

LIFESTYLE SEGMENTATION OF INTERNET USERS

A. JASIULEWICZ, phd

Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Economic Sciences

E-mail: annajasiulewicz@gmail.com

A. JAKUBIK

Warsaw University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Economic Sciences

E-mail: annjakubik@gmail.com

Abstract. *Based on the subject matter literature, the article presents existing, basic and widely used, market segmentation by lifestyle, including the “gemiusAudience” segmentation created in 2005, where the lifestyles of internet users served as the basic distribution criterion.*

In the article, an attempt has been made, based on the author’s own quantitative survey results, to identify the lifestyles represented by internet users. The analysis included the manner in which respondents spent their free time and the values they lived by. The results of the surveys indicate that internet users place significant emphasis on universal values, such as family, health and love. They tend to treat the internet as a source of information to support their education and occupational duties, however, they also use it for entertainment purposes.

Keywords: *segmentation, consumer, life style, Internet*

Relevance. The respondents were analysed in terms of their pastime habits and the values guiding their lives. The results of the author’s own surveys did not serve as the basis for determining the lifestyle segmentation of respondents, however, based on the subject matter literature, the author presented existing, basic and widely used, types of market segmentation by lifestyle, including, among others, “gemius Audience”, i.e. the segmentation model created in 2005, with internet user lifestyles as the key criterion for distribution.

In spatial terms, the surveys carried out by the author covered Polish consumers using the internet from across the country, while in terms of their subject matter, the surveys focused on the lifestyles of consumers using the internet on a regular basis.

The article presents selected results of a questionnaire-based survey, conducted in 2016 on a sample of 460 respondents, including 62% and 38% female and male respondents respectively. Sixty-three percent of respondents were aged 17 to 25 years, thirty-one percent were those aged between 26 and 54, while six percent of respondents were over the age of 56. Respondents with higher, i.e. university or college, education constituted 51%; 46% and 2% were graduates of upper and lower secondary schools respectively; and

finally, 1% had a vocational type of education (i.e. graduates of vocational (trade) schools).

The initial survey, using an online questionnaire, was carried out at the Department of European Policy, Public Finance and Marketing of Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW). However, since the results of this survey were not representative for the entire population of internet users and only expressed the opinions of those willing to take part in the survey, they need to be interpreted with caution.

Recent research and publications analysis. Lifestyle is one of the many factors that shape consumer behaviour. In the literature related to the subject matter, we can find numerous definitions describing this concept. Penconek [1, p.180] quotes the definition of this concept according to Lazer, which says that *“life style refers to a distinctive or characteristic mode of living, in its aggregate and broadest sense, of a whole society or segment thereof. It is concerned with those unique ingredients or qualities which describe the style of life of some culture or group, and distinguish it from others. It embodies the patterns that develop and emerge from the dynamics of living in a society.”*

People’s lifestyles affect their curiosity about a specific product or service, but at the same time, such goods reflect their psychographic profile [2, p. 436].

Pizlo [3, p. 63] quotes a statement saying that lifestyle *“is also (...) the style of consumption, which is a determinant of the social status and personality of the buyer”*, while Lambin [4, p. 208] draws attention to the fact that segmentation based on lifestyle *“seeks to supplement demographics by adding such elements as activities, attitudes, interests, opinions, perceptions and preferences to obtain a more complete consumer profile.”*

Rudnicki [5, p.133] pointed out the perspectives that need to be taken into account in segmentation studies interpreting consumer lifestyles:

- the amount of time that is available and the manner of its use (management);
- the role of work in life and its nature;
- a sense of aesthetics (clothing, interior design/decor);
- behaviour in the sphere of health and hygiene;
- participation in culture;
- participation in the socio-political sphere;
- social contacts.

Purpose of research. The results of quantitative surveys were used in the attempt to identify the lifestyles represented by internet users.

Materials and methods. The methods used include descriptive and comparative analysis, statistical approach.

