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# Readership and Buying Patterns of Students, Faculty and Staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

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READERSHIP AND BUYING PATTERNS OF STUDENTS,  
FACULTY AND STAFF OF  
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, CARBONDALE

By

Zachary J. Englum

B.S., Southern Illinois University, 2007

A Research Report

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Masters of Science

Department of Mass Communications and Media Arts

In the Graduate School

Southern Illinois University Carbondale

December 2010

RESEARCH REPORT APPROVAL

RESEARCH AND BUYING PATTERNS OF STUDENTS, FACULTY  
AND STAFF OF  
SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, CARBONDALE

By  
Zachary J. Englum

A Research Report Submitted in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Science  
in the field of Professional Media and Media Management

Approved by:  
Narayanan Iyer, Chair  
Vicki Kreher  
Jerry Bush

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Carbondale  
April 3, 2009

## AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH REPORT OF

Zachary J. Englum, for the Master of Science degree in Professional Media and Media Management Studies presented on April 4, 2009, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

**TITLE: READERSHIP AND BUYING PATTERNS OF STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, CARBONDALE**

**MAJOR PROFESSOR: Narayanan Iyer**

This research report examines the readership habits and buying patterns of the students, faculty and staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale with a focus on the Daily Egyptian, the student-run newspaper. Newspapers require an understanding of who is reading their publication to address content and advertising needs. This is important to ensure that the newspaper features relevant content for its target audience and enables the publication to be attractive to its advertisers. The goals of the study are to gain factual information dealing with readership and buying patterns regarding the Daily Egyptian through analysis of online and offline surveys distributed using convenience sampling. Findings indicate that 68 percent of the university population read the Daily Egyptian daily, and 80 percent read it for local news content. This illustrates how strong the Daily Egyptian is at reaching the university population and also remains the predominant reason why the university's population reads this newspaper. The goal of the study is to provide the Daily Egyptian with ample data about its reader base with an eye on understanding who is reading, how often they are reading and why people are reading.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Daily Egyptian is the student-run newspaper of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. It is unique in that all editorial, photography and advertising content is created and placed in the newspaper by students. It is also unique in that it is completely funded by advertising revenue generated by the student advertising sales staff. The reason for conducting a study on readership and buying patterns of students, faculty and staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale is to help the Daily Egyptian gain a better understanding about its reader base and to help it in its advertising and marketing efforts. The researcher has a vested interest in this information as he serves as the student advertising manager and recognizes the need for current data regarding readership and buying patterns of the Daily Egyptian. Current information of these two topics aids the student advertising sales staff when approaching advertising clients to advertise in the Daily Egyptian increasing the likelihood of making a sale thereby generating revenue for the newspaper.

The goal of this research report is to gain factual information dealing with readership and buying patterns regarding the Daily Egyptian through analysis of responses to an online survey. Knowledge of how respondents use the Daily Egyptian, what days receive the most readership, what businesses that advertise in the newspaper are being seen by respondents, etc., is essential to the future of the Daily Egyptian. This information will help the Daily Egyptian move forward to more effectively service advertisers. The ensuing chapters will examine the following objectives dealing with readership of the Daily Egyptian, buying patterns of respondents and respondent



interaction with the Daily Egyptian's website, siuDE.com. All respondents are either students, faculty or staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

For this study, a literature review was performed examining previous readership and buying pattern studies completed for the Daily Egyptian. These studies were conducted in the years 2001 (Nelson, 2001) and 2005 (Brewer, 2005). The research study of readership and buying patterns conducted in 2001 collected data through a phone survey and asked respondents to answer 14 questions. Phone numbers were collected from the university phonebook. This phone survey resulted in a sample size of 200. Only students participated in this study. The research study conducted in 2005 also focused on readership and buying patterns. This study had a sample size of 512 students. These students participated in an online survey consisting of 23 questions. The method of obtaining email addresses was not provided. Each study succeeded in analyzing readership and buying patterns for the Daily Egyptian.

A major finding from these previous studies is a sequential outline of days of the week, which enjoy the highest readership. The sequence was as follows starting from the highest readership to the lowest readership: Monday, Wednesday, Tuesday, Thursday and then Friday. After reviewing the previous studies and analyzing the current situation surrounding the Daily Egyptian, where it stands and what up-to-date information may be beneficial to the newspaper in 2009, the following objectives were created:

Objective I: To survey university population in order to gain an understanding of the readership base for the Daily Egyptian.

As part of this objective, the survey analyzed days that receive highest readership and time spent reading the Daily Egyptian, then analyzed sections of the newspaper that received highest readership and also analyzed the competition that exists in the market

for the Daily Egyptian.

Objective II: To study consumer buying patterns among the university population.

As part of this objective, the study examined the prominence of the businesses that currently advertise in the Daily Egyptian and the frequency at which survey respondents shop for items, entertainment or services in the local market.

Objective III: To estimate the amount of use and frequency of the Daily Egyptian website, siuDE.com

As part of this objective, the Daily Egyptian website, siuDe.com, was analyzed for popularity of various sections as indicated by the amount of traffic the website receives.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

After reviewing previous studies conducted on this topic, a 38 question survey was created to address the readership, the frequency of reading as well as various questions delving into reader buying patterns. All questions refer to the behavior surrounding the Daily Egyptian in Carbondale and the immediate surrounding area. The survey was created online using the Google Documents program. This program not only allows for creation of a survey, but also gives access to survey respondent data on a spreadsheet thereby allowing the researcher to easily compile and formulate data for graphs and presentations. A total of 200 respondents completed the voluntary survey, which comprises the data for this study.

The survey was distributed using convenience sampling. The online survey was disseminated by email and the social networking website, Facebook. Email addresses were obtained through the researchers personal network. The research also requested professors to pass along the survey to students in their respective classes. In addition, the survey was also sent to professors and administrative staff who work at the university. This allowed for faculty and staff to encounter the survey as well as students. Approximately 60 survey respondents replied to the email request and took the survey.

Facebook was utilized because of its prevalence in the daily lives of not just students, but faculty and staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale as well. A Facebook group was created to help direct people to take the survey. Students, faculty and staff were invited to join the group and take the survey. They also had the option to not join the group. Approximately 90 survey respondents came from the Facebook group.

The third method employed by the researcher was to distribute paper copies of the survey in different undergraduate classes. The researcher obtained prior permission from the professors, and students had the option to not take the survey. Students were not given any extra credit for taking the survey. It was completely voluntary.

Approximately 50 survey respondents came from this method. Overall, the study ended with exactly 200 respondents, which is an adequate representation considering the population of the university is approximately 15,551 students for fall semester 2009 according to the SIUC Office of Undergraduate Admission.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The following chapter consists of the results of the survey. The results have been broken down into various sections. The first section looks at the demographics of the survey respondents. The next section analyzes their readership habits. The third section looks at their buying patterns. The final section outlines their prevalence and use of the Daily Egyptian's website, siuDe.com. Demographic data serves to break down who the respondents are. This allows for better analysis of who is reading the Daily Egyptian and their individual habits. The breakdown is done by gender, relationship to the university, and whether or not respondents read the Daily Egyptian.

Out of the 200 respondents that took the survey, 41 percent were male and 59 percent were female. The distribution is shown below in Figure 1.

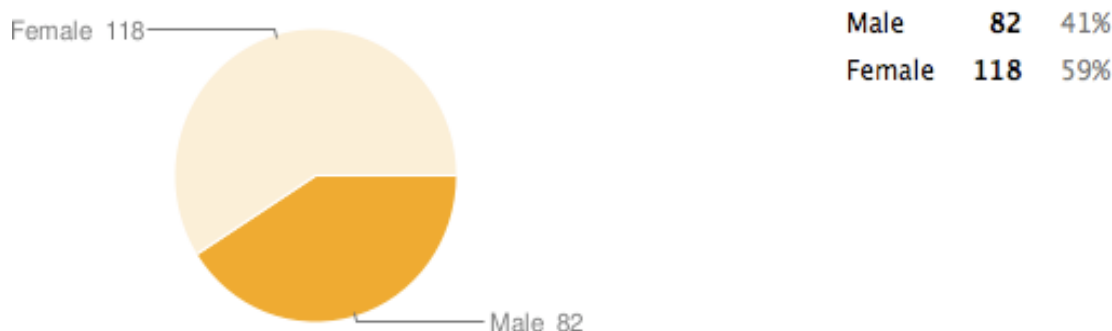
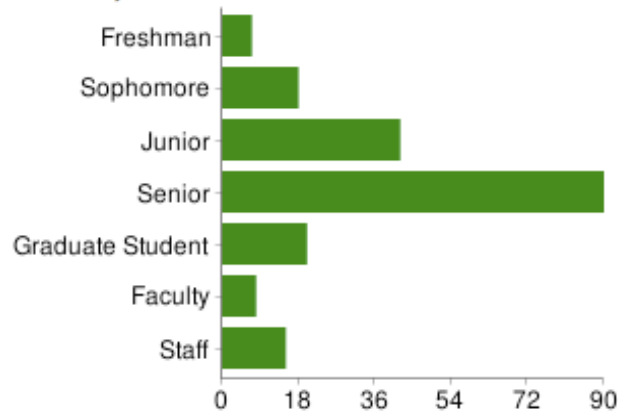


Figure 1: Gender

The next analysis looked at the relationship of the respondents to the university. The survey respondents were comprised of 88 percent students, 4 percent faculty and 8 percent staff. Most of the students who took the survey were seniors (45%) followed by juniors (21%), graduate students (10%), sophomores (9%) and freshman (4%). The distribution is shown below in Figure 2.

**What is your current status at SIUC?**

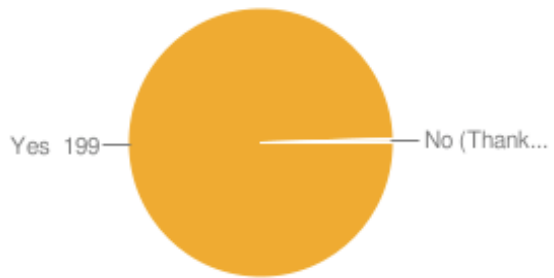


Freshman	7	4%
Sophomore	18	9%
Junior	42	21%
Senior	90	45%
Graduate Student	20	10%
Faculty	8	4%
Staff	15	8%

Figure 2: Relationship to SIUC

Just about all respondents claimed to be readers of the Daily Egyptian with the exception of 1 respondent (Figure 3).

**Do you read the Daily Egyptian?**



Yes	199	100%
No (Thank you, you have completed the survey)	1	1%

Figure 3: Readers of the Daily Egyptian

### Objective One

To survey the university population in order to gain an understanding of the readership base for the Daily Egyptian.

