

Latest internet trends



By Louise Marsland

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As we know, the dizzying speed of change on the interwebs has led to fundamental changes in commerce, communication and the consumption of information and entertainment content. Luckily, there are clever people out there who keep track of latest numbers and trends.

One of these is Mary Meeker who is best known for her annual internet trend charts that she puts out every year. There are 164 slides in total from Meeker of KPCB.com, and the latest internet trends report for 2014 shows that while internet user growth is slowing globally, there is strong growth in smartphone, tablet, and mobile data traffic, as well as rapid growth in mobile advertising. KPCB clients have included the likes of Amazon, Google, and Twitter.

The trends report also addresses high-level trends in messaging, communications, apps and services; looks at the data behind the rapid growth in sensors, data mining tools, and pattern recognition; looks at the context on the evolution of online video; and makes observations about online innovation in China. The full report from KPCB.com can be downloaded in PDF format [here](#). There are some fantastic graphs and charts with great comparative data on everything from tablet growth to global internet advertising stats. South Africa features in a few of them too!

Here's a sample:

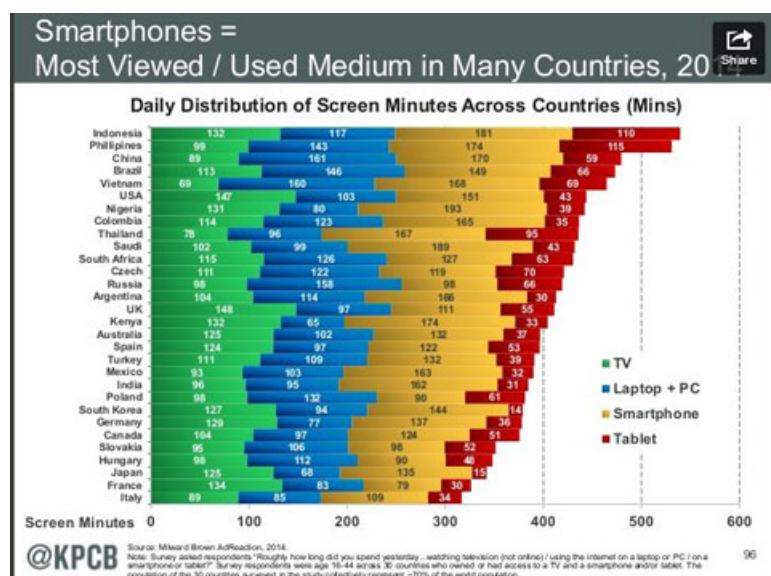
- Internet user growth is slowing. Fastest growth is in developing markets like India, Indonesia, and Nigeria - which are harder to monetise.
- Smartphone subscriber growth is still showing strong growth (up 20%), although slowing. Fastest growth is in "underpenetrated markets" such as China, India, Brazil, and Indonesia.
- Tablets are still at 52% early stage rapid unit growth.
- Mobile data traffic growth is accelerating at 81%, with video as a strong driver.

Highlights

These are the highlights from Michael Brenner who writes a great blog on b2bmarketinginsider.com. He is the vice president of global marketing for SAP (follow him on Twitter [@BrennerMichael](https://twitter.com/BrennerMichael) if you don't already, his digital marketing content is really useful).

1. **Mobile will continue to grow:** This is one we are very aware of here in Africa, of course, where much of our internet connections are via mobile phones predominantly. What Meeker reports is that only 30% of the 5.2 billion mobile phones in global circulation are smartphones. But as prices come down and we see an increase in cheaper entry level smartphones entering the market, data and content usage will increase exponentially as the so-called 'feature phones' make way for smartphones.
2. **Internet advertising spend continues to rise:** Advertising spend on both desktop and mobile is increasing and remains strong. Brands continue to look for ways to capture the attention of the multi-tasking digital user, which is why social is also recording growth.
3. **Technology bubble? What technology bubble?!** Meeker doesn't believe we're heading for another tech bubble, like that of the 'dotcom bomb' in 2000 as technology market valuations are in line with long-term historical averages (at 19%) and nowhere near the 35% recorded during the 2000 dotcom peak.
4. **The future of the internet is visual:** The web is evolving to be a lot more visual in all communications due to the rise of the 'visual web' via social networks like Tumblr, Pinterest, Instagram, Vine, and Snapchat.
5. **The rise of social news content:** Social news content leaders are BuzzFeed, Huffington Post and ABC News. BuzzFeed and Huffington Post in particular, have mastered social distribution of their news by using Facebook and Twitter to reach new audience and draw them into their engaging content.

6. **Nailing the 'Internet Trifecta':** Brenner says forget the '4 P's of marketing', Meeker has "nailed it" with her chart on the 'Internet Trifecta' of content. This includes *Content*: provided by consumers and PROs + *Community*: context and connectivity created by and for users = *Commerce*: products tagged and ingested for seamless purchase.
7. **Growth of data sharing:** Digital data shared on the internet is growing at 50% every year and will continue, says Brenner. Most important to note is that consumers create two-thirds of the data shared over the internet.
8. **And the first screen for video is... the smartphone!** I've been writing about the smartphone replacing television as the first screen for a couple of years now and this is true when it comes to video viewing habits. Smartphones are the screen people choose to watch most of their video programming in most countries, including South Africa! [See *chart*]
9. **Millennials are leading the charge:** And of course, the biggest threat to television is the cool kids - the majority of Millennials are viewing their video content online - 34% of them in fact. Some of them have never even owned a television set.



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