

## E-Channel trend is gaining acceptance

The Multi-Channel-Monitor “Dental” investigates how dentists obtain information. It becomes apparent that a change to digital media is also taking place in the dental market.

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Young dentists also want to obtain information digitally – this is confirmed by the latest issue of the MC-Monitor “Dental”. The joint information service of the New Business Verlag and the international healthcare market research agency EUMARA AG, Saarbrücken, analyses the latest multichannel trends at regular intervals. In its current issue, the MC-Monitor shows which communication channels young dentists in particular use today and will use in the future.

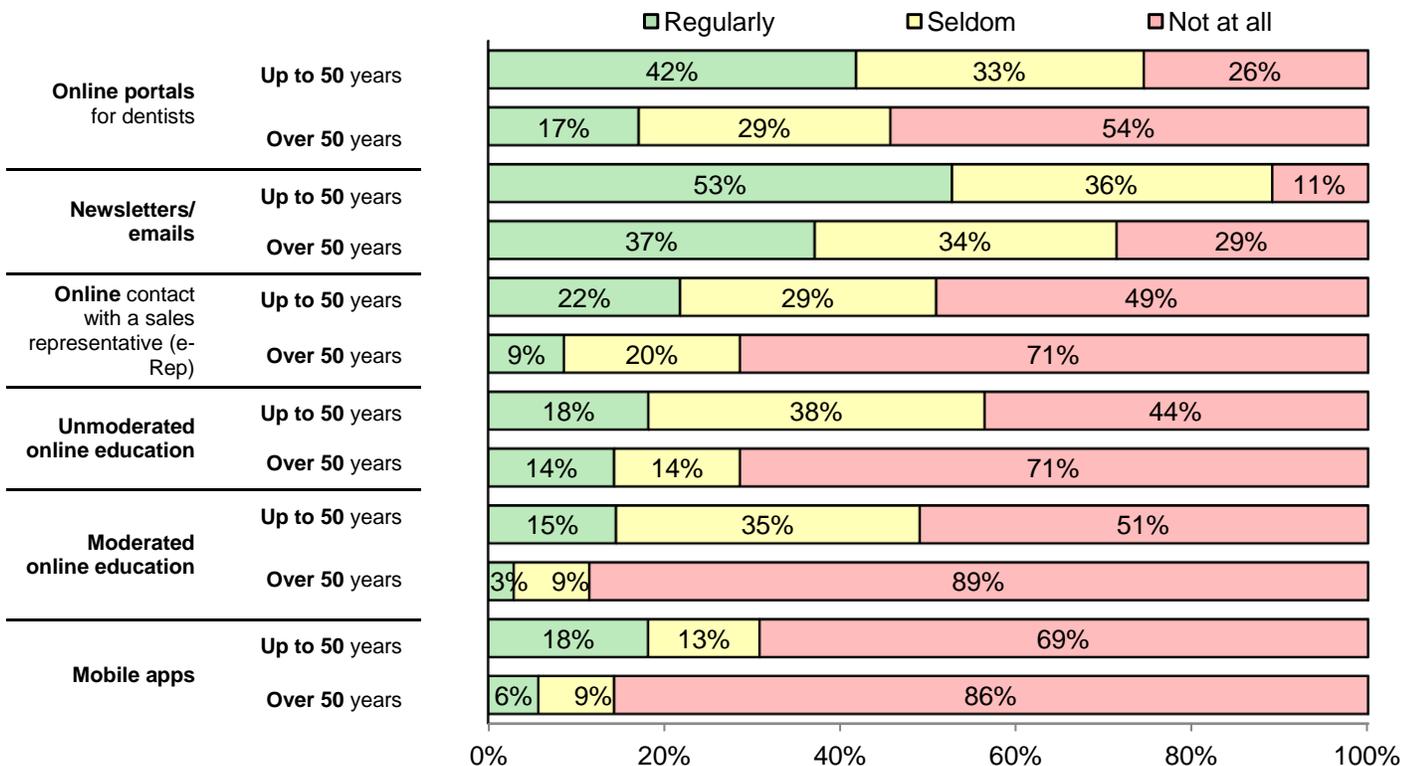
The insights of the current representative survey resemble a wake-up call, which manufacturers must not fail to hear: digital information possibilities will be far more relevant for coming generations of dentists.

Multichannel studies over the past years have shown that dentists prefer to obtain information from classic channels like e.g. regional education events and printed medical journals. However, a differentiated picture emerges when just the information behaviour of the “younger” dentists (up to 50 years) is considered. Younger dentists already make greater use of electronic channels (see fig. 1) – so it’s clear where things are headed.