In order to effectively understand our audience, we must understand who is reading the newspaper and how often they do read it. Knowing how long we have the attention of any given reader is beneficial in understanding what the newspaper may be doing right or wrong. Readers that read more frequently for longer periods of time are more likely to frequent advertisers found in the Daily Egyptian. This information will aid the advertising department when dealing with clients interested in Advertising in the Daily Egyptian. Understanding which days have the highest readership is vital information for advertisers. Advertisers seek to reach their target audience as effectively as possible. This information will help aid the Daily Egyptian in securing advertising clients.

The Daily Egyptian offers advertising clients the chance to reserve sectional space in the newspaper for an additional fee. Knowing which sections of the newspaper are being read the most will be helpful in explaining what the Daily Egyptian has to offer an advertising client when specific sectional placement is being discussed.

Understanding news outlets that the Daily Egyptian competes with as well as how often the competitors are read is essential in understanding where the Daily Egyptian stands in the minds of its target audience. Once competitors are identified, the Daily Egyptian can audit its strengths and weakness against these competitors and make changes accordingly so that it benefits the newspaper.



The first analysis in this section looked at the frequency of readership of the Daily Egyptian across its various days of publication. Figure 4 indicates in percentages the individual days respondents read the Daily Egyptian. Quite a significant amount of respondents state they read the Daily Egyptian daily with 68 percent. Furthermore, when given the choice to choose which days respondents read the Daily Egyptian, we see the following pattern: Monday is the most read with 22 percent, Wednesday follows with 19 percent, then Tuesday with 18 percent followed by Thursday with 16 percent and Friday with 16 percent (Figure 4).

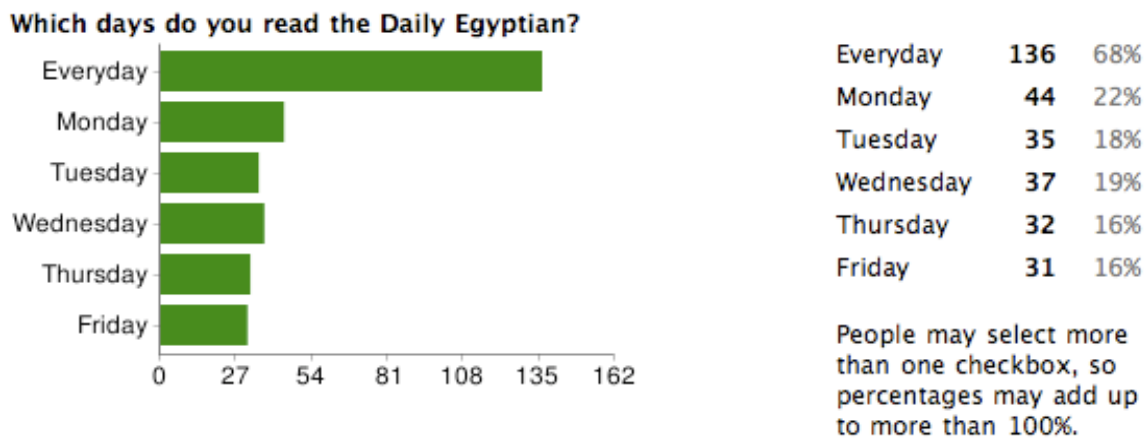


Figure 4: Frequency of Readership

The next Figure (Figure 5) looks at the amount of time a respondent spends reading an issue of the Daily Egyptian. We see that the majority of respondents read an issue for 11 to 20 minutes a day (45%). The second highest percentage is 5 to 10 minutes (43%). A small minority read 21 to 30 minutes (11%) and finally a smaller segment of respondents claimed to read it for 30 minutes or more (2%).

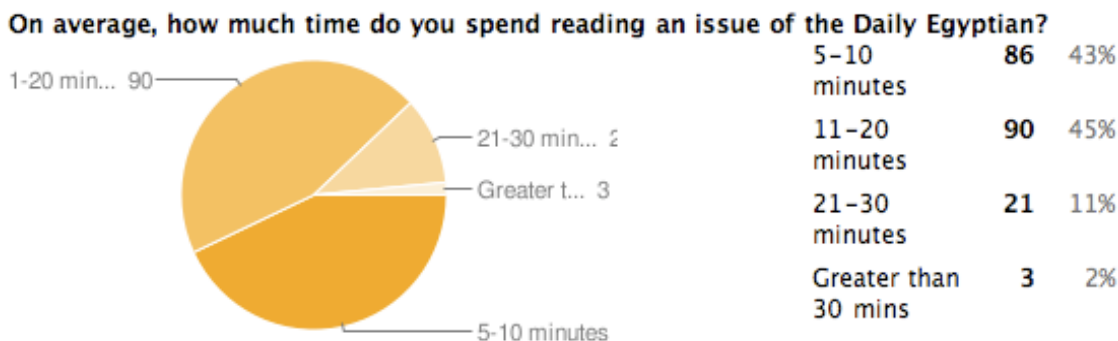


Figure 5: Time Spent Reading an Issue of the Daily Egyptian

The next analysis focused on what other publications respondents had read in the past week. Figure 6 shows the amount of readership competitor publications receive in a week. Competitor publications were chosen based upon their proximity regionally to Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Most of the respondents indicated that they do not read any of the competitors listed (43%). The competitor with the highest amount of readership is the daily newspaper, the *Southern Illinoisan* with 27 percent, followed by the weekly entertainment periodical the *Nightlife* with 22 percent followed by the daily newspaper the *Chicago Tribune* with 13 percent. *Carbondale Times*, a local publication only received 10 percent of responses and the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* was read by only 9 percent of respondents.

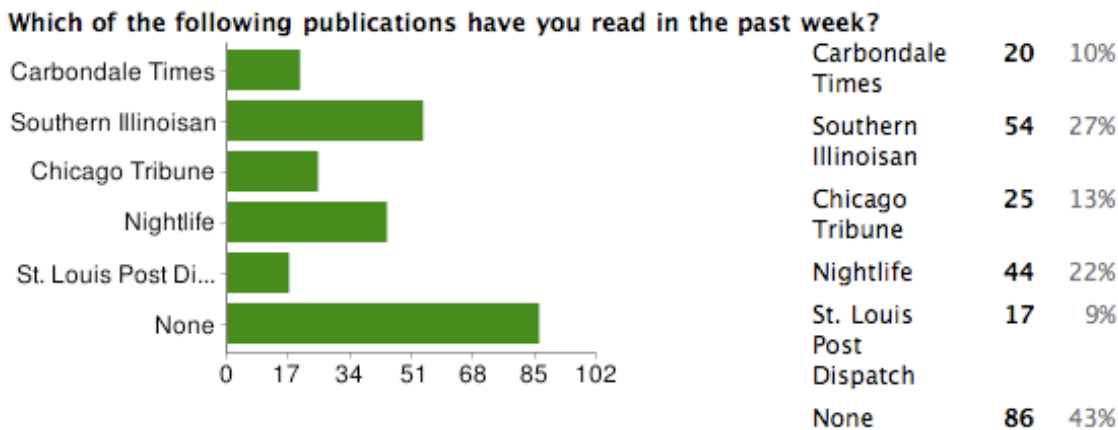


Figure 6: Readership of Competitors

The Back to Campus edition is an important yearly special publication by the Daily Egyptian. Here, Figure 7 indicates that this edition received a high amount of readership (67%), while 33 percent stated they did not read the edition. This is an important figure gauging how the edition faired with its readers. This also provides information on how likely readers are to read a standard issue of the Daily Egyptian.

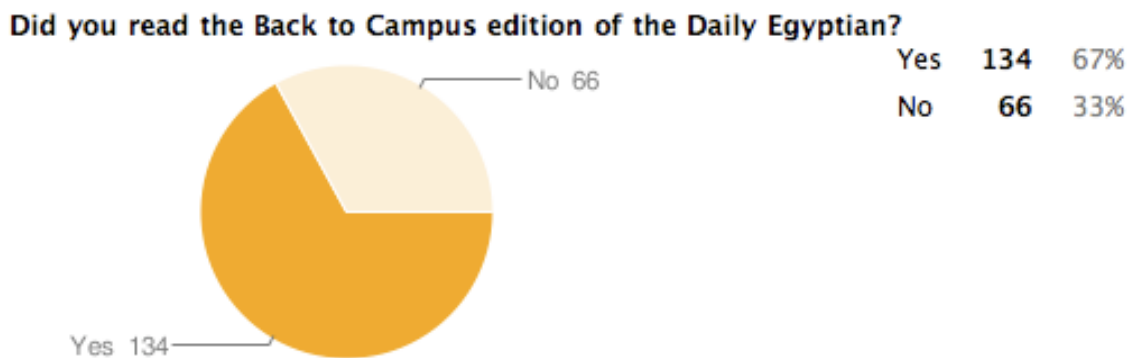


Figure 7: Special Edition Readership

Figure 8 indicates which sections of the Daily Egyptian respondents remember reading in a week. This perpetuates the importance of the Daily Egyptian in conveying local news to the university community with 80 percent of respondents saying they read the local news section. The Daily Egyptian covers a significant amount of local news and, as this data shows, is the main source of local news for readers. Opinion (voices) is

the second most read section with 56 percent, sports being the third most read section with 52 percent. Figure 8 indicates that comics, entertainment (pulse), features (currents), national news and classifieds are relatively even in respondents indicating that they read these sections of the newspaper. Knowing which sections of the Daily Egyptian receive the most attention from readers is important, but one step further is needed. The frequency at which readers reference the Daily Egyptian or competitor publications for different types of information must be examined.

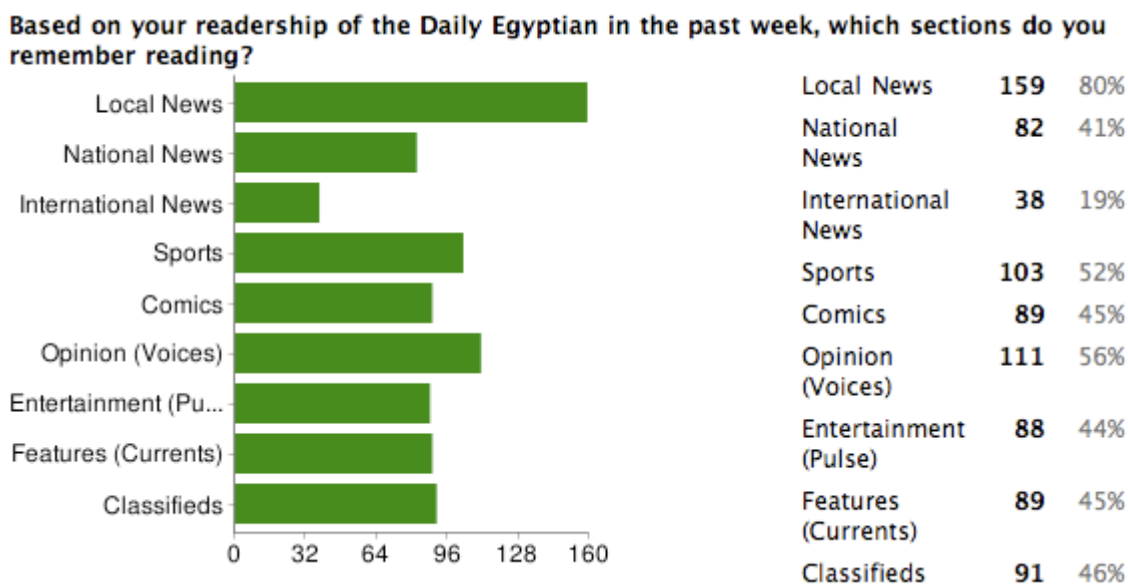


Figure 8: Readership of Newspaper Sections

Figure 9 illustrates what locally available publications respondents use as their primary source to gain information about local entertainment. The Daily Egyptian is clearly the primary source with 55 percent of respondents agreeing. The choice of “other” follows with 27 percent. The Nightlife, the closest competitor to the Daily Egyptian, is third with 16 percent. The Carbondale Times comes in last with no respondents indicating they reference this publication. This follows the Southern Illinoisan, which earned 3 percent.