Results and discussion. Analysis of lifestyle (also referred to as psychographic analysis) may be performed at three different levels: the level related to the system of values and personality traits of the consumer, the level related to the ethics, i.e. actions, interests and opinions, of the individual, or the level that is only concerned with the description of purchased products and services, and the manner of their consumption [4, p. 208].

- There are three standard methods of psychographic analysis [1, p.181]:
- AA- is a concept used in the course of marketing research, developing systems of segmentation of consumer lifestyles, and its name is the abbreviation of the English phrase “Attitudes and Activities”. According to this concept, lifestyle is reflected in the attitudes and activities of buyers in their free time;
 - AIO- empirical studies can also be performed by analysing three dimensions of lifestyle that make up the second level, namely activities, interests and opinions;
 - AIO supplemented by demographic characteristics (Table 1).

1. Dimensions of lifestyle*

Activities	Interests	Opinions	Demographic factors
Work	Family	About oneself	Age
Hobbies	Home	Social issues	Education
Social events	Work	Politics	Income
Holiday	Local community	Business, economics	Occupation
Leisure	Recreation	Economy	Family size
Membership in a club	Fashion	Education	Dwelling
Local community	Cuisine	Products	Geography
Buying (shopping)	Media	Future	Size of the city/town
Sports	Achievements	Culture	Stage of life

**Source: Lambin J. J. (2001). Strategic Marketing Management (p.209). Warsaw: PWN Scientific Publishers.*

Basic and commonly used segmentation of the market by lifestyle include: segmentation by typology “Values and Lifestyles” VALS and VALSII (created by Arnold Mitchell and modified in cooperation with SRI International, Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley in 1989), segmentation of consumers by lifestyle - 4C (developed by advertising agency Young & Rubicam), segmentation according to the European way of life (proposed by Jean-Jacques Lambin).

In VALS II, hierarchy is based on the available consumer resources, corresponding to the social, psychological and economic measures which allow consumers to select their lifestyle. According to this system, consumers are distinguished by their dominant motivation [1, p.182; 6, p. 247]:

- low-resource group: Survivors;
- motivated by ideals: Believers, Thinkers;
- motivated by achievements: Strivers, Achievers;
- motivated by experience (self-expression): Makers, Experiencers;
- high-resource group: Innovators.

4C segmentation (Cross-cultural consumer characterization) identifies three main consumer groups, divided into further subcategories [2, p. 436]:

- restricted (their wages are lower, and therefore, their purchasing ability is restricted): the Resigned and the Strugglers;

- mainstream majority: the Mainstream, the Aspirers and the Succeeders;
- innovators: the Explorers and the Reformers.

Lifestyle segmentation of consumers on the European market has been created based on the following dimensions: material goods – values and motion-inertia. In the proposed segmentation, you can observe that material values are important for the majority of consumers, regardless of whether they prefer a life in constant motion or inertia. The analysis confirmed the key role of product quality and brand in human consciousness [4, p. 211].

In Poland, consumer lifestyle was applied for the first time as a market segmentation factor at the beginning of the 1990s. Currently, you can distinguish three main types of lifestyle segmentation: segmentation based on Target Group Segments (developed by SMG/ KRC A Millward Brown Company), segmentation created by IQS and QUANT GROUP, and Euro Socio Styles segmentation (proposed by GfK).

