

Thursday, 20 August 2020

It's official: Internet is Australia's main source of news; TV remains most trusted

New research from Roy Morgan reveals the internet has overtaken TV as Australia's main source of news over the last two years. Over 12.7 million Australians (60.8%) now say the internet is a main source of news, up 1.4 million since 2018, including nearly 7.9 million Australians (37.7%) specifically nominating Social Media.

The number of Australians who say TV is their main source of news has dipped 1 million over the last two years to 12.4 million or 59.4%. However, TV is still regarded as the most trusted source of news by nearly 7 million Australians (33.4%) – ahead of any other forms of competing traditional or digital media.

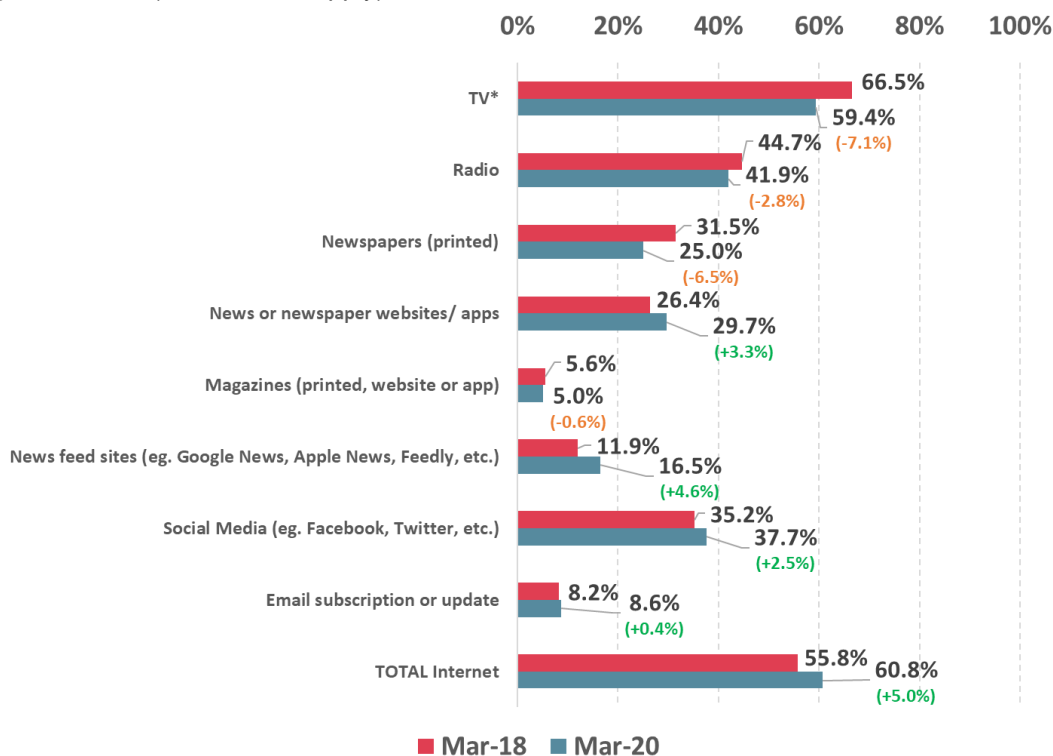
Other traditional media used widely as main sources of news include radio, nominated by 8.7 million Australians (41.9%) and printed newspapers mentioned by 5.2 million (25.0%), although both have declined since 2018.

Within the broader category of the internet over 3.4 million Australians (16.5%, a significant increase of 4.6% points since 2018) use news feed sites such as Google News, Apple News, Feedly etc., a further 1.8 million (8.6%) use email subscriptions or updates and 1.1 million (5.6%) use other websites or apps. There are 1.0 million (5.0%) who use magazines (printed, website or app) as a main source of news.

These latest findings are drawn from the Roy Morgan Single Source survey, Australia's most comprehensive consumer survey, derived from in-depth interviews with 50,000 Australians each year.

Main sources of news – 2020 Vs. 2018

People surveyed were asked "Thinking about all the ways you get your news, how do you mainly get your news?" (Mark all that apply).



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source April 2017 - March 2018, n=50,014, April 2019 – March 2020, n=48,935.
Base: Australians 14+. *TV including free-to-air TV and Pay TV.