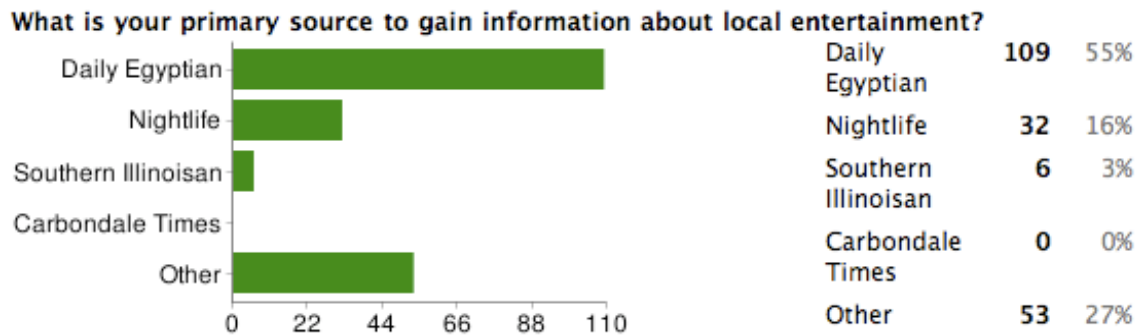
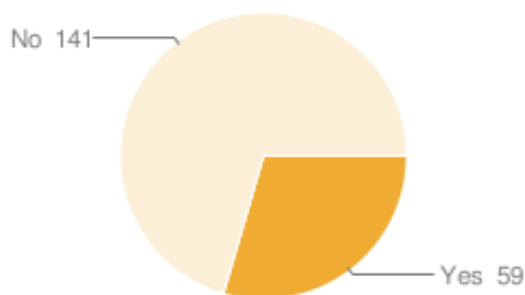


Figure 9: Frequency of Entertainment

This figure (Figure 10) indicates that 30 percent of respondents do refer to the Daily Egyptian specifically for entertainment decisions. This figure also shows that 71 percent do not rely on the Daily Egyptian when making an entertainment decision.

**In the past week, have you used the Daily Egyptian when making an entertainment decision?**



Yes	59	30%
No	141	71%

Figure 10: Amount of Reference of the Daily Egyptian for Entertainment

Availability of the Daily Egyptian is directly related to readership. Here we see 98 percent of respondents indicate that the Daily Egyptian is conveniently available to them with a minimal amount of 3 percent indicating the newspaper is not conveniently available (Figure 11).

**Do you find the Daily Egyptian conveniently available to you?**



Yes	195	98%
No	5	3%

Figure 11: Convenience of Availability

Information regarding how often readers refer to the Daily Egyptian for local events and entertainment is beneficial to understanding the readership base. In this instance, we see that for the most part, respondents refer to the newspaper for campus events more frequently with 23 percent very frequently doing so, 22 percent frequently. The highest percentage of respondents is in the middle equally referring or not referring to the Daily Egyptian for campus events with 29 percent. Here, 16 percent rarely

reference the Daily Egyptian and 11 percent very rarely referencing the newspaper for campus events. (Figure 12).

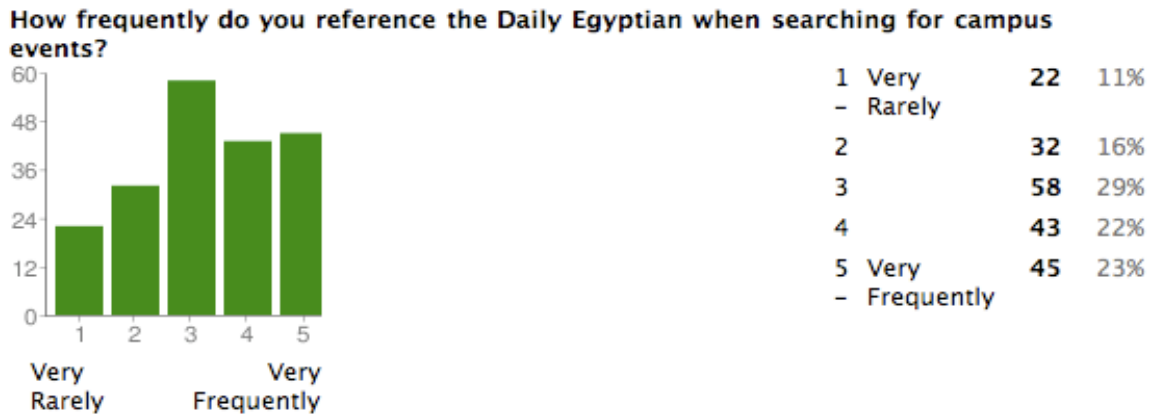


Figure 12: Frequency of Reference for Campus Events

According to Figure 13, 59 percent of respondents state that they do not notice locations where the Daily Egyptian is distributed that run out of copies of the newspaper. However, 41 percent did indicate locations that run out of copies of the newspaper. These locations will be addressed in Chapter 5.

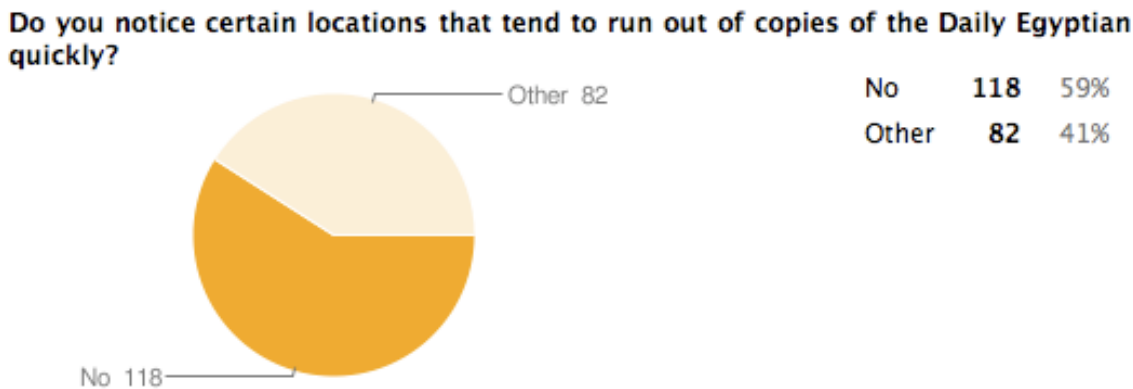


Figure 13: Availability through Location

Figure 14 illustrates the locations where readers can pick up an issue of the Daily Egyptian with 91 percent of respondents saying they pick up an issue on the university campus. This is followed with a tie between At Work (off campus) and “other” at 3

percent. Restaurants received 2 percent and local businesses (other than workplace) received 1 percent.

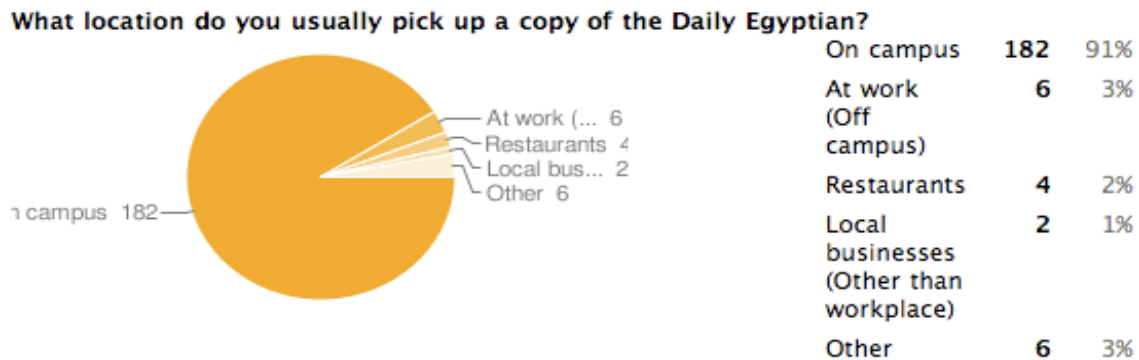


Figure 14: Location of Newspaper Acquisition



## Objective Two

To study consumer buying patterns among the university population.

The more up-to-date information that addresses current buying patterns of readers of the Daily Egyptian that can be collected, the better advertising clients can be serviced and more relevant advertising can be provided to the readership base. To do this, it must be asked what the readers are buying, how frequently they are buying and where they are buying products and services. Having this information will aid the advertising department when servicing advertising clients and aid it in developing sales plans for said clients.

Figure 15 presents responses indicative of a high level of shopping in Carbondale or the surrounding area. Here, 27 percent shop very frequently followed by 33 percent shopping frequently, 23 percent are in the middle, 13 percent rarely shop in Carbondale or the surrounding area and 6 percent very rarely shop in Carbondale or the surrounding area. This is a basic overview of reader buying behavior. It must be asked to what extent are readers in the market for certain products or are incentives available for readers of the Daily Egyptian to shop in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

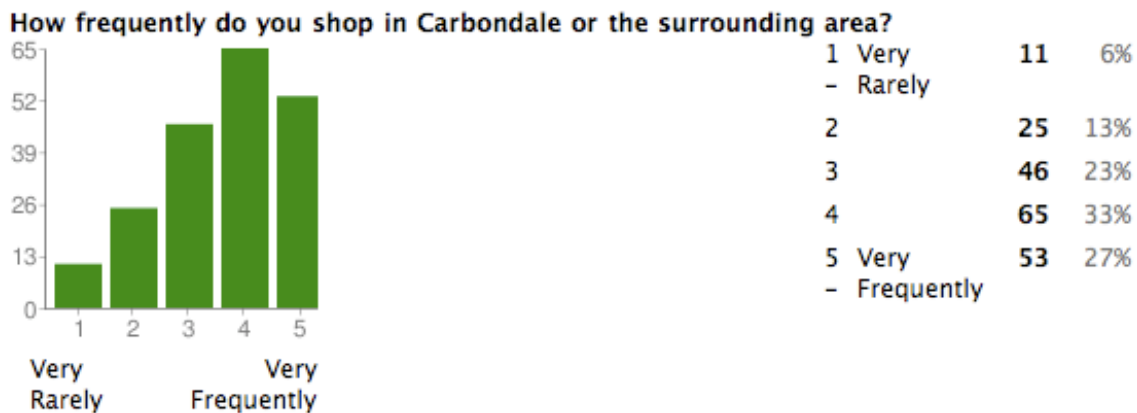


Figure 15: Frequency of Shopping

As illustrated by Figure 16, only 40 percent of respondents say they have used a coupon found in the Daily Egyptian when making a purchasing decision while 60 percent have not.

