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Who Uses Tablets Most?

DECEMBER 9, 2011

Asian-Americans join Hispanics in early adoption of emerging devices

Asian-Americans are avid users of new devices and are among the first to buy tablets and ereaders. They join US Hispanics on the top rungs of the technology early-adoption ladder.

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eMarketer's estimate of US tablet users shows that 14.4% of Asians have used tablets monthly this year, vs. 12.6% of Hispanics and just over 10% of blacks and whites. The gap will narrow as the years pass, but it will take until 2014 for whites in the US to reach the same tablets penetration level as Asian-Americans.

US Tablet User Penetration, by Race/Ethnicity, 2010-2014

% of population in each group

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Non-Hispanic					
—White	3.9%	10.1%	16.9%	24.0%	29.0%
—Black	4.2%	10.5%	17.0%	22.8%	26.5%
—Asian	5.6%	14.4%	20.6%	25.7%	29.0%
—Other*	3.6%	9.1%	14.5%	18.5%	21.4%
Hispanic**	5.0%	12.6%	18.9%	23.3%	24.6%
Total	4.2%	10.8%	17.3%	23.7%	27.7%

Note: individuals of any age who use a tablet at least once per month; *includes Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders, and bi- and multiracial individuals; **can be of any race
Source: eMarketer, Nov 2011

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Another study, by the Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication at

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Florida State University, also found that Asian-Americans have among the highest penetration for both tablets and ereaders. With 14% ereader penetration rate, Asians are about even with Spanish-speaking Hispanics (15%), and a few points behind Hispanics who are primarily English-speaking (20%).

But Asians are on par with Hispanics in possession of tablets, with 17% of both groups reporting ownership.

"US Hispanics and Asian-Americans are very eager to bridge the technological gap and they are proportionately more likely to adopt these devices than non-Hispanic whites," said Felipe Korzenny, Ph.D., who led the Florida University study.

Ownership of Ereaders vs. Tablets Among US Internet Users, by Race/Ethnicity and Language Dominance, March 2011

% of respondents in each group

	Hispanic/ Spanish- speaking	Hispanic/ English- speaking	Black	Asian	Non- Hispanic white
Ereader					
Have now	15%	20%	16%	14%	12%
Plan to have within next year	31%	25%	24%	29%	20%
Tablet*					
Have now	17%	22%	15%	17%	9%
Plan to have within next year	41%	28%	34%	35%	22%

Note: n=2,500; *iPad, Galaxy Tab, etc.
Source: Center for Hispanic Marketing Communication at Florida State University survey conducted by DMS Insights, June 9, 2011

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Asians' aspirational intentions for these devices are also high, with 35% saying they plan to have tablets within the next year. Spanish-speaking Hispanics have the highest intention to purchase tablets, at 41%. Non-Hispanic whites have the lowest intention to acquire tablets (22%).

Referring to Asians' high intention to purchase, Korzenny said Asians should be "more interesting targets to marketers because they are much more interested in these products."

Reasons for early adoption among Asian-Americans, who comprise about 6% of the US population, include that they are more educated than average and have higher annual incomes than other minorities. "And those two factors make them more technologically innovative types of people," said Korzenny.

And while it's true this demographic skews young, when Korzenny broke down the data by age, he found out that age makes no difference in emerging-device adoption among Asian-Americans.

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