



FACTUM

What Industry Professionals Think Canadians Do Doesn't Match Reality

Thirty percent use TikTok; industry estimates nearly three times higher

Toronto, Canada, September 17, 2026 — The fourth wave of Ad Nation, conducted by Ipsos Canada on behalf of thinktv, examines differences between the media habits of Canadian marketing, media, and creative professionals and those of the general public. Findings show that industry professionals often overestimate public use of media platforms and technologies. One example is TikTok, where 30% of Canadians report using the platform in the past month, while industry professionals estimate public usage at 89%, representing a gap of 59 percentage points.

Industry Estimates Often Exceed Reported Consumer Media Use

Across the platforms and applications measured in the study, the average difference between public-reported usage and industry estimates of public usage is 35 percentage points. YouTube is the most widely used platform among Canadians, with 77% reporting use in the past month. Usage rises to 93% among industry professionals, who overestimate public usage at 93%. Netflix is used by 58% of Canadians, compared with 87% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate that 92% of Canadians use the platform, a 34-point overestimation. Amazon Prime Video shows a smaller perception gap, with 52% of Canadians reporting usage, compared with 70% of industry professionals and an estimated public usage of 81%. One-third of Canadians (32%) report using Disney+ in the past month, while usage among industry professionals reaches 52%. Industry respondents estimate that 75% of Canadians use the platform, more than double reported public usage. Apple TV+ is used by 12% of Canadians and 41% of industry professionals, while industry estimates place public usage at 63%, a gap of 51 percentage points. For Paramount+, 13% of Canadians report using the service, compared with 17% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate that 37% of Canadians use Paramount+. Similarly, 17% of Canadians report using StackTV, while 43% of industry professionals use the service. Industry estimates place public usage at 72%, more than four times reported consumer usage.

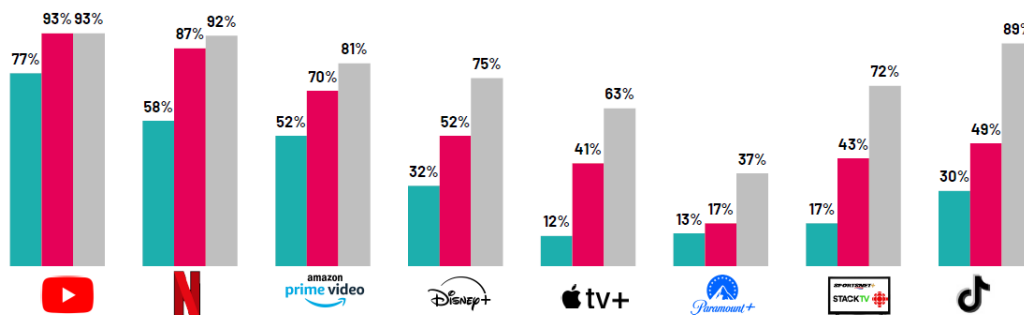


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Apps Used in the Past Month: Video Forward Platforms (1/2)

Avg gap = 35 ppts!



Social and Music Platforms Show Similar Perception Gaps

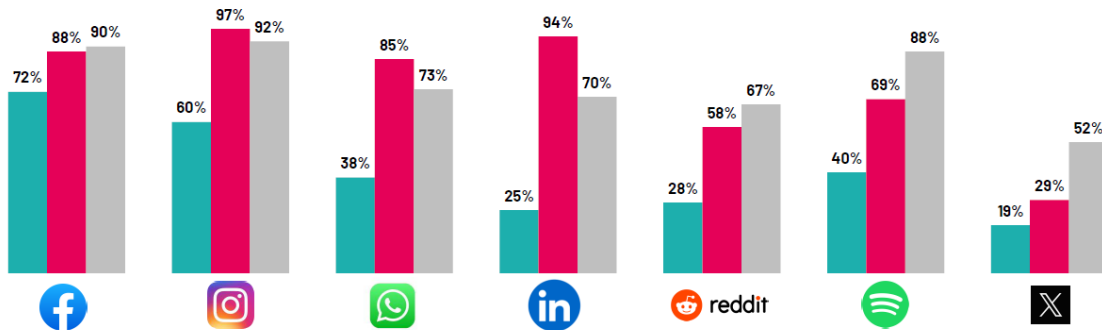
A similar pattern emerges across social media and music streaming platforms, where industry professionals report higher usage than Canadians overall and often overestimate adoption among the general public. Facebook remains the most widely used platform measured, with 72% of Canadians reporting use in the past month. Usage increases to 88% among industry professionals, who estimate that 90% of Canadians use the platform. Instagram is used by 60% of Canadians, compared with 97% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate public usage at 92%, 32 percentage points higher than reported usage among Canadians.

