

# INTERNET AND MOBILE APPLICATIONS IN WORK LIFE AND PRIVATE LIFE OF DIGITAL MARKETERS - METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

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## Abstract

*The goal of the article is to declare and describe the methodology of research about Internet and mobile applications in work life and private life of digital marketers. This article is a reflection on the research methods used, their adequacy and potential results that the research team should achieve during the research. The article is the justification for the selected research method (both quantitative and qualitative), describes the research group. The authors, based on the pilot study, also make some conclusions, which will then be verified using subsequent - more extensive and implemented on a larger scale research tools.*

**Keywords:** Internet, mobile applications, work life, private life, marketers

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This article describes the assumed methodology for conducting the study mentioned in the title. The main goal of the proposed research project is to verify ways of using the Internet and mobile applications by employees of the Internet marketing industry as a professional group exposed to risks associated with excessive use thereof. There are studies confirming that the type of work performed can significantly increase the risk of Internet addiction or at least dysfunctional use of it, and areas such as communication and online self-presentation are among the factors that increase this risk most

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[Aouli, Siedlaczek 2011, Dembińska, Ochnik 2014]. It is worth emphasizing that the purpose of this study is not to diagnose these addictions [Young 1998], which is involved in psychology, but only to identify ways and scope of using the Internet and mobile devices by the studied professional group, which may affect the quality of work of its representatives, important from the point of view of both themselves and employers from the internet marketing industry. For the research team, a particularly interesting comparative media analysis of this phenomenon at the level of media users from the mentioned industry on an international scale (quantitative analysis) as well as in-depth research in Poland (quantitative and qualitative analysis).

Interactive Advertising Bureau Poland Poland - the Association of Internet Industry Employers was invited to participate in the research project, thanks to which it will be possible to provide both substantive consultation of the planned research methodology and research tools, as well as to gain access to IAB member companies around the world that will be invited to the research.

The research project involves three stages of research procedures - quantitative and qualitative.

It is worth referring to the concept of overall (multiple) triangulation, which Norman K. Denzin [Denzin 1970] defines as: the use of more than one method in the study of specific phenomena, processes, objects; a work pattern that allows researchers to rise above personal preferences associated with specific methodologies; crossing different theoretical approaches, methods, researchers and data in specific research projects.

Methodological triangulation was chosen as the basis for the research process in question. Its advantage is the ability to overcome the limitations of individual research methods. This approach also allows to broaden the scope of analyzes, as well as to build a much broader picture of the phenomenon studied [Gackowski 2014].

According to Alan Bryman [Bryman 1992], the representativeness of qualitative research (in the case of this research - in-depth interviews) can be credited, supplemented by quantitative research. In addition, qualitative results facilitate the interpretation of mutual correlations between variables (e.g. type of device and time of use). Alan Bryman [Bryman 1992] also mentions that the use of both types of research can be effective at various stages of the research process (in the case of the study discussed - deepening knowledge of the issue by selecting more costly, but showing processual aspects of qualitative research at later stages of the research process).

Stage I is a quantitative research based on the CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview) technique - a technique of a direct interview conducted via the Internet, in which there is a questionnaire to be completed by an interviewee. The study will cover countries where IAB has its local member organizations - depending on the interest of enterprises in participating in the study. The study was preceded by a pilot on representatives of the industry in the local area - during the National Conference Internetbeta 2018. Participants of the said conference ideally fit into the target group of the study. They are mainly people aged 28-40, with higher education, working in positions related to marketing, sales, communication, using mainly the Internet as a channel to reach the final recipient. During the pilot study, 39 questions were asked about the habits of using mobile applications by respondents during and outside of the working day. The questions are listed at the end of this article. The first 9 questions related to the respondents' records, were asked about age, gender, education, form of employment, job position, seniority, size of the company in which the person works, current personal situation, as well as the number of dependents. The next part of the survey concerned the way the respondents used the Internet for professional purposes. Seven questions were asked here regarding the period of use of the network (days of the week, time of day), tools used and issues related to the intensity of Internet use. The next part deals with private issues - i.e. there is a reference to situations in which respondents rest, spend time with family or a group of

friends. The structure of questions for both parts was left identical (to better understand this diffused target group). The last part of the survey examining marketers' behavior concerns feelings related to using the Internet as a communication channel. In this part, the respondents are asked about their potential addiction to the Internet, intent to use it, as well as feelings related to the lack of access to the Internet.