### Currently popular: newsletters and online portals

Above all else newsletters are regularly read at present and online portals for dentists visited, but the frequency of using the e-Rep (online contact with sales representatives), online education (with and without moderation) and mobile apps is increasing too (see fig. 1). Therefore, manufacturers should react in the medium term by particularly offering newsletters and online portals for digital communication. Both channels currently promise the greatest success in terms of frequent usage by the target group. But which online portals do dentists actually use? Information on this can be requested from EUMARA as this was also part of the survey.

Fig. 1: Use of various digital communication channels



Please tell me for each communication channel whether you currently use it regularly, seldom or not at all.

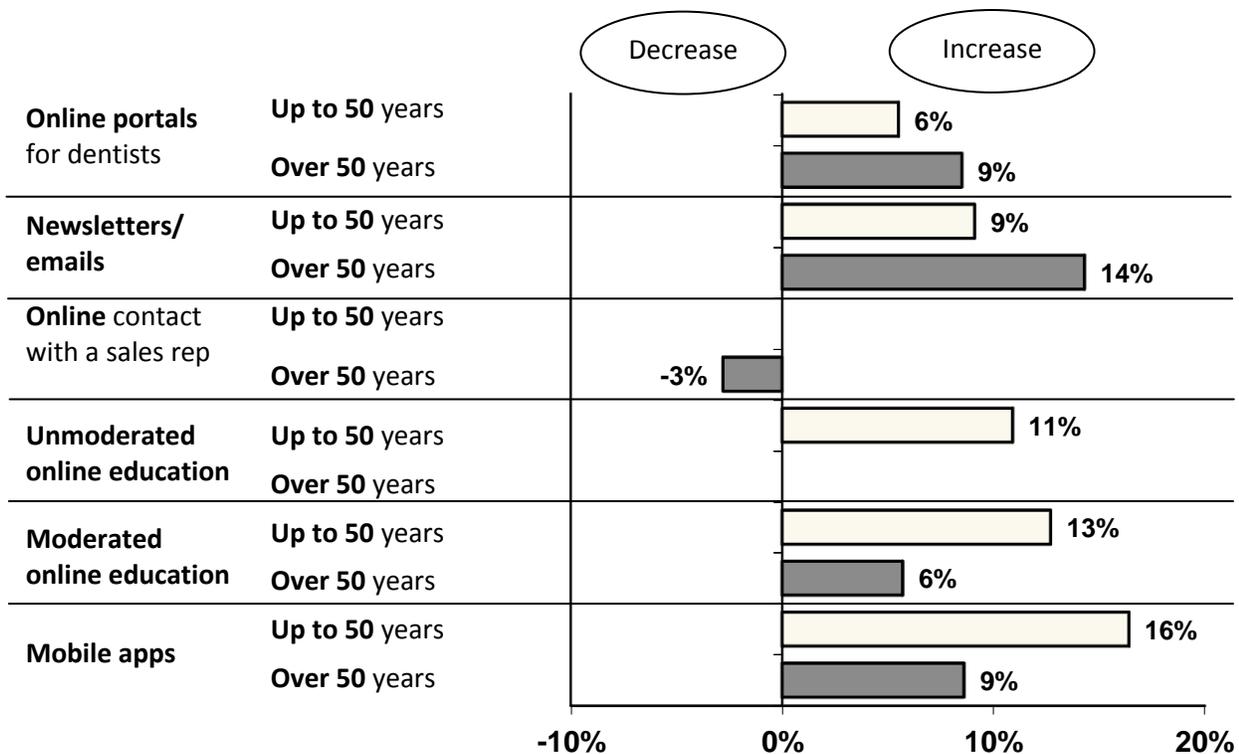
### Young dentists are more receptive to digital information offers

Increased offering of online education and apps

Besides the current level of usage, the dynamics of each communication channel are investigated in the MC-Monitor. Here the dentists indicate whether the respective communication channel was offered less often, more often or with unchanged frequency in the last twelve months. It can be seen by analysing the digital options that the overall offer of these channels has clearly increased (see fig. 2). However, it is striking that the younger dentists have more strongly perceived alternatives like online education and mobile apps – accompanied by the more frequent use of these channels. Consequently, these are also promising channels to communicate with the target group in future.

The results show that manufacturers are already pushing the development of digital offers. Who wants to be one of the “laggards” when it comes to this transformation of marketing channels? Manufacturers that have neglected digital communication channels so far should keep an eye on them – since the (marketing) competition never sleeps!

