Poll: Most Israelis prefer to receive news updates via Internet

Only one percent said daily print newspapers are most credible

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Israelis prefer to learn about current news events via the Internet, according to a survey released this week ahead of the 2014 DIGIT conference at the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya (IDC) Sammy Ofer School of Communications.

According to the poll, 27 percent of respondents said they prefer to receive news updates from the Internet, compared to 22% via television, 21% by daily print newspapers, and 19% by radio.

This marked a 7% increase over 2013 in those reading daily newspapers and a 7% decrease in those watching the news on TV.

However, in the event of a major security incident, 38% of respondents said they would turn to television news for updates, with only 28% turning to the Internet and 26% to radio, marking a 14% increase from last year for people who would tune into the radio.

When breaking the results down by age group, younger respondents, some 30%, prefer Internet news sites, compared to 16% of respondents aged 44 and older.

In contrast, 37% of respondents aged 44 and older prefer television news, compared to 22% of younger respondents. The study also showed that a vast majority of 80% does not view video news reports on Internet news sites, a 20% decrease from 2013.

A 62% majority of respondents believe that news updates on Facebook are not trustworthy, compared to 38% who believe they are credible.

A little over a third of respondents, 36%, believe that all news outlets are equally credible, while 13% believe none is to be believed.

The additional respondents rated the credibility of news outlets as follows: 27% said television news is most credible, 15% said radio, 8% said the Internet, and only 1% said daily print newspapers are most credible.

Regarding reporters, 37% of people surveyed said all reporters are equally "serious and professional," while 7% said no reporters are "serious or professional enough." The additional respondents believed that 26% of television news correspondents are most serious and professional, compared to 17% of daily print newspaper reporters, 11% of radio reporters, and 2% of Internet reporters.

"More and more Israelis are catching up on news content via digital platforms. However, anyone who holds online journalism as dear should be concerned about the low confidence given by news consumers to the news reports they read on the net."

"You will find excellent and committed journalists on Israeli news sites who do not deserve the professional image revealed in the poll," said Roy Katz, founder and producer of the DIGIT conference and VP of Content at Radio Tel Aviv 102FM.

The survey was conducted throughout the month of January 2014 and included 584 people aged 16 and up, interviewed by telephone, with a 4.5% margin of error.

Half were men and half women, with an average age of 41; 37% living in the Center, 19% living in the South, 21% living in the North, 11% living in the Sharon region and 12% living in Jerusalem. The poll was conducted by Maagar Mochot research institute, managed by Prof. Yitzhak Katz, Prof. Baruch Mevorach, and Dr. Amir Horkin.

The third annual DIGIT conference, to be held March 10, is the only one dealing exclusively with online media. The conference will focus on the major issues that concern the digital media in Israel and abroad and will include media master classes by senior industry executives, journalists, editors, designers, and programmers, as well as panel discussions and lectures.