The survey was conducted via an online questionnaire. 60 people reach the first page of the survey, 19 of whom completed the survey. This gives researchers a return of 32%. At this stage one should think about where such a large number of bounces will appear. It is worth noting that each of the participants of the study who began to complete the questionnaire reached the end (answered all the questions asked). It was considered that the page that appears first should be reworded (it is the first contact of the study participant with the questionnaire, explains the purposefulness of the study and its importance for researchers). It was considered that the collected set of 19 sets of responses was a representative group for piloting. The questionnaire mainly contains complementary questions, which are in a closed form - the respondent can choose one or several of the answers proposed. This closes some non-standard answers, but also allows you to better understand the questions and their legitimacy. This is also an important aspect when analyzing the collected results. Settlement questions appear in only a few places and in their case the answers are also limited to answers that complete the question asked (and are single-choice) [Nowak 2007].

Considering the fact that the pilotage was a competition - personal data was also collected (for the purposes of the competition resolution), which also allowed feedback on the quality and comprehensibility of the research tool. As a result of the pilot study, it was decided to change some questions (their formula) so that the answers provided were more precise and the questions themselves understood. The collected answers allowed drawing some conclusions that will be compared with the research on a larger group of respondents. The applications include:

1. The tools used by marketers professionally and privately are the same,
2. Approximately 16% of respondents are not able to divide the time of network usage between private and professional use,
3. The main tools are a laptop or smartphone
4. The Internet (online activity) is a key sphere of life (private and professional) for half of the respondents (taking into account their dependence on the Internet).

As mentioned above, these claims should be verified on a more representative audience. This survey is planned for the first quarter of 2020, using cooperation with the Interactive Advertising Bureau Poland and Interactive Advertising Bureau Poland Europe. This will be the next - second stage of the study. It is assumed that a group of about 300 respondents, marketers employed mainly in Poland, being in the 25-45 age groups (which is of appropriate technological maturity), working in positions related to digital marketing or running their own business will be examined here.

The research presented above is quantitative and will be a kind of starting point for the preparation of tools for qualitative research.

In the next stage, a qualitative research will be conducted - based on a mobile application whose task will be to measure the activity of marketers on their mobile devices (as those most often indicated in quantitative research, i.e. tablet, smartphone). This study will take the form of direct non-participating observation [Jemielniak 2012] carried out through technology. The importance of qualitative research here is very large. Their main goal is to learn more about the behaviors that are associated with the use of the Internet by people working on the web. Important for researchers here is the opportunity to observe the "real world", not artificially created or declarations made by the respondents [Flick 2010]. The use of a mobile application that will allow data collection is of great importance for the objectivity of the study (assuming that the study participants

will not intentionally disable the application). Similar research on the Internet, browsed content and online activity of the society was (and continues) in Poland by Megapanel PBI / Gemius. The methodology used by Megapanel PBI / Gemius<sup>5</sup> uses two approaches - user-centric and site-centric. User-centric involves testing through the intentionally installed netPanel application (and applies to content, sites viewed by respondents). Site-centric approach is the measure of the whole traffic on the website generated by users. The research team will focus on this first approach (due to technological limitations and ethics in the field of monitoring mobile applications). The research carried out by Megapanel PBI / Gemius is interesting for researchers because it shows an image of the entire audience of the Polish Internet, which can be an interesting comparative material with the conducted research (in the context of the amount of time spent on the Internet)<sup>6</sup>. The lack in the indicated study, which at the same time the researchers want to supplement is analyzing only website traffic - bypassing the distinction between applications (in the case of mobile devices they will be outside of web browsers, applications for social media).

