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Marketing to Online Teens

11 May 2004

In its study of US teens online, [Jupiter Research](#) forecasts 22 million teens will be using the Web by 2008.

Jupiter conducted a survey of over 1,800 online teens ages 13 to 17, and analyzed the resulting data with an eye on how marketers can reach this demographic. Overall, Jupiter found healthy growth in the number of teens online between 2004 and 2008, which will increase from 18 million to 22 million. It also found that 17% of teens are "teen influencers," a group that is highly active online, style conscious, popular and exerts a strong sway over friends and family. As a group, Jupiter found that influencers are older and wealthier than the average teen, spend 8 hours a week on the Net (one hour more than the average) and are 53% female.

Number of US Teens Online, 2004 & 2008 (in millions)

| | |
|------|----|
| 2004 | 18 |
| 2008 | 22 |

Note: ages 13-17

Source: Jupiter Research, May 2004

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Although the "teen influencers" group is an attractive marketing target, Jupiter noted that in general, the Internet is not necessarily the best marketing route to connect with teens. While the average teen spends 7 hours a week on the Net, they spend 10 hours a week watching TV, a difference more pronounced than for online adults.

Amount of Time that US Teens Spend Online vs. Watching TV, 2004 (in hours per week)

| | |
|-------------|----|
| Watching TV | 10 |
| Internet | 7 |

Note: ages 13-17

Source: Jupiter Research, May 2004

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The ways in which teens use the Net may also make it slightly more difficult in terms of marketing. The biggest areas teens differ from adults when online is in their use of instant messaging (IM) and Weblogs. Yahoo!, AOL and Microsoft have all attempted to bring more advertising into their IM applications, but due to the spartan nature of the program and people's aversion to intrusive advertising, ads are limited to small banner ads near user's buddy lists and pop-up ads.

Weblogs are also tricky for advertisers, as many of them are sites owned or run by individual users. These sites are often highly idiosyncratic journal-based pages that are updated with no regular schedule and subject to the whims and opinions of the users. They are numerous and often mercurial, making it hard to zero in on a prime advertising opportunity, and some might not even accept advertising. All this combines to make them a less attractive opportunity for marketing.

Online Activities of US Teens, 2004 (as a % of respondents)

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Regularly use Instant messaging | 71% |
| Regularly use Weblogs | 30% |

Note: ages 13-17

Source: Jupiter Research, May 2004

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How can you influence the influencers? Check out eMarketer's recently released *Kids vs. Teens* report.

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