TV is the most trusted source of news ahead of the internet and radio

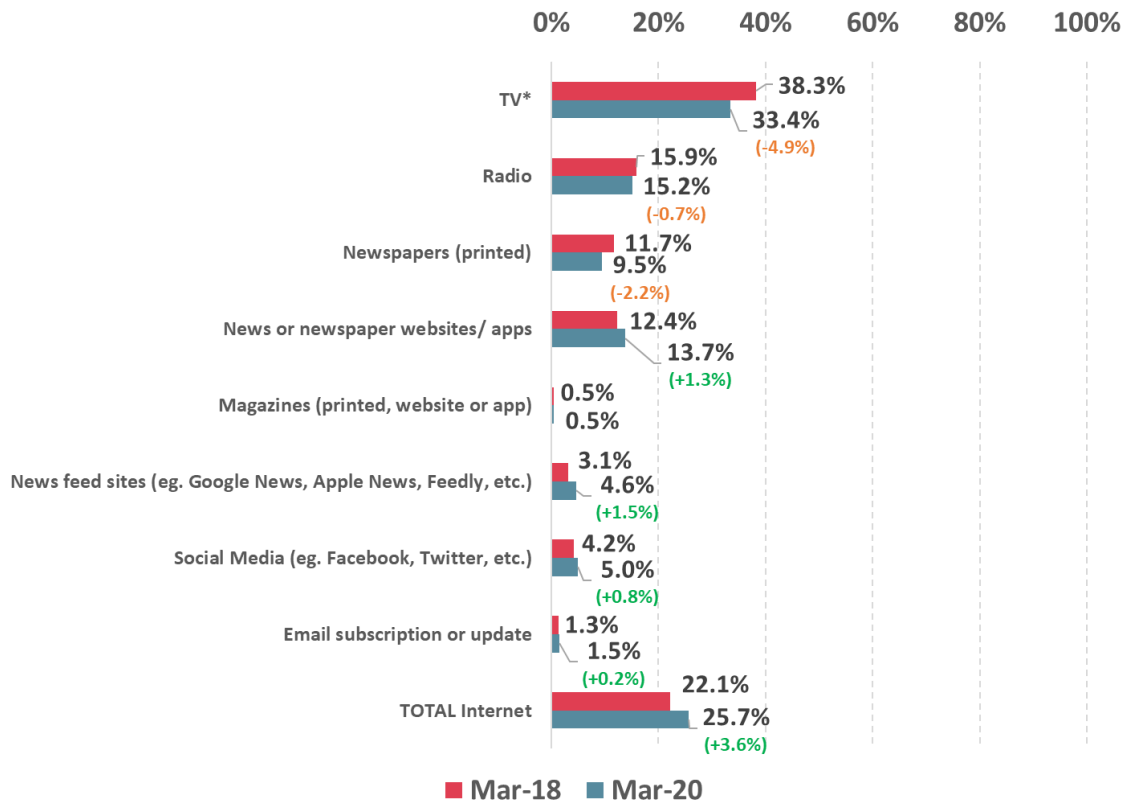
TV remains clearly the most trusted source of news for Australians (mentioned by 33.4%, but down 4.9% points on two years ago), ahead of the internet on 25.7% (up 3.6% points). The internet is split between several different channels including news or newspaper websites/apps, social media, news feed sites such as Google News, Apple News, Feedly etc. and email subscriptions or updates.

The third most trusted source of news is the radio on 15.2% (down 0.7% points) just ahead of news and newspaper websites/apps on 13.7% (up 1.3% points). Newspapers in printed format have dropped 2.2% points to 9.5%. Only 5.0% (up 0.8% points) consider social media their most trusted source of news.

These findings are in line with Roy Morgan’s research of ‘Trust’ and ‘Distrust’ that shows social media is the least trusted media.

Most trusted sources of news – 2020 Vs. 2018

People surveyed were asked “Thinking about all the ways you get your news, which ONE do you trust most” (Mark one response only).



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source April 2017 - March 2018, n=50,014, April 2019 – March 2020, n=48,935.
Base: Australians 14+. *TV including free-to-air TV and Pay TV.

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan, says:

“As the world increases its levels of digital communication, one could be forgiven for thinking ‘traditional media’ is being left behind. However, the latest research from Roy Morgan, which specifically focuses on the use of, and trust in, news sources clearly shows that TV remains Australians’ most trusted source of news – and while the internet is now the most common source of news for Australians, TV is still one of Australians’ main sources of news. Additionally, large portions of the population continue to rely on radio and newspapers for their news.

"The proliferation of new digital media such as 'social media' in recent years coupled with the era of 'fake news' has put a premium on 'trust' in media. Traditional media channels such as TV, radio, and newspapers that have built a high degree of trust over many decades do retain an advantage against new digital media. However, over the last two years Roy Morgan has revealed Internet channels are increasingly being relied upon to provide trusted sources of news.

"Although younger generations have a higher degree of trust in the internet including social media, 42% of 25-34yr olds and 36% of people under 25 trust the internet as a source of news compared to only 16% of 50-64yr olds and just 8% of people aged 65+, indications are that the level of trust in media generally is set to remain under pressure.

"In this challenging environment with Australians looking for the truth about the latest developments concerning COVID-19, government enforced lockdowns and the search for a vaccine to deal with the pandemic it is crucial for traditional media brands which have established their online presence to maintain and develop the trusted relationship their audiences have with those brands."

Roy Morgan Enquiries

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

askroymorgan@roymorgan.com

About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full-service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan has over 75 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2

