

Consumers Talk Offline!

We all know that Social Media is the big thing in marketing these days. But with all the hype around Facebook, Twitter et al, we sometimes tend to forget where the over-whelming majority of social interactions actually happen: in the offline world!

At trnd, we thrive on research. It teaches us about the reality of the people that we love to work with every day: real consumers who are passionate about the brands that they get involved with.

In January 2012, we conducted another large study in which we wanted to investigate the roles and relationships between online and offline word of mouth, and between push- and pull word of mouth.

Members of trnd.com were invited to answer a survey titled: „From whom do we learn about products?“ Within a couple of days, we had received 7,792 valid answers. A couple more stats:

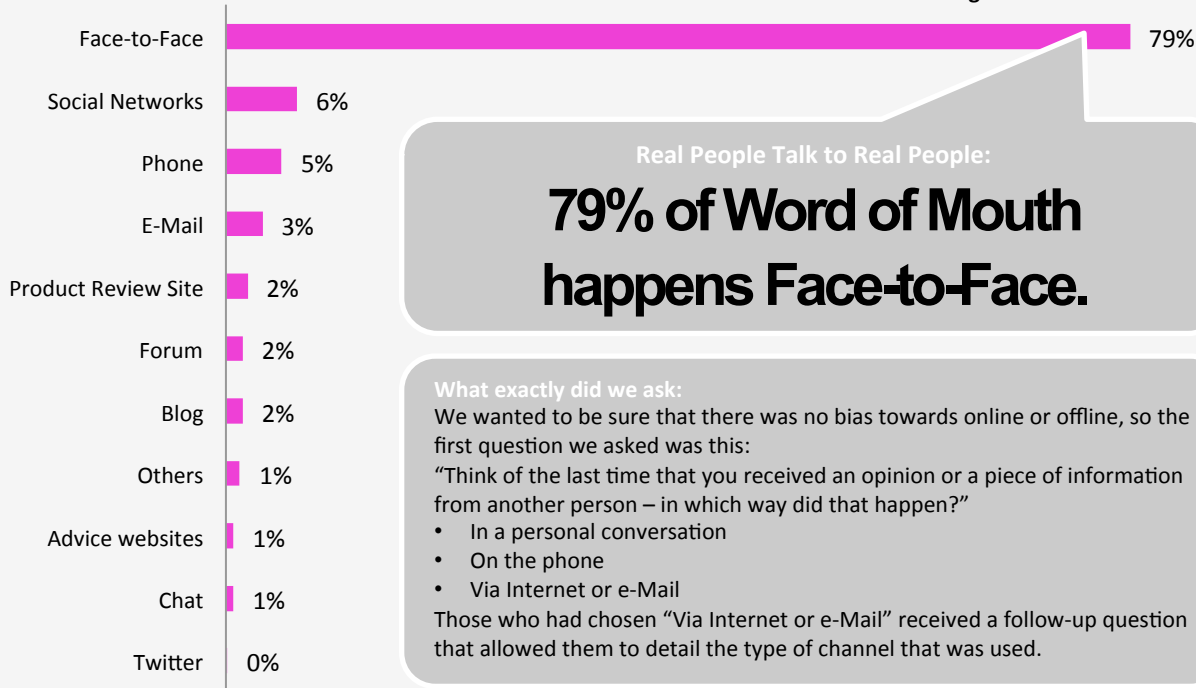
- Average age: 29.6 years
- 75% female
- 25% male

The questionnaire was based on what’s called the “Critical Incident Method“, which has been around for a while in Word-of-Mouth research: survey participants are asked to remember a situation in which they had received information or an opinion from others, online or personally. They are then asked about details regarding this situation. The very first thing we asked about was **the channel through which people received** the information. The results are shown on the left.

Our conclusion: yes, consumers use the Social Web, but when they talk about brands and products, real world interaction with friends, family, and colleagues still rules. Add the 5% of phone conversations to the 79% in real life, and we find that **84% of word of mouth happen off the Internet.**

And do bear in mind: this is a fairly young demographic, the picture will look different again if you are talking to older folks.

Where do consumers get their word of mouth?



Real People Talk to Real People:
79% of Word of Mouth happens Face-to-Face.

What exactly did we ask:
We wanted to be sure that there was no bias towards online or offline, so the first question we asked was this:
“Think of the last time that you received an opinion or a piece of information from another person – in which way did that happen?”

- In a personal conversation
- On the phone
- Via Internet or e-Mail

Those who had chosen “Via Internet or e-Mail” received a follow-up question that allowed them to detail the type of channel that was used.

n=7,792; © trnd Research 2012