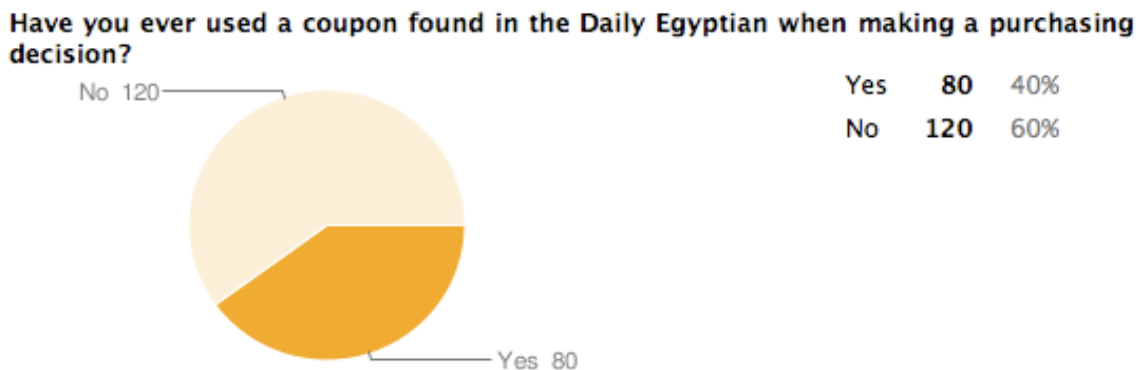


Figure 16: Coupon Usage

Coupon usage does not appear to be high as shown by Figure 16. Figure 17 shows that 72 percent of respondents have used no coupons in the past 30 days. This highest response is for 1 to 2 coupons with 23 percent used in the past 30 days. This is followed by 5 percent using 3 to 4 coupons and 1 percent using 5 or more coupons in the past 30 days.

**Approximately how many coupons have you used from the Daily Egyptian in the past 30 days?**

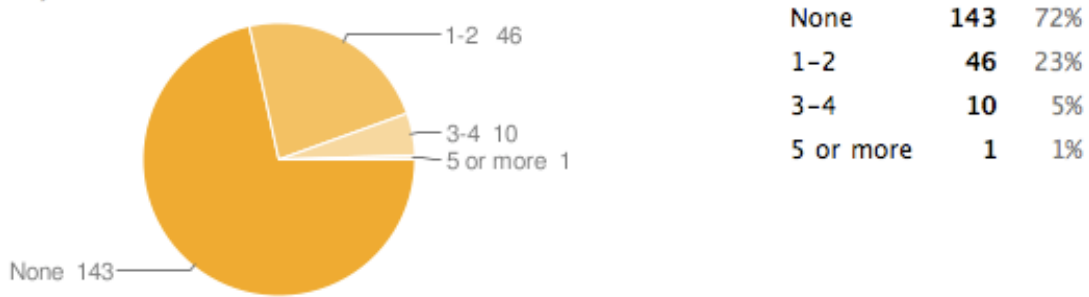


Figure 17: Frequency of Coupon Use

This figure (Figure 18) reflects the previous figures' (Figure 16, Figure 17) coupon usage. Here, 66 percent of respondents say they have never used a coupon found in the Daily Egyptian. The leading response of coupon usage is restaurants having 27 percent. Grocery store coupons with 13 percent follow restaurants. Professional services garner 5 percent. Specialty shops and entertainment services each garnered 3 percent of responses respectively. Clothing, Auto Products and Services and Recreational Activities each received 2 percent. Medical services, Electronic/Computer and Banking each received 1 percent of the response total signifying use of coupons found in the Daily Egyptian used in stores in the past 30 days.

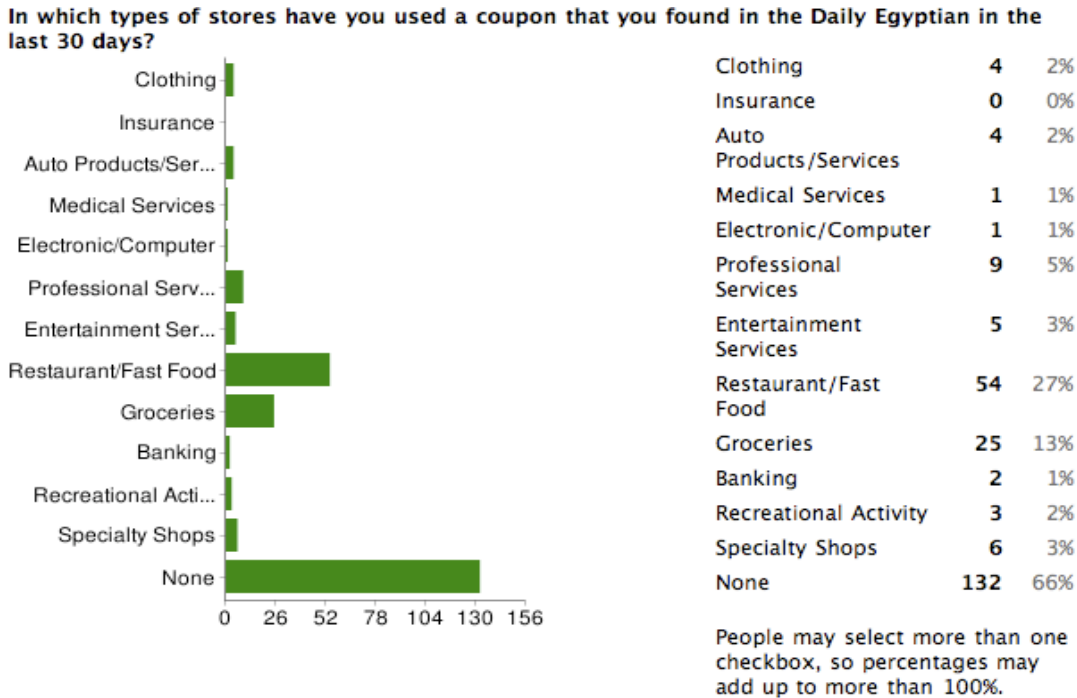


Figure 18: Location of Coupon Use

Grocery shopping peaked with the majority of responses in Figure 19 indicating 51 percent very frequently shop for groceries in Carbondale or the surrounding area. This is followed by 27 percent frequently shopping, 14 percent in the middle, 5 percent rarely, and 4 percent very rarely shopping for groceries in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

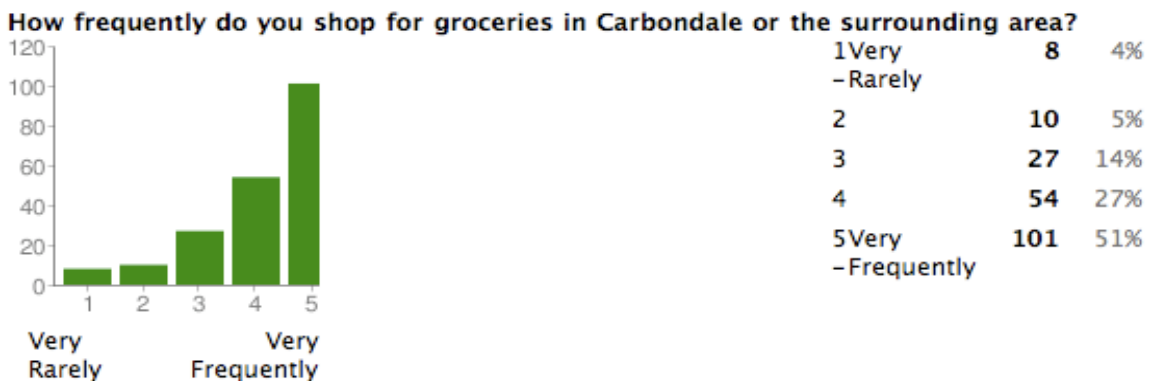


Figure 19: Grocery Shopping Frequency

The Daily Egyptian runs grocery store advertisements on a weekly basis. According to respondents in Figure 20, a significant 50 percent stated they do not consider these advertisements when making purchasing decisions choosing the option of very rarely. This is followed by 18 percent stating rarely, 16 percent in the middle, 9 percent frequently and 9 percent very frequently consider grocery store advertisements in the Daily Egyptian when making grocery purchasing decisions.

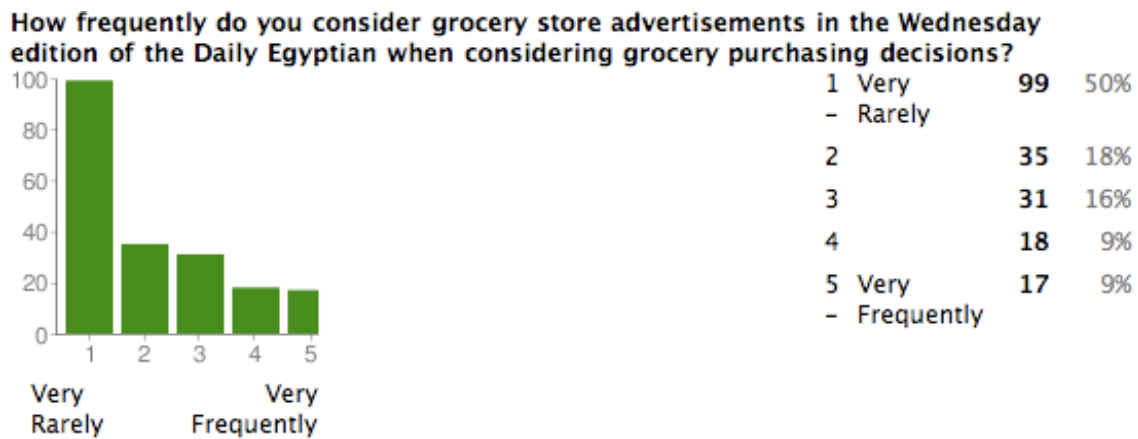


Figure 20: Usage of Daily Egyptian Grocery Ads

Entertainment services are not often sought in Carbondale or the surrounding area according to Figure 21 with 39 percent stating this fact. This is followed by 26 percent stating they shop less often for such products, 18 percent in the middle, 12 percent shop often and 7 percent shop very often for entertainment services in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