This application will be specially prepared to anonymously measure the activity of individual users in the context of the time of day, type of application, time of its use, state of its use (sleep, work in the background, active work), character, frequency. These data will be sent to a cloud database via an encrypted connection, which will constitute research material. This study should give very reliable data on the use of the Internet and mobile applications (without specifying the context, i.e. the division into professional work and private life). In the context of the discussed research topic, this constitutes a certain obstacle, but for the purposes of this study it will be assumed that use for professional purposes is classified in the time interval indicated by the respondent (the working time will be determined at the first launch of the application), the remaining time will be treated as private life. The survey will cover countries where IAB has its local member organizations (low threshold for reaching potential respondents).

An in-depth interview [Jemielniak 2012] scenario with the respondents will be prepared on the basis of data obtained from the first (quantitative) and second (qualitative) stages. It will concern the ways of using the Internet (implicitly on mobile devices) by selected representatives of the research group. An important element of in-depth interview will be issues related to Internet addiction, withdrawal syndrome and problems that result from the growing expansion of this form of communication. In-depth interviews will be conducted with at least 15 people selected to represent the target group as fully as possible. In-depth interview will provide researchers with information on the experiences, feelings and behaviors of marketers on the Internet. It has a co-creative character - which means that the team of researchers will be forced to strict objectivity and limit their role in the interview to the moderator.

As a summary of the entire study, a report will be prepared on marketers' behavior on the Internet and their use of mobile applications. It is planned to be published jointly with Interactive Advertising Bureau Poland Poland.

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#### **Appendix: Questions from Pilot Questionnaire (conducted during Internetbeta 2018):**

##### **Basic, technical questions**

- Age
- Gender
- Education
- Form of employment
- Position / function
- Work experience in the internet industry
- The size of the current company
- Current personal situation
- Number of people in your household (dependent on a shared household budget)

##### **The next part of the survey concerns the use of the Internet by industry employees. We want to ask in a few simple steps how you use the Internet for professional purposes.**

- If you were to describe your typical week, on what days and at what hours do you usually use the Internet for professional purposes?
- What tools do you use to use the Internet for professional purposes?
- Do you use any of the following tools with access to the Internet for professional purposes while using other tools?
- What social networking sites and to what extent do you use for professional purposes?
- What tools / applications do you use every day for professional purposes?
- Have you ever tried to limit the time spent on the Internet (including using the application) for professional purposes?
- If so, was this a successful attempt?

##### **Thank you! The next part of the survey concerns the use of the Internet for private purposes (i.e. not related to the work performed). Please focus now on this sphere of life.**

If you were to describe your typical week, on what days and at what hours do you usually use the Internet for private purposes?

What tools do you use to use the Internet for private purposes?

Do you use any of the following tools with Internet access for private purposes while using other tools?

What social networking sites and to what extent do you use for private purposes?

What tools / applications do you use for private purposes on a daily basis:

Have you ever tried to limit the time spent on the Internet (including using the application) for private purposes?

If so, was this a successful attempt?

**Thank you! Let's move to the last part of the survey - regarding the possible consequences of using the network.**

Do you think the Internet absorbs you so much that you constantly think about what you did on the web?

Do you think the Internet absorbs you so much that you can't wait to use the Internet again?

Do you feel the need to spend more and more time on the Internet to enjoy it more?

Do you feel the need to spend more and more time on the Internet to enjoy it more?

When entering the network, do you usually plan how much time you'll spend using the internet?

Do you sometimes use the Internet for a longer time than initially anticipated?

Have you ever had the risk of breaking contact with someone close or losing an important relationship with others due to spending too much time on the Internet?

Have you ever encountered the risk of problems at work or a career related to spending too much time on the Internet?

Have you ever hidden your excessive preoccupation from the Internet from other people?

Do you sometimes use the Internet to escape from problems?

Do you sometimes use the Internet to avoid unpleasant experiences or feelings (e.g. feelings of helplessness, guilt, anxiety or depression)?

Have you ever felt internal anxiety when trying to limit the time you use the Internet?

Have you ever felt the tension when trying to limit the time you use the Internet?

Have you ever felt depressed (depressed mood or / and sadness) when trying to limit the time you use the Internet?

Have you ever felt irritable when trying to limit the time you use the Internet?