

# Time Spent with Digital Media in the UK Surpassed Time with Traditional Media in 2019

Continued adoption of connected TV is driving growth of digital video

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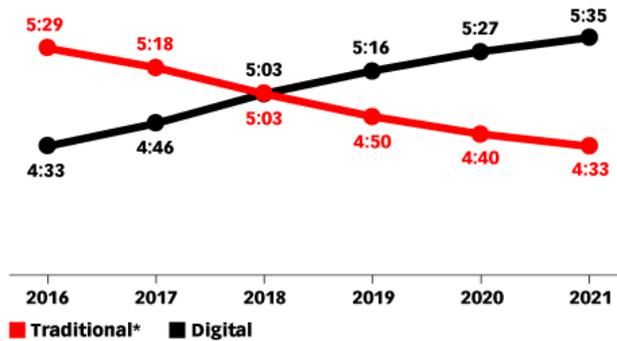
**eMarketer Editors**



ast year, for the first time, UK adults spent more time with digital media than with traditional media.

## Average Time Spent per Day with Traditional\* vs. Digital Media by UK Adults, 2016-2021

hrs:mins



Note: ages 18+; time spent with each medium includes all time spent with that medium, regardless of multitasking; for example, 1 hour of multitasking on desktop/laptop while watching TV is counted as 1 hour for TV and 1 hour for desktop/laptop; \*TV, newspapers, magazines and radio; excludes digital  
Source: eMarketer, Nov 2019

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We estimate UK adults spent a daily average of 5 hours, 16 minutes (5:16) with digital media last year. This represents 52.2% of media consumption. In 2018, the average time spent with digital and time spent with traditional media were tied at 5:03.

“We expect the gap to widen in the coming years, as content consumption continues to shift further onto digital platforms,” eMarketer UK senior analyst Bill Fisher said. “This has ramifications for media companies, of course, but for marketers, too. They will need to weigh their ad budgets carefully. Traditional media will remain hugely important, but it will mean more complex strategies for reaching customers.”

Growth in time spent with digital media has slowed and is set to plateau in the coming years. The growth that remains will be fueled by increases in time spent with smartphones and other devices including connected TVs. Adults in the UK used their smartphones (excluding voice calls) for 2:16 per day, on average in 2019. Smartphones will continue to gain an increasing share of time spent with total media, surpassing 25% by 2021.

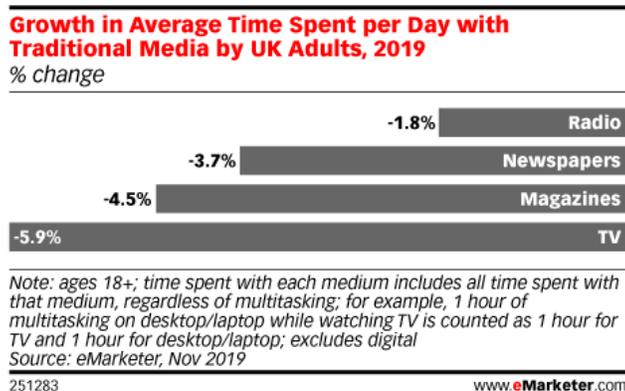
Video consumption is also driving growth of overall digital media time. In 2019, UK adults spent 1:25 per day watching digital video, up 10.4%

over 2018. Mobile will remain the leader for digital video consumption among adults, at 36 minutes in 2019, up 7.2% over 2018. This is closely followed by “other connected devices” (31 minutes), which include smart TVs and gaming consoles. We estimate that these devices saw growth of 20.7% in 2019.

In the UK, time spent with traditional media among adults decreased by 4.2% in 2019 to 4:50. This number will continue to decline, dropping to 4:33 by 2021.

A key reason for total traditional time dropping is TV time, which has been steadily declining. We estimate it fell 5.9% in 2019 as consumers spent more time with digital video. Consumers spent 25.8% of their total media consumption on traditional TV in 2019.

“The way people are watching video content is changing faster than ever before,” eMarketer senior forecasting analyst Cindy Liu said. “Streaming services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime have become incredibly popular because of their vast libraries of original content, including some UK-produced titles. Coupled with the fact that these platforms can be watched on virtually any connected device, it’s not surprising that time spent watching digital video will continue to chip away at traditional TV time.”



We forecast that other major traditional media saw declines by the end of 2019: newspapers (down 3.7%), magazines (down 4.5%) and radio (down 1.8%).