Among European companies, one of the key leaders of internet research is Gemius S. A. [7]. In 1999, in collaboration with the company: Polskie Badania Internetu [Polish Internet Research], it developed a standard for the measurement of website and internet application traffic, called "gemiusAudience". In 2005, a random sample of 4984 respondents participated in an online survey. Segmentation was performed by using hierarchical cluster analysis and the method for selecting the optimal number of clusters developed by Ward, as well as the method of least squares, the observations of which were assigned to the following clusters:

- laymen (28%) – this segment is predominantly composed of women who use the internet at home, searching for current news and means of communication with their friends;
- pragmatists (24%) – the majority of this group are men aged 25–44 who use the internet at work for the sole purpose of finding products or economic and financial information;
- chatterboxes (19%) – these are usually people under 25 years of age, representing both sexes, who use the internet everywhere they can, especially, to communicate with other users;
- fun lovers (15%) – most members of this segment are men who take interest in games and sports and seldom use the internet, mostly at home; they use the internet, in most cases, to search for current information/news, for e-shopping and e-banking;
- computer maniacs (4%) – this segment consists mainly of men who use the internet whenever they can and are usually active members of discussion groups;
- In addition, Gemius distinguished three main areas of internet use, namely the manner of use, the subjects which internet users search for and the applications they use in order to ensure security of their activities. With these areas it was possible to determine the basic dimensions of network user activity:

- purpose of internet use: surfing the internet (browsing websites) (97.9% of respondents), scientific information (36.5%), listening to music (33.6%), hobby-related (28.1%), watching TV, searching for product offers and descriptions (62.9%), shopping (40.8%), using a bank account (29.8%);
- level of advancement of users: application/use of internet security, antivirus programs, e-mail programs and email browsers.

Research Results. Respondents were asked about the frequency of use of the internet depending on the location of such use. The most popular places are home and work, and a relatively large group of people use the internet at school or university. The least popular places are internet cafes, probably due to the possibility of using the internet in your own mobile devices (Table 2).

2. The frequency of Internet using depending on the location (%)*

	1 – never	2 – seldom	3 – sometimes	4 – often	5 – very often
At home	0%	1%	3%	17%	79%
At work	21%	19%	17%	18%	25%
At school/university	30%	9%	21%	23%	17%
At an internet cafe	91%	5%	2%	1%	1%
At my friends'/relatives' place	18%	38%	28%	10%	5%
Other places	28%	26%	26%	13%	7%

*Source: Authors' survey results.

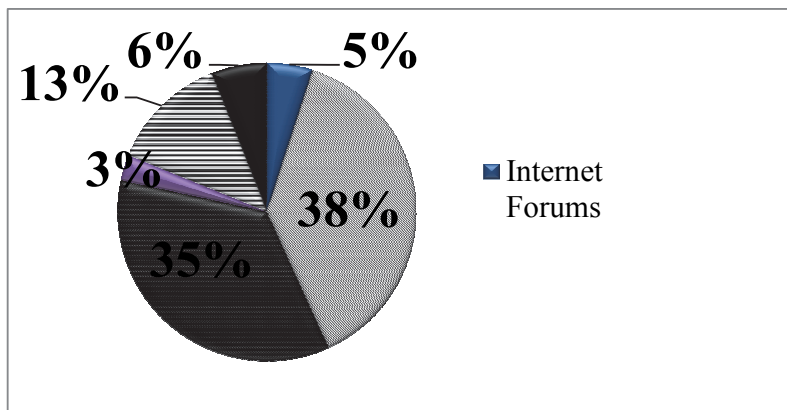
The most common reasons for internet use selected by respondents were: 47% – education or work, followed by entertainment, listening to music, watching films and series, searching for current information / news both from Poland and the world. Forty-eight percent of respondents said that they never used online games. Comparing the 2016 surveys and the results of the 2005 studies conducted by Gemius, we can conclude that despite significant development of the internet, its users are still looking for entertainment and comfort in it.

The most popular with internet users were social networking sites (38%) and internet search engines (e.g. Google, Yahoo!) (35%) (Chart 1).