Fig. 2: Dynamics of various communication channels



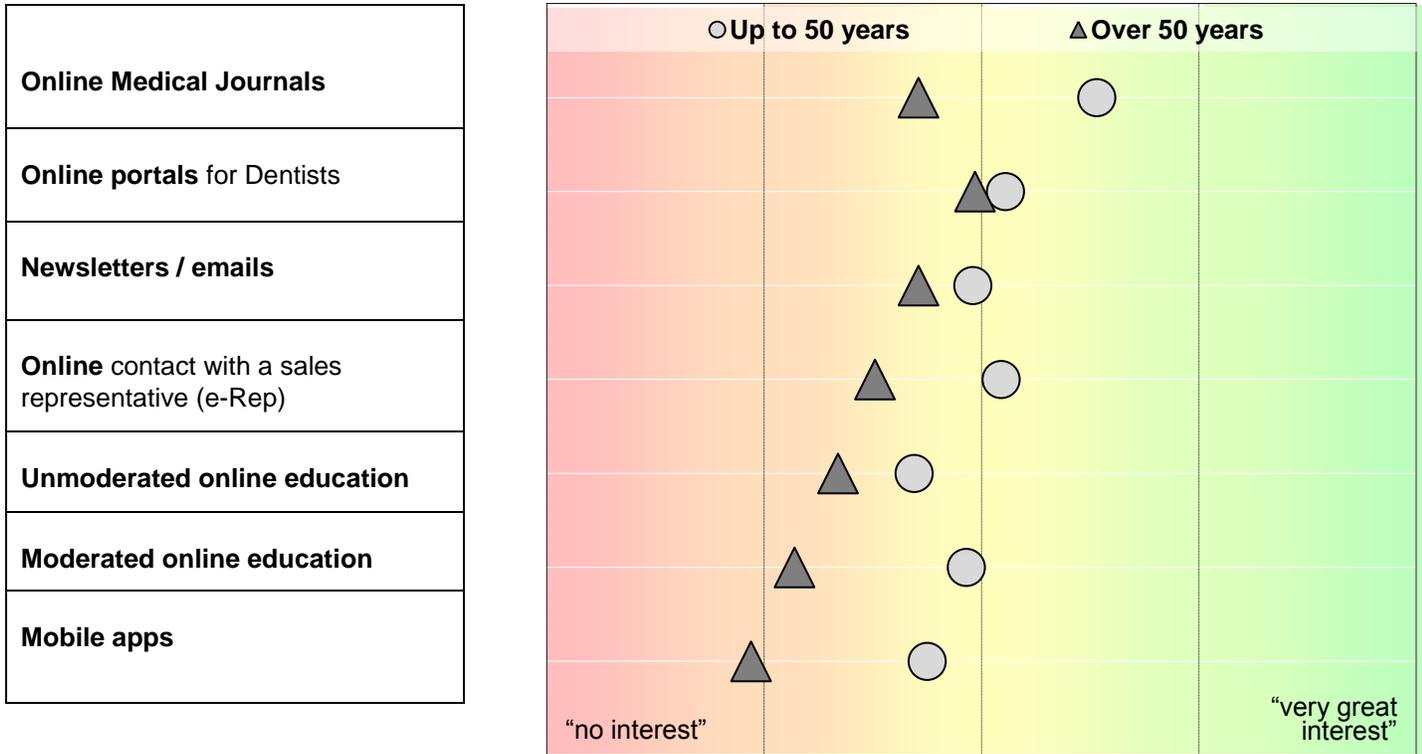
Related to dentistry please tell me whether you think the frequency with which each of these communication channels is offered has decreased / increased / stayed the same in the last 12 months

**In the perception of both age groups, the offer of various digital channels is increasing.**

Excellent opportunities for online medical journals

If not already clear, one look at the future use of digital channels makes it obvious. that these will soon play an important role in the marketing plan since the younger dentists are far more open to these possibilities (see fig. 3). Similar to current usage and dynamics of the channels it would appear that the target group will be mainly interested in e-Reps, moderated online education and apps in the future. Furthermore, online issues of dental journals will be a “channel of the future”.

Fig. 3: Potential of various communication channels



Interest in future usage, means (1 “very great interest”; 5 “no interest”).

**Younger dentists partly appear to have far greater interest in digital information offers.**

Content is king

All these digital channels provide manufacturers with an endless pool of possibilities to address the target group and their needs. Apart from the electronic communication channel, the content will also be highly relevant for the dentists of course. After all, no-one wants to be inundated with uninteresting content – this is particularly true given the dentists’ shortage of time in day-to-day practice. The future of dental communication will be increasingly digital – the move away from analogue will presumably speed up in future as the share of “digital natives” grows!

**Peter Herzog**

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