WhatsApp shows an even larger difference. While 38% of Canadians report using the platform in the past month, usage rises to 85% among industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate that 73% of Canadians use WhatsApp, nearly double the reported level. LinkedIn records one of the largest gaps between industry and public behaviour. One-quarter (25%) of Canadians report using LinkedIn in the past month, compared with 94% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate public usage at 70%, overestimating adoption by 45 percentage points. Reddit is used by 28% of Canadians and 58% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate that 67% of Canadians use the platform, a gap of 39 percentage points. Spotify is used by 40% of Canadians, compared with 69% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate public usage at 88%, more than double reported usage among Canadians. X (formerly Twitter) is the least-used platform measured. Nineteen percent of Canadians report using the platform in the past month, compared with 29% of industry professionals. Industry respondents estimate that 52% of Canadians use X, representing a 33-point difference between perceived and reported usage.

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Apps Used in the Past Month: Social & Music Platforms (2/2)



AI Usage Highlights Gap Between Industry Experience and Public Behaviour

Differences between industry professionals and the public are also evident in the use of artificial intelligence tools. In the past month, 84% of industry professionals report using an AI tool, compared with 29% of Canadians. Industry professionals estimate public usage at 86%, substantially higher than reported usage among Canadians.

Trust in Advertising Remains Stable Over Time

Levels of trust in advertising have remained relatively consistent over the past decade. Twenty-nine percent of Canadians say they do not trust any advertising today, compared with 30% ten years ago. The study finds notable differences between industry professionals and Canadians in how social media advertising is perceived. While both groups express concerns about social media advertising, with 33% of Canadians and 52% of industry professionals describing it as misleading and 22% and 32%, respectively, associating it with low-quality advertising, industry professionals are substantially more likely than Canadians to report favourable reactions to social media advertising. Four in ten (40%) industry professionals say social media is a source of advertising they like, compared with 15% of Canadians. Industry respondents are also more likely to say social media advertising draws their attention to a product or brand they had not previously heard of (49% vs. 21%) and makes them want to buy a product (39% vs. 17%). By comparison, Canadians rate television highest across these measures, including advertising they like (33%), advertising that introduces them to new products or brands (26%), and advertising that makes them want to buy a product (18%).

Live Television Continues to Deliver Shared Viewing Experiences



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Despite the growing number of viewing options available, live television continues to meet needs that are tied to real-time viewing. Among Canadians who watch television live, the most commonly cited reason is to watch events as they happen, such as sports, reality programming or awards shows (27%). Other commonly reported reasons include avoiding spoilers (19%), wanting to watch anticipated programs as soon as possible (17%), participating in what feels like a shared event (17%), and watching with family or friends (15%).

About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of Ad Nation between July 6 and August 2, 2026. A total of 774 Canadians aged 18 to 59 participated in the study. This included a sample of 600 Canadians who do not work in the marketing or media industries, as well as 174 members of the Canadian Marketing Association (CMA) who qualify as advertisers, marketers, content publishers, or professionals working in media, creative, or digital agencies. The n=174 was supplied by the CMA. Data for n=600 was collected online through the Ipsos panel.

Quotas and weighting were applied to ensure the composition of the Canadian sample reflects the population according to census parameters. The results based on the sample of 600 Canadians are accurate to within ± 4.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what would have been obtained had all Canadians aged 18 to 59 been surveyed. Results based on the sample of 174 industry professionals are accurate to within ± 9.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

For more information on this Factum, please contact:

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Our passionately curious research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide true understanding and powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. We serve more than 5000 clients across the world with 75 business solutions.

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