Pastime habits, i.e. the manner in which respondents spend their free time, were also examined as one of the most important determinants of lifestyle (the respondents used a 5-step scale to answer the questions, where 1 was never and 5 – very often). In most cases, internet users relax when watching films and series, or reading an interesting book (20% very often, 39% often). A lot of them (18% replied: “very often” and 39% – “often”) admitted that they liked meeting friends, and 47% devoted their free time to pursue their own interests and develop their skills (total number of “very often” and “often” replies). More than half of respondents (55%) said that they were never involved in social or charitable issues (only 5% of replies indicated high frequency). About 34% of respondents spent their free time on physical

activities or having fun at parties, while 13% admitted to doing it very often or often.

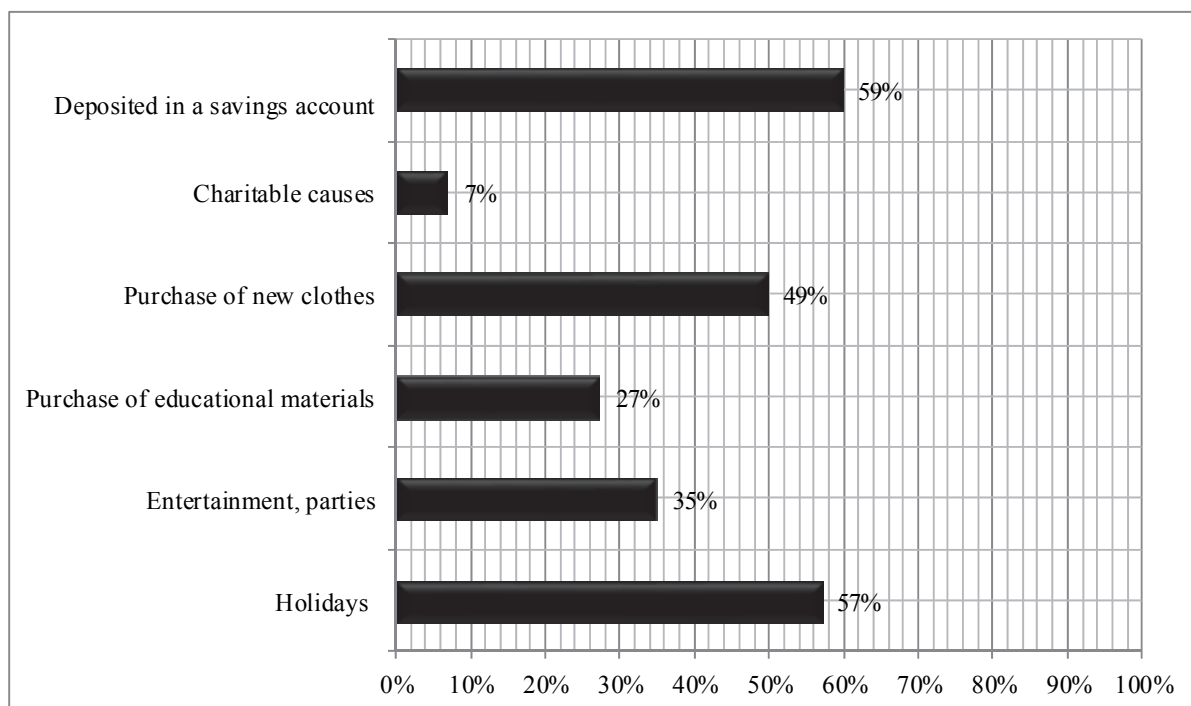
In the question about the way of spending their additional funds, respondents were able to select more than one answer. Noticeably, internet users tend to spend their spare cash mostly on holiday trips (57%). Almost half of respondents replied that they preferred to spend their additional cash on new clothes (49%) or good fun (entertainment) (35%). Only one-third of respondents spent such additional funds to buy educational materials, and 7% shared them with those in need (charity) (Chart 2).



1. What kind of websides do you use the most often?*

**Source: Authors' survey results.*

Respondents were asked to indicate which values are important to them (using a 5-step scale). With regard to the most important values, 80% of internet users chose family in the first place. This was followed by love and health (77% respectively), friendship (75%), honesty (68%), freedom (60%) and wisdom (55%). Career (18%) and pursuit/development of your own interests (39%) were of key importance for a smaller number of respondents, similarly to a sense of peace (44%). Fifty-four percent of respondents replied that faith was important or very important to them. It is worth noting that for 28% of respondent work was not an important value (Table 3).



