

The argument is pervasive. Kids don't want or need cable. They have the internet for content. Why would they pay all that money when they can find most, if not all the entertainment they want and need for free ?

Put another way "kids today", the twentysomethings, don't follow the same entertainment consumption paths that their parents and elders do. **The new mantra is "Never trust the media consumption habits of anyone over 30"**

Well no shit Sherlock. Has any generation's kids consumed media the same way as their parents ?

I'm going to let you in on a secret. The only 20 somethings that are going to consume media in 10 years the way they do today are the ones without a job, still living with their parents.

I'm going to let you in on another secret. **The older you get, the faster time goes by.** I'm sure there is some scientific explanation for this phenomena. I don't know it. But I know it is true. Months and years go back faster and faster the older you get.

Which in turn leads to the next truism. **The older you get, the more you value your time. You quickly learn that your most valuable possession/asset isn't one you put on a balance sheet or in your home. It is time.** Every minute, hour, day is one you will never get back and there is nothing you can do to earn another.

So what does this have to do with Internet, Internet Video and Traditional TV ?

If you read my blog posts you know that a recurring theme is that businesses must offer the path of least resistance to their customers. If someone else makes their product easier to buy or use than you, that is when you lose customers the fastest. This theme is even more important when it comes to entertainment. If you agree that TV is the path of least resistance to a cure for boredom, then it is easy to see that when someone is bored, the more they value their time, the less they will want to work to find their entertainment.

So to state the obvious: 20 somethings don't value their time as much as 30 somethings who don't value their time as much as 40 somethings, etc, etc.

Kids have all day to search for pirated music, movies and software. They value the money it would cost to buy the stuff more than they value their time. 20 somethings don't mind listening to tons of music to find out what they like. They don't mind rooting through Youtube for hours to find fun stuff. They will listen to music over and over because learning the words and dance steps creates social capital that is more valuable than their time. They can and will spend hours searching for new stuff. Why ? Because they can.

Once a 20 something gets that job and takes on rent, student loan payments, credit cards, car payments, etc the equation starts to change. They order music from iTunes rather than pirating it. They click on links and look to see what their friends are doing on facebook as a short cut to the entertainment they should like. They don't spend time on news, they believe that if news is important, they will see it when someone posts it on their FB wall or tweets it. Which by itself is a time saving mechanism.

As the real world starts to impact their lives, through job responsibilities, families, whatever else, they start to value time even more and look for ways they can buy time. This is where their entertainment consumption starts to change. They still want to keep up with Jersey Shore and their favorite sports team. They want to watch it so they can talk about it at work, so they can see the shows they are hearing about online and from friends, or just so they can enjoy watching it. So they consider adding cable when they can afford it, knowing they can cut it (but not cut their internet connection) if they don't use it or if they lose their job.

Once a family starts, the economic realities and the importance of time change dramatically. No one has time to download all the Scooby Doo episodes the kids want to watch, and you don't want them carrying around your iPhone/iPad all day, nor do you want to buy your 3 year old their own device. So you recognize that as much as you hate to admit it, traditional TV has its value. And while you would love to check out those Youtube videos the guy in the office sent you, and the ones you saw on your facebook wall, you don't have the time or the brain cycles to deal with it.

By the time 10pm rolls around, you want to vegetate, be entertained and just find a way to calm down so you can go to sleep.

You have reached the point where there aren't enough hours in the day. The idea of having to expend any more energy than the effort it takes to pick up the remote control, check the programming guide and your DVR list to see what you want to watch is in and of itself tiring.

The examples are different for everyone, and of course there are exceptions, but the underlying principal is the same. The more you value your time, the more you value simple, easy access to cures for boredom, the best of which is TV. Which is why 20 somethings of every generation find their own unique ways to entertain themselves and their parents do all they can to not have to expend time or energy to cure their boredom.

What kids do today has absolutely nothing to do with how they will consume media as adults or what future generations will do to consume media.

Put together a graph of how people value their time as they age and you will see how their media consumption evolves over time. Add to that graph the various media options currently available and you will see that the simpler and more expensive skew old and the cheaper and more choice options skew younger.