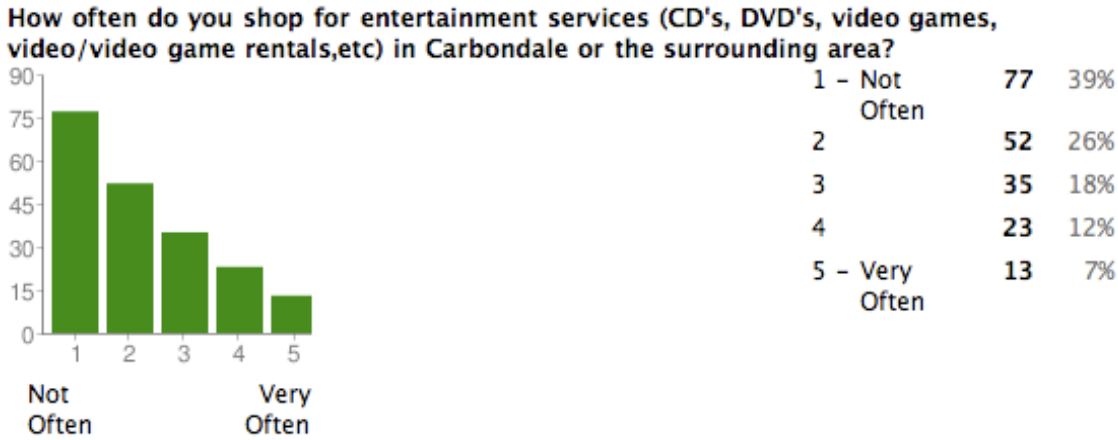


Figure 21: Entertainment Purchasing

The data in Figure 22 indicate that respondents spend 51 to 100 dollars in an average month in Carbondale on entertainment activities. This figure is closely followed by 24 percent of respondents stating they spend 21 to 50 dollars in an average month. Next, we see that 17 percent spend less than 20 dollars, 15 percent spend 101 to 50 dollars and 8 percent spend more than 200 dollars in an average month in Carbondale on entertainment activities.

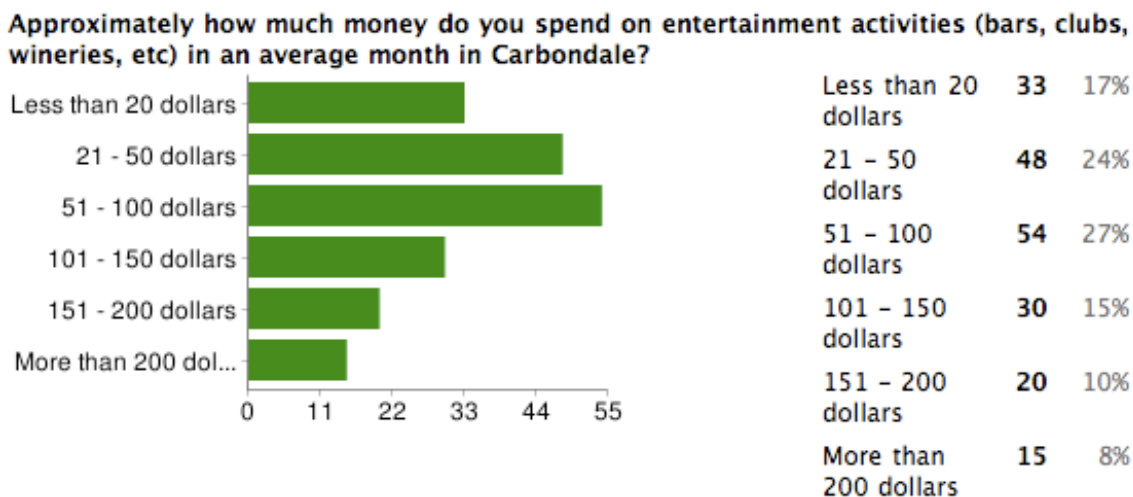


Figure 22: Amount of Money Spent on Entertainment Activities

Figure 23 illustrates the level at which respondents shop for clothing in Carbondale or the surrounding area. Primarily, 31 percent of respondents are in the middle, 23 percent rarely shop, 20 percent frequently shop, 17 percent very rarely shop and 10 percent very frequently shop for clothing in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

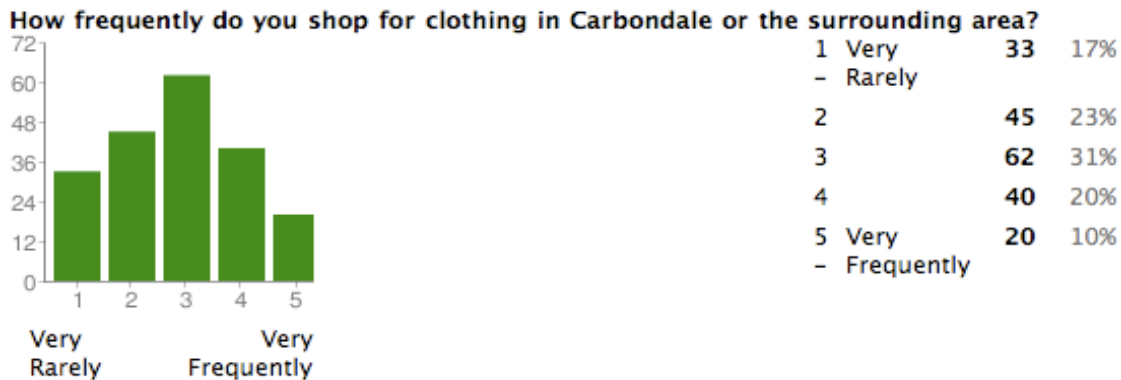


Figure 23: Clothing Purchasing

Professional services tend to be purchases that arise out of need and not spontaneity. This is indicative of Figure 24 indicating that 71 percent very rarely shop, 18 percent rarely shop, 8 percent are in the middle, 2 percent frequently shop and another 2 percent indicate they very frequently shop for professional services in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

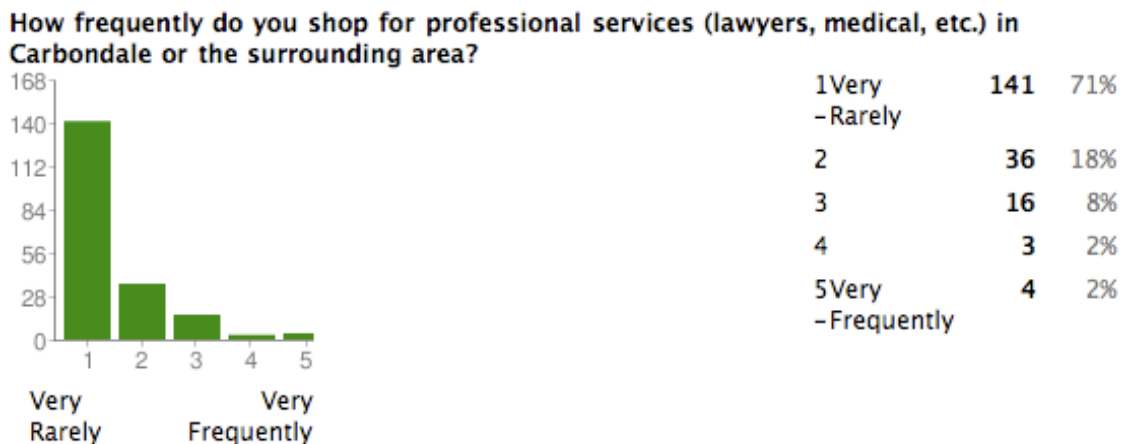


Figure 24: Professional Services Usage

Restaurants and or fast food received a high amount of frequency from respondents. Figure 25 tells us that 40 percent of respondents frequently eat out followed by 28 percent indicating that they frequently eat out. Next, 19 percent are in the middle, 8 percent rarely eat out and 5 percent very rarely eat out at restaurants or eat fast food in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

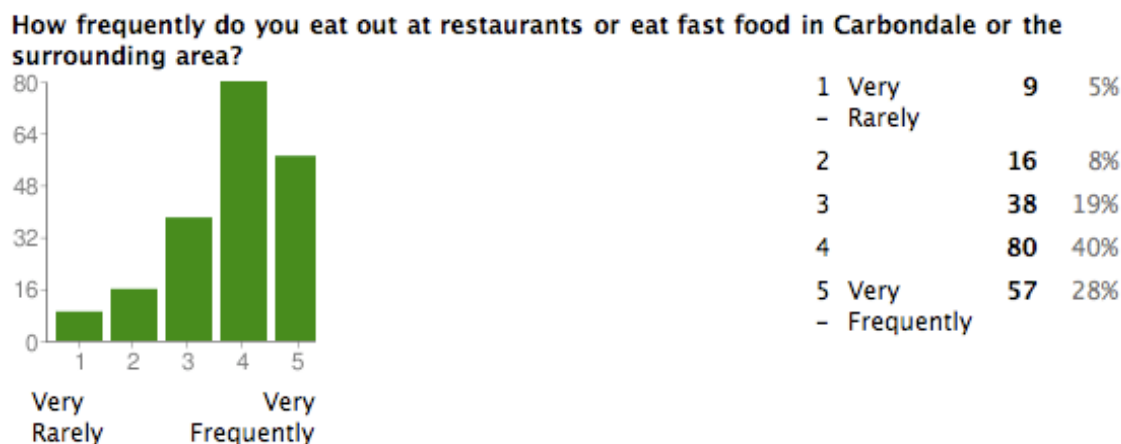


Figure 25: Frequency of Restaurants and Fast Food Visits

Auto parts shopping received the highest number of responses, 59 percent, for the option of very rarely shopping in Carbondale or the surrounding area for these types of products (Figure 26). A distant second, 21 percent indicated they rarely shop, 12 percent



are in the middle, 6 percent frequently shop and 2 percent very frequently shop for auto parts in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

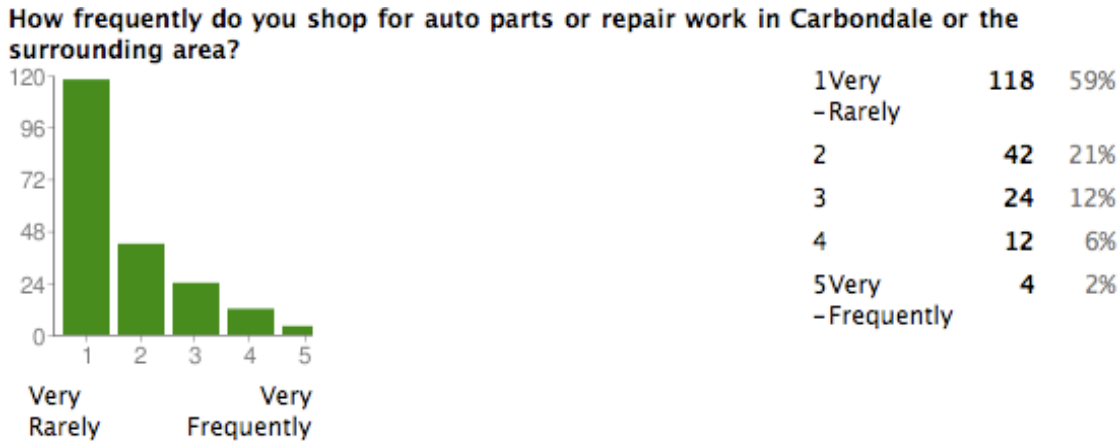


Figure 26: Auto Parts Purchasing

Figure 27 shows a lack of frequency among respondents when purchasing electric or computer products. The highest percentage, 54 percent, very rarely shop for these products, 24 percent rarely shop, 14 percent are in the middle, 7 percent frequently shop and 2 percent very frequently shop for electric or computer products in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

