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NEW CHANNELS A HIT WITH VIEWERS

New consumer research shows the new free-to-air channels are proving a hit with viewers, driving increased TV consumption and quickly becoming part of Australian's regular television viewing.

The national survey, commissioned by Free TV and conducted by Jigsaw Strategic Research, was part of a quantitative study of more than 1,500 digital TV viewers that explored consumers' attitudes to free-to-air TV and, more specifically, the new channels.

The study found that people are finding more of what they want to watch on free-to-air TV. 73 per cent say that the new channels are providing them with more choice than ever before and 6 in 10 people say the new channels are now part of their regular television repertoire.

Furthermore, more than 1 in 3 people say they are watching more TV now that they have access to the new channels.

This is supported by OzTAM ratings data which shows overall TV viewing is up 6 minutes for the survey year. Free-to-air's share of viewing is also up year-on-year with the new channels, despite only being in market for a short time, now accounting for around 15 per cent of evening viewing.

The new channels are also driving higher satisfaction levels of free-to-air TV. An overwhelming majority of respondents (7 out of 10) believe free-to-air TV is getting better.

The research also confirmed that people are more accepting of the ads they see on free-to-air TV. More than half of respondents say they don't mind ads on free-to-air TV because that's what makes it free, while just 12 per cent of people with pay TV say they don't mind ads on pay TV. However a whopping 72 per cent of pay subscribers disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Free TV director of marketing Rhonda Brown said, "The new channels have quickly found a home on the digital free-to-air platform and are now very much part of Australians daily TV viewing.

"The new channels offer more choice not only for viewers, but for also for advertisers – providing them with even more ways to engage with their target audiences."

(Nationally representative sample of digital TV viewers, people 13-64 years, n=1504. Pay TV subs, 18 years+, n=434.)

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