

The Media Audit

NEWS RELEASE

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24% of All Adults Dieted 4 Weeks Or More in 2003, Says New Report

Houston, Texas -- (2/11/04) -- It's more popular than hunting, fishing, snow skiing or even golf, says The Media Audit, a syndicated media ratings service.

What is it? It's dieting.

"The number and percentage of adults (age 18 plus) who diet for at least 4 weeks a year is increasing each year," says Bob Jordan, president of International Demographics, Inc., a 33-year-old market research firm, which produces The Media Audit.

The percentage of adults who diet at least 4 weeks a year has increased from 20.9 in 1998 to 22.7 in 2001 and 24.2 in 2003. The numbers for 2003 are based on surveys of 57 metro markets. All other numbers are based on 85 metro markets that have an aggregate population of 131,417,000. Although not a national survey The Media Audit's aggregated totals traditionally track national data. The Media Audit surveys only adults, age 18 plus.

Dieter Demographics

“Dieters,” says Jordan, “are – for the most part – a very affluent group with active lifestyles.” Dieters aren’t all women. And they aren’t all white. In 1998, 34.8 percent were men. That increased to 37.4 percent in 2003. Approximately 24.6 percent of white adults diet, compared to 25.6 percent of Hispanics and 23.5 percent of African-Americans. Among Asians, just 17.3 percent diet.

Approximately 16.5 percent of dieters have incomes of \$100,000 plus compared to 13.5 percent of all adults. Forty nine percent of all dieters have household incomes of \$50,000 or more, compared to 45.1 percent of all adults. Thirty seven percent of all dieters plan to take a cruise during the next 2 or 3 years compared to 31 percent of all adults. Sixteen percent shopped in jewelry stores during the four weeks prior to the survey compared to 13.8 percent of all adults.

“Some of the characteristics that distinguish the dieter,” says Jordan, “are predictable. But, there are others that seem to be saying that being overweight isn’t the only factor in an individual’s decision to diet.”

Dieters fly, use travel agents and rent cars significantly more than the general population and 28.7 percent visited a major theme park during the past 12 months. Twenty eight percent made 5 or more purchases on the Internet during the previous year.

“Weight loss products and services are estimated to be a \$30 billion industry in the US,” says Jordan, “and, with the growing concern about the impact of excess weight on health it would appear that the growth of the numbers The Media Audit is now recording will accelerate in the next few years.”

Exercising Mind & Body

More than 35 percent of dieters exercised 12 plus times at a health club during the past year compared to only 25.3 percent of all adults. And, 55.8 percent of dieters purchased five or more books from a bookstore during the past year, compared to just 48.2 percent of all adults.

Dieters are also much more inclined to purchase lottery tickets (31.6 % Vs 30.5 %) and visit a gambling casino (31.2 % Vs 27.2 %). Dieters also voted in local state and national elections in greater numbers (62.8 %) than the general adult population (58.5 %).

As always, says Jordan, “the percentage of adults on a diet varies significantly from one market to another.” Based on 2002 data from all 85 markets Daytona Beach, Lexington, Louisville and New Orleans had approximately 27 percent of adults on a diet for at least 4 weeks in the 12 months prior to the survey. Only 18 percent of adults dieted in Colorado Springs, Columbia/Jefferson City, Minneapolis/St. Paul and San Jose.

The Data Source

The Media Audit, a syndicated media ratings service currently covering 85 markets, provides both quantitative and qualitative data for media web sites as well as for traditional media.

Traditional media – print, broadcast and outdoor – have used The Media Audit data in sales, marketing and management for more than 30 years. In 1998, the survey started providing data on local media web sites. The surveys now contain more than 400 fields of qualitative information in addition to quantitative measurements of local web audiences.

The Media Audit is a product of International Demographics, Inc., a 33-year-old Houston firm that is engaged exclusively in syndicated, multimedia surveys conducted at the local market level.

Note: If you would like to periodically receive market survey data from The Media Audit, please contact Bob Jordan by email (bjordan@TheMediaAudit.com) and leave your name, title, company affiliation and email address.