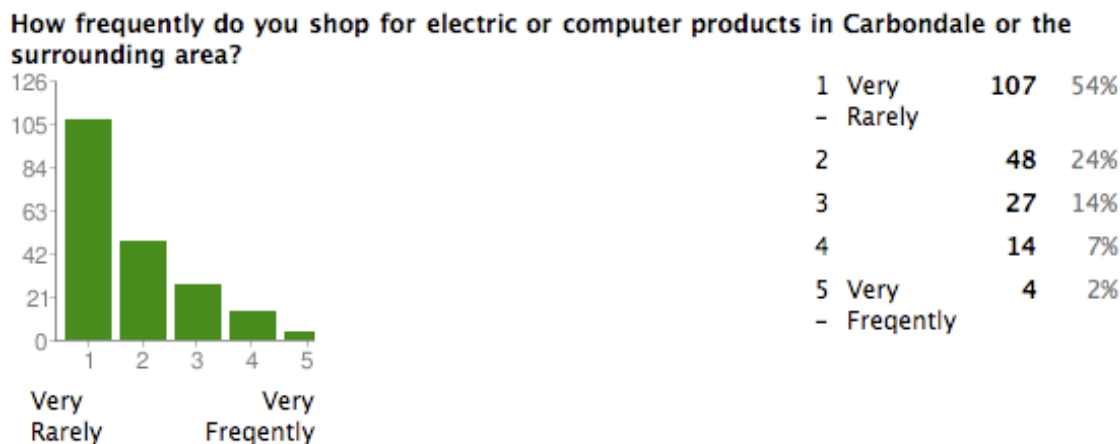


Figure 27: Electronics and Computer Purchasing

Recreational activities have relatively the same frequency among respondents opting not to shop for recreational activities in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

Figure 28 illustrates the following: 28 percent are in the middle, 27 percent rarely shop, 23 percent very rarely shop, 16 percent frequently shop and 7 percent very frequently shop for recreational activities in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

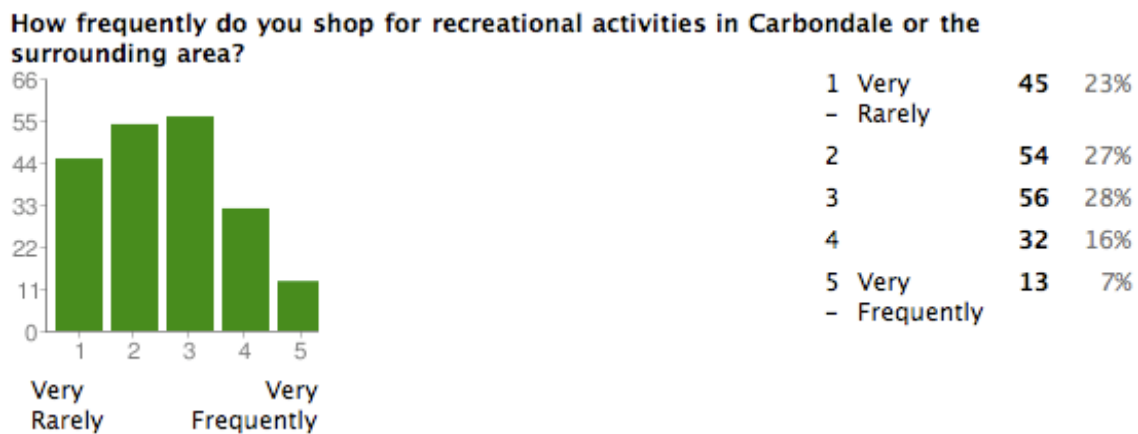


Figure 28: Recreational Activities Usage

Figure 29 indicates that respondents purchase beauty products infrequently. Here, 33 percent very rarely shop, 20 percent rarely shop, 23 percent are in the middle followed by 18 percent that frequently shop and 7 percent that very frequently shop for beauty products or services in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

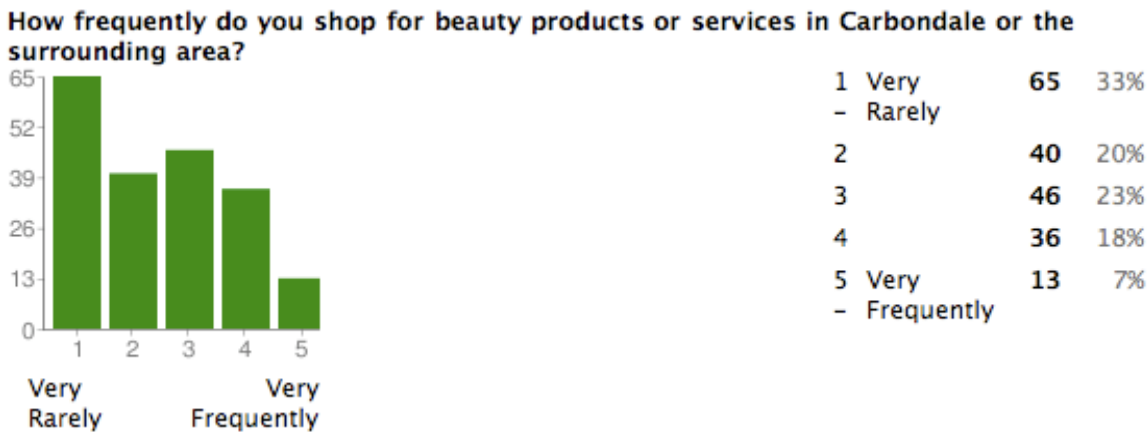


Figure 29: Beauty Products Purchasing

73 percent of respondents say they are not insured by a local insurance provider, referring to Carbondale or the surrounding area, while 27 percent are insured by a local insurance provider (Figure 30).

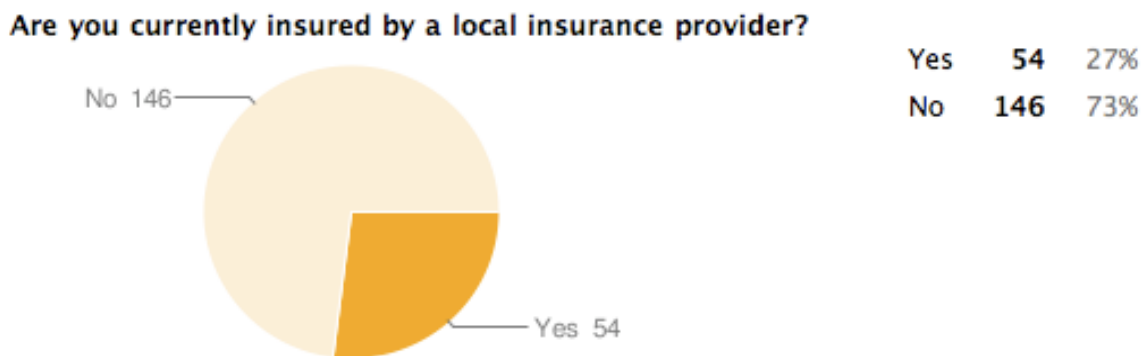


Figure 30: Coverage by a Local Insurance Provider

Figure 31 shows that 72 percent of respondents do bank in Carbondale or the surrounding area while 28 percent do not bank in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

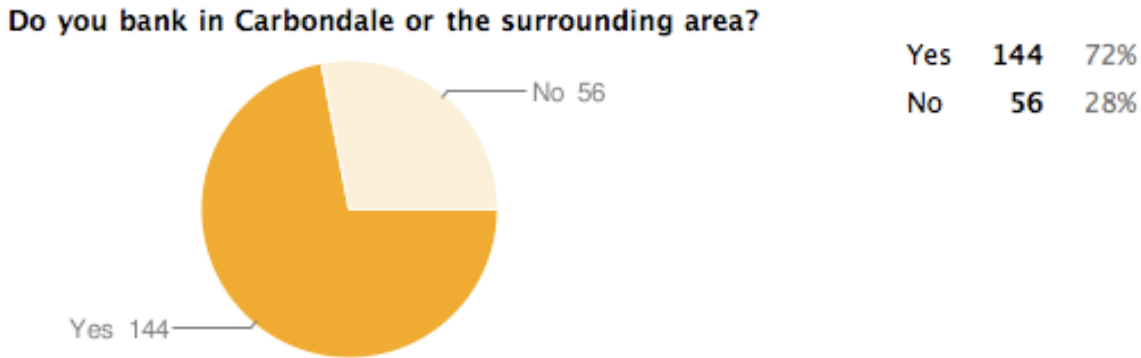


Figure 31: Local Bank Patronage

Here, Figure 32 shows us that the classified section is very rarely referred to when making a shopping decision with 47 percent. Second, 28 percent rarely use, 16 percent are in the middle, 8 percent frequently use and 3 percent very frequently use the classifieds when making a purchasing decision.

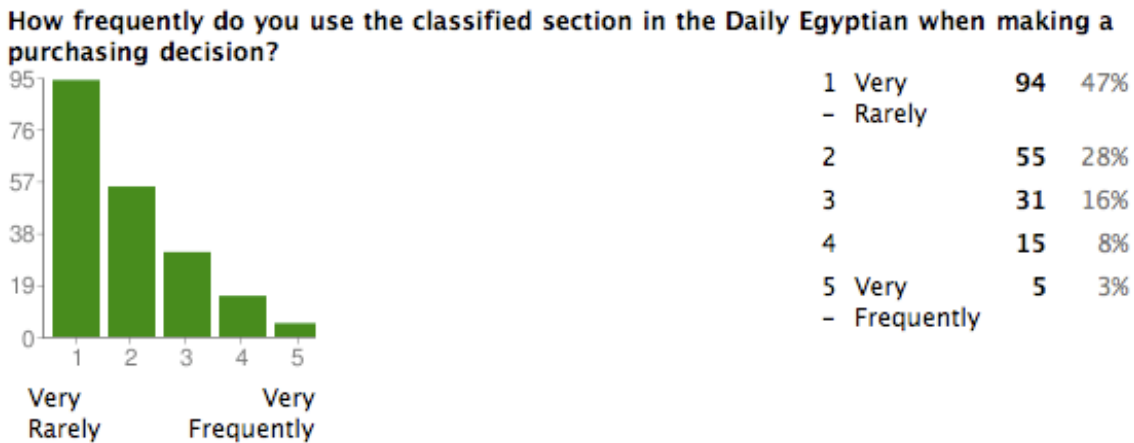


Figure 32: Classified Advertising Referencing

### Objective Three

To estimate the amount of use and frequency of the Daily Egyptian website, siuDE.com.

