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Social Media deeply distrusted by Australians

Australians distrust Social Media more than any other media category, a landmark new survey reveals.

Conducted in May by Roy Morgan, the *MEDIA Net Trust Score Survey* reveals that Social Media is deeply distrusted in Australia, with Facebook by far the most distrusted media brand.

Half of all Australians (47 per cent) distrust social media, compared to only 4 per cent who distrust, for example, magazines.

Young Australians distrust social media the most – 68 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds, and 53 per cent of 25 to 34-year-olds. Men (49 per cent) distrust social media marginally more than women (45 per cent).

According to Roy Morgan CEO Michele Levine, trust is now firmly on corporate Australia's agenda, "But distrust is the critical measure everyone's ignoring," she said.

"Distrust is where our deepest fears, pain, and betrayal surface – the shock of discovering we were foolish to trust too much.

"And nowhere is that sense of betrayal more profound than with Social Media.

"Australians told us that their distrust of Social Media is being driven by fake news, manipulated truth, false statistics and fake audience measurement. They are feeling the shock of discovering they were foolish to trust the global platforms too much."

According to survey respondents, their top-5 drivers of distrust in Social Media are:

1. Fake News / manipulation of the truth
2. False statistics / audience measurement
3. Personal information stolen & distributed
4. Anyone can make claims without any evidence
5. News is sensationalised / becomes entertainment

But why does distrust matter?

According to Ms. Levine:

- Distrust triggers audience churn
- Distrust kills audience engagement
- Distrust kills advertiser spend
- Distrust is the tipping point for reputational damage
- Distrust is the bellwether for an unsustainable future

"The real picture is revealed only when distrust is subtracted from trust to reveal a Net Trust Score or NTS," she said.

"Social Media's TRUST score is 5 per cent, however, it's DISTRUST score is 47 per cent.

"So, when we subtract one from the other we reveal a **Social Media NTS of minus 42 per cent**, making it more toxic even than the banking industry," she said.

“We have also conducted four surveys of ALL brands, and they reveal the **banking industry** as the worst performer with an **NTS of minus 18 percent**, compared to the **media industry** with an **NTS of minus 7 per cent**.

“But even the banks’ negative NTS is low compared to Social Media.

Facebook is the most distrusted media brand in Australia with an **NTS of minus 39 per cent**.

“This is where we get a powerful sense of how toxic Social Media in Australia really is,” she said.

THE SURVEY

- We asked approximately 4,000 Australians which BRANDS they TRUST and which they DISTRUST
- To date, we have conducted 3 rounds:
 - October 2017
 - January 2018
 - February 2018
- Then in May 2018 we conducted an additional survey of 1,111 Australians asking which **MEDIA** they **TRUST** and **DISTRUST**
- The survey was unprompted and open ended (quantitative + qualitative)
- Respondents were recruited from the Roy Morgan Single Source database (>600,000)
- We took the trust score of each nominated media brand and subtracted the distrust score
- The result is a Net Trust Score – **Media NTS**
- Respondents were also asked **WHY** they trust or distrust nominated media brands

MORE INFORMATION

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