2. How do you spend your extra cash? You may select more than one answer*

*Source: Authors' survey results.

3. Values important in life, according to respondents (%)*

	1- completely insignificant	2- insignificant	3- indifferent	4- important	5- very important
Love	0	1	4	17	77
Friendship	0	0	2	23	75
Faith	12	12	22	27	27
Peace	1	1	13	42	44
Health	0	0	3	19	77
Family	0	1	4	15	80
Freedom	0	1	7	32	60
Wisdom	0	1	8	37	55
Honesty/truth	1	0	3	28	68
Carrier/work	2	6	20	53	18
Self-realisation/developing my interests	0	3	11	47	39

*Source: Authors' survey results.

Conclusions

Based on the results of her own surveys, the author was able to formulate the following observations:

- polish internet users place strong emphasis on universal values, such as family, health and love. Friendship, a sense of peace (and well-being) and freedom are quite significant values as well;
- Internet users usually try to deposit additional funds in a savings account or spend it on holiday;
- most frequently, they relax while watching series and films or reading books, or spending their time with friends and pursuing their own interests;
- Internet users treat the internet as a source of information, to facilitate their education and occupational duties, but also for entertainment purposes. The most popular are social networking sites and search engines.

In the future, it would be advisable to conduct a broader study on a representative sample of internet users, the results of which would enable the segmentation of respondents according to their lifestyle. Furthermore, the proposed segmentation could be used for effective marketing communication between companies and the target group of potential buyers of their offer.

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СЕГМЕНТАЦІЯ СТИЛЮ ЖИТТЯ КОРИСТУВАЧІВ ІНТЕРНЕТУ

**А. Ясулевич,
А. Якубик**

***Анотація.** Грунтуючись на спеціалізованій літературі, в статті наведено дієву та широко розповсюджену сегментацію ринку за стилем життя, у тому числі сегментацію "GemiusAudience", здійснену в 2005 р., де стилі життя користувачів Інтернету були основним критерієм розподілу.*

Здійснено спробу ідентифікувати стилі життя користувачами Інтернету. Проаналізовано спосіб, в який відповідачі витрачали свій

вільний час, і цінності, за якими вони жили. Результати оглядів свідчать, що користувачі Інтернету значну увагу зосереджують на універсальних цінностях, як, наприклад, сім'я, здоров'я і любов. Вони прагнуть використовувати Інтернет як джерело інформації, щоб підтримувати рівень освіти і виконувати професійні обов'язки, проте вони також користуються ним для розваги.

Ключові слова: сегментація, споживач, життєвий стиль, Інтернет

СЕГМЕНТАЦІЯ СТИЛЕЙ ЖИЗНИ ПОЛЬЗОВАТЕЛЕЙ ІНТЕРНЕТА

**А. Ясулевич,
А. Якубик**

Аннотація. Основываясь на специализированной литературе, в статье приведена действенная и широко распространенная сегментация рынка за стилем жизни, в том числе сегментация "GemiusAudience", осуществленная в 2005 г., где стили жизни пользователей Интернета были основным критерием распределения.

Осуществлена попытка идентифицировать стили жизни пользователей Интернета. Проанализирован способ, в который респонденты тратили свое свободное время и ценности, по которым они жили. Результаты обзоров указывают, что пользователи Интернета акцентируют на универсальных ценностях, как, например, семья, здоровье и любовь. Они стремятся использовать Интернет как источник информации, чтобы поддерживать уровень образования и исполнять профессиональные обязанности, однако они также пользуются им для развлечения.

Ключевые слова: сегментация, потребитель, жизненный стиль, Интернет