The Daily Egyptian's website is currently undergoing updates and alterations. Past studies for the Daily Egyptian have neglected the website, siuDE.com. Given the transfer of many major national newspapers to online, the Daily Egyptian is doing the same to supplement the print version of the newspaper as well as providing more ways to interact with news such as video of events and additional photos available on the website. With information regarding website usage, we can examine traffic to the website as well as which pages of the website are the most popular and therefore receive the most traffic. This information aids in answering advertising clients' questions regarding exactly that; which pages on the website receive the most traffic? Here, we can place advertising clients on the specific pages they request based upon the data collected.

Figure 33 indicates that 86 percent of respondents have visited the Daily Egyptian website while 14 percent have not visited the website.

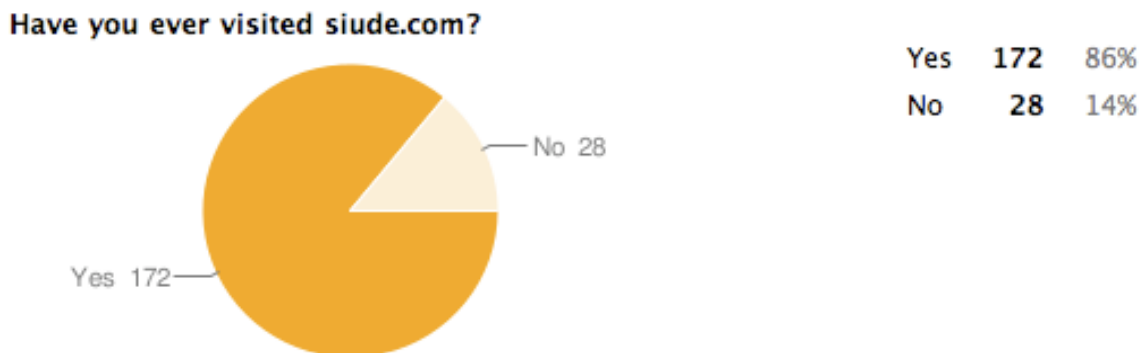


Figure 33: Traffic to siuDE.com

Figure 34 indicates that respondents most frequently visit the Daily Egyptian's website for news content (59%). This is followed by sports content with 28 percent, opinion (voices) received 23 percent, web extras received 17 percent, find-it option received 7 percent, the dawghouse received 16 percent, blogs received 12 percent, dining guide received 21 percent, pulse received 12 percent and the online poll received 14 percent.

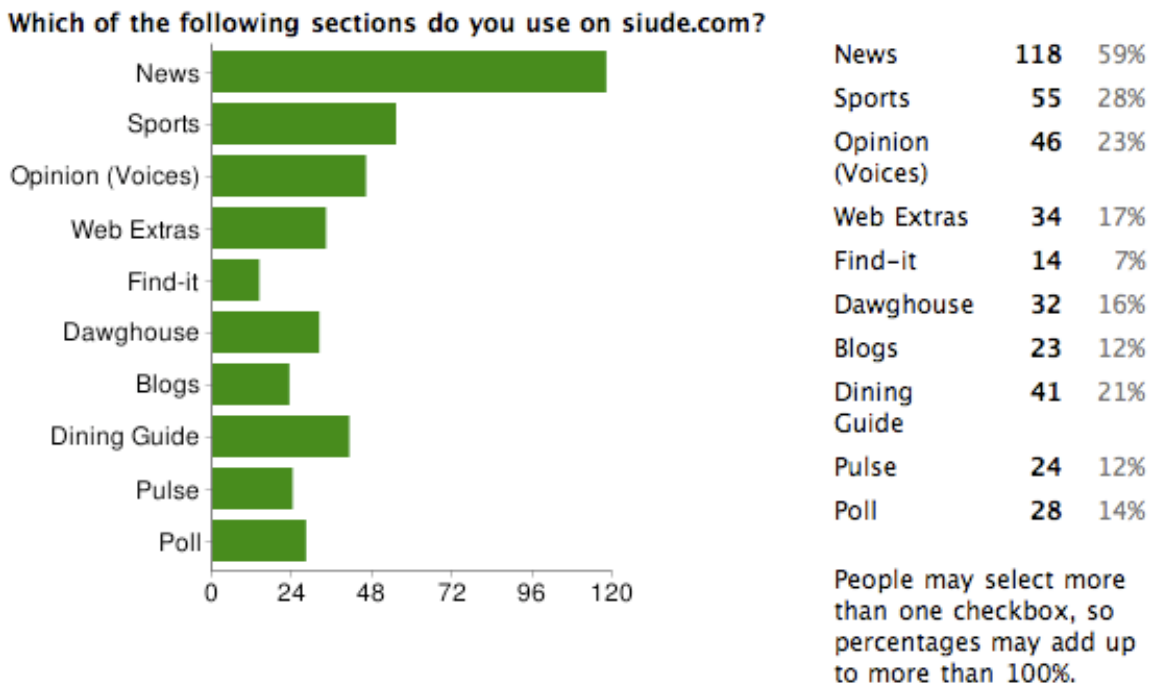


Figure 34: Traffic to Specific Pages on siuDE.com

The likelihood of respondents who visit the website, according to Figure 35, are 48 percent very unlikely to use a listing featured on the siuDE.com dawghouse section. Respondents are 17 percent unlikely to visit, 21 percent in the middle, 7 percent likely and 7 percent are very likely to use a listing featured on the siuDE.com dawghouse section.

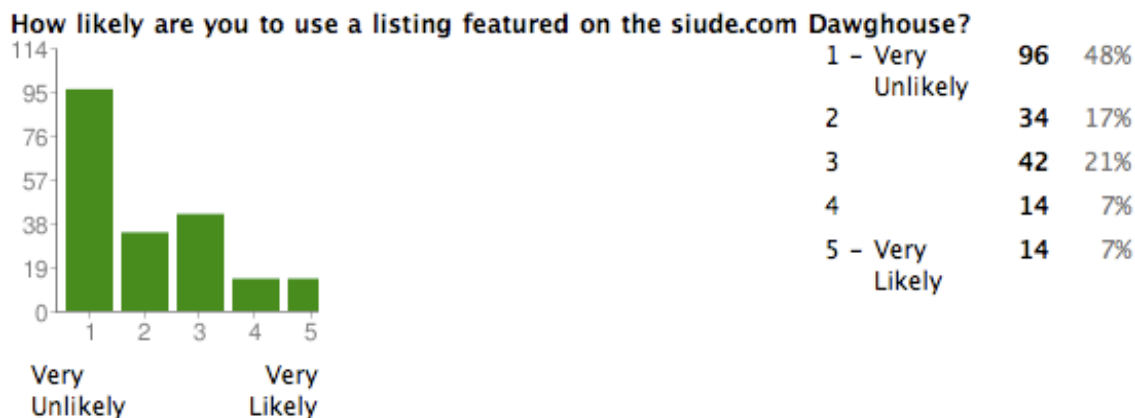


Figure 35: Likelihood of Using Online Housing Listing

Figure 36 indicates that 62 percent of respondents are very unlikely to visit a banner or skyscraper ad on siuDE.com. This is followed by 17 percent saying they are unlikely, 16 percent are in the middle, 5 percent are likely, and 2 percent are very likely to click on a banner or skyscraper ad found on the website, siuDE.com.

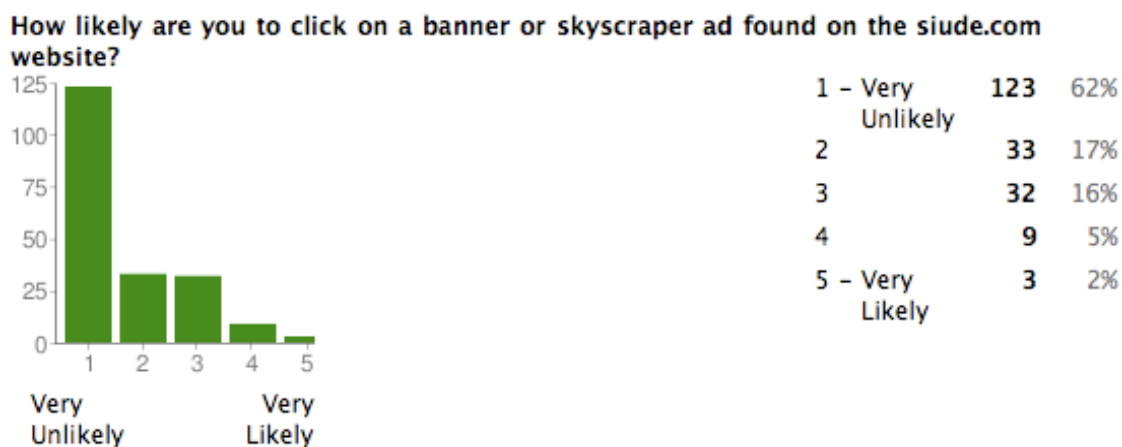


Figure 36: Likelihood of Visiting Online Advertisement

Figure 37 indicates that respondents are 25 percent very unlikely, 19 percent unlikely, 35 percent in the middle, 14 percent likely and 7 percent very likely to visit a restaurant featured on the siuDE.com dining guide.

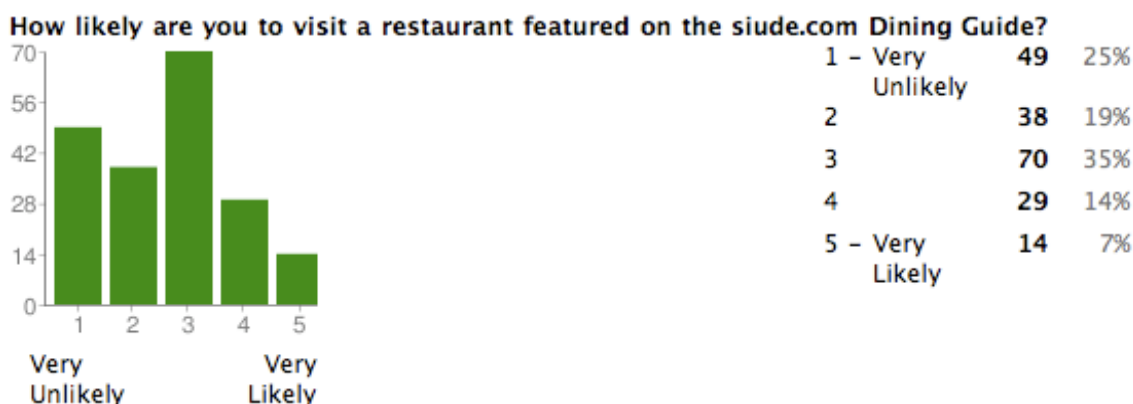


Figure 37: Likelihood of Visiting Online Restaurant Listing



## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The demographic data illustrates how many individuals read the Daily Egyptian. This is broken down into how many males and females read the newspaper. Furthermore, we can gain insight into how many students, faculty and staff are reading the Daily Egyptian. It is important to note here that faculty and staff are included in this study. Faculty and staff are components of the Daily Egyptian's readership and are important to fully understanding the readership of the newspaper as a whole. It is interesting to note here that more females completed the survey than males given that more males are enrolled at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale than are females (SIUC fact book, 2007).

When analyzing respondents' relationship to the university, we see that more seniors took the survey than any other response. This could be because seniors have been around the university community longer than any other undergraduate class or, for that matter, some graduate students. Ergo, they may be more willing to take a survey about the Daily Egyptian because they have had more contact with the publication. Faculty and staff combined account for 12 percent of respondents. This is a useful number considering past studies have not measured faculty and staff readership of the Daily Egyptian. Faculty and staff of the university are high paid individuals in the region and are a viable target for advertisers.

## Objective One

Readership is the backbone of the Daily Egyptian. This is important because it provides a gauge for the Daily Egyptian to see how often it is reaching the university population; in this case, the majority read the Daily Egyptian daily. For a day-by-day breakdown, we see that Monday is the highest day for readership followed by Wednesday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. This order could arise from the format of student schedules. Student schedules are broken into classes that are held on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at a length of 50 minutes. Tuesday and Thursday see classes that are longer in length. Here, it can also be inferred that Wednesday is the second highest read day not only because of student schedules, but also that it is the middle day of the week. Readers may refer to the paper more on this day to see upcoming events for the weekend along with news. Monday may also receive the highest readership because it is the first day of the week after respondents have had a two-day break. The respondents then read for to see what they may have missed over the weekend and see what else is going on during the coming week. This also provides insight into the size of the audience that can be reached through advertising and which days will provide the highest readership for advertisers.

We also see that the majority of individuals read the newspaper on average 11 to 20 minutes a day (45%). That is a significant percentage. This provides a large window of opportunity for advertisers to reach the university population. The amount of time spent reading an issue of the Daily Egyptian possibly corresponds with how long an individual is on campus paired with the size and length of their class or time spent waiting between classes. The Daily Egyptian offers not only something for readers to do,

read local news, contemplate the crossword puzzle, etc, but provides information to them about local advertising options for entertainment, food, services etc.

Competition is not fierce for the Daily Egyptian with the closest competitor being a corporate daily newspaper, the Southern Illinoisan (SI). This is not a threat to the Daily Egyptian because the SI is a regional newspaper that requires a subscription fee or a cost per issue. The Nightlife is the closest competitor for the Daily Egyptian, the Nightlife receiving 22 percent of the respondents. It is a weekly publication highlighting entertainment events and is also free. The remaining publications either require a cost to obtain or are of no significant threat as indicated by the respondents' data because they have extremely low readership.

Special editions of the Daily Egyptian provide added value not only to the newspaper itself but also to the advertisers in the special issue. Figure 7 indicates how many respondents read the Back to Campus edition of the Daily Egyptian, 67 percent did read the edition and 33 percent did not. This indicates that this special edition did receive a high amount of readership and high amount of awareness. It also gauges how other special editions may perform, and the Daily Egyptian may pursue other similar editions.

Local news is the number one section respondents indicated that they remember reading. This shows that the Daily Egyptian is an important publication for informing readers of local news content because it is available in multiple locations around Carbondale and is free. Respondents also indicated that they find the Daily Egyptian to be conveniently available (Figure 11). The opinion (voices) section received the second highest percent in being remembered possibly due to this section being topical and potentially sensationalistic. It is also a section for readers to have their individual voices

heard. Advertisements are not placed here because of the editorial nature of this section. The sports section receives high readership because of the popularity of Salukis sports at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Regardless of how any particular sport performs, readers enjoy keeping up with scores and stories relating to sports. The comic section also includes the crossword puzzle, word jumble and Sudoku. These are games that allow readers to interact with the newspaper, which elaborates on this section's high readership. The entertainment section (pulse), features (currents) and classifieds all have relatively equal readership (Figure 8).

This could be due to the frequency at which each section appears in the paper. Readers enjoy reading these sections on a steady basis resulting in an average readership as compared to the previously mentioned three. National news and international news received the lowest amount of respondent readership. Students, faculty and staff have other news sources whether they are an online source or a television news source. These other sources, while they may provide some local content, provide national and international news on a much more in-depth level and may be referred to more than the Daily Egyptian.

This instance can be carried over when considering where respondents turn to find information regarding local entertainment. The Daily Egyptian publishes stories regarding local entertainment and advertisers place in their ads where entertainment can be found at their particular establishment. The survey received over 50 percent of respondents indicating that the Daily Egyptian is their primary source for this type of information. The *Nightlife* is a distant second to the Daily Egyptian even though the *Nightlife's* primary focus is on local entertainment. This could be a result of more

availability of the Daily Egyptian on campus and more notoriety as compared with the Nightlife. Respondents placed “other” in high priority over the choices of other publications. This may be due to the wide availability of information online regarding entertainment activities or word-of-mouth regarding local entertainment.

Campus events can also be considered to be local entertainment, but more respondents indicated they reference the Daily Egyptian more often than not when looking for campus events. This can be attributed to the association of the Daily Egyptian as the school newspaper and, therefore, should be considered to have all pertinent information regarding campus events.

The availability of the Daily Egyptian has already been described as convenient. It was also asked if there are certain locations where the Daily Egyptian is available that might run out of copies quicker than others. If certain locations do tend to run out of copies quickly, more copies could be placed at these locations for readers. Some respondents did suggest that there are locations that run out of copies quickly (Lawson, Wham, Student Center). The locations mentioned as running out quickly are high traffic areas not just in the mornings but also all throughout the day because of the prevalence of classes held there. This suggests that regardless of how many copies are placed at these locations, issues of the paper will run out quickly. Readers pick up the majority of copies of the Daily Egyptian on campus. This is to be expected. Respondents to the survey were expected to spend a majority of their time on campus due to classes. If this were not the case, then more copies of the newspaper would be distributed where readers come into contact with it.

## Objective Two

Buying patterns of respondents are extremely important to have a handle on given the current economic environment nationally. The Daily Egyptian is not immune to consumers cutting back on their spending. The Daily Egyptian wanted to know how frequently respondents shopped in Carbondale or the surrounding area, places where a Daily Egyptian can be found or readers of the newspaper may travel. Given that the sample size consists of current students, faculty and staff, the fact that the majority of respondents either frequently or very frequently shop in Carbondale or the surrounding area is not a surprise. It may be attributed that those respondents that are in the middle or rarely to very rarely shop in Carbondale or the surrounding area are those that commute to attend class or work at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Knowing that the majority of respondents do indeed shop locally, this provides a base at which to judge the likelihood that they may use a coupon from a local advertiser or frequent a local advertiser.

Traditionally, coupons have never celebrated a high redemption rate for local advertisers. However, they do serve to promote awareness and incentive for readers to visit an advertiser. As this data shows, the majority of respondents have not used a coupon found in the Daily Egyptian. Even so, a significant amount have; 40 percent (Figure 16), and these readers have used at least one coupon in the past 30 days, 28 percent combined (Figure 17). Primarily, those coupons that are used are redeemed at local grocery stores and restaurants or fast food establishments. This corresponds with Figure 25, which illustrates that respondents frequently to very frequently eat out at restaurants or fast food establishments. Other places of business such as auto part stores,

medical services, banking, insurance, etc., receive extremely low rates of redemption on coupons. This is directly related to the type of business. For instance, some of businesses like auto parts are fairly expensive and require a consumer to heavily consider the purchase of a specific auto part. This can be applied to many other areas of business with respondents indicating they have not used a coupon in a certain place of business (Figure 18).

Grocery stores local to Carbondale or the surrounding area should definitely see a high amount of patronage from respondents. Food shopping is primarily done locally. Those respondents indicating that they rarely to very rarely shop for groceries locally are more than likely commuters to Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. Ergo, it is not surprising that respondents do not frequently or very frequently reference grocery advertisements that appear in the Daily Egyptian on a weekly basis. Respondents more than likely have a routine set in place in regard to their grocery shopping habits. Although, those respondents indicating that they do reference these advertisements makes the advertisements noteworthy.

Entertainment services include the likes of CD's, DVD's and video games. The results presented in Figure 21 are reflective of current attitudes towards these types of media. More and more music and DVD's can be purchased and viewed via the Internet. The need to shop for the latest CD or film can be accomplished from a consumer's bedroom, for instance. Frequently shopping for these types of products at a local store is no longer necessary or essential to enjoy them. Those respondents that did indicate that they often or very often shop for these types of products may not have a fast Internet connection or a reliable one and then shop for these products online.

Entertainment activities include the likes of bars, clubs, wineries, concerts, etc., in Carbondale or the surrounding area. College students, in general, have a large amount of disposable income, and college is, again, in general, a very sociable time in a student's life. Faculty and staff of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale are among the highest paid positions in the southern Illinois region when the amount of education required for these positions is considered. Having knowledge of how much money respondents are spending on entertainment activities can help the Daily Egyptian better serve its advertising clients that provide such venues or services. While the majority of respondents indicated they spend 50 to 100 dollars a month on such entertainment services, some respondents indicated spending less and are still a very important portion of their audience. This data can be used to reaffirm the Daily Egyptian as a viable source to reach the student market and faculty and staff at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

Shopping for clothing can be a fickle process. As data indicate in Figure 23, respondents are relatively split on their frequency for clothing shopping in Carbondale or the surrounding area. Clothing can be purchased in either a mall setting with many options, specialty clothing stores, outlets, etc. Clothing can also be purchased over the Internet. Consumers also have a particular style of clothing they may prefer and are willing to travel to a specific store or wait for the proper opportunity to purchase what they desire. Due to the poles of desire for clothing versus convenience of obtaining clothing that the fact that the majority of respondents are in the middle of very rarely and very frequently shopping for clothing in Carbondale and the surrounding area is reasonable. In order for advertisers to be effective in attracting respondents, the right



product must be advertised at the proper time.

Professional services such as law firms and medical services are sought out for specific purposes, and the search for these services are not sought often. The results of Figure 24 are not surprising. When such services are sought, research into finding the proper service is done and consumers are willing to travel out of Carbondale or the surrounding area for their desired service or care. These types of services are typically expensive which adds to the extra amount of time and care attributed to choosing the proper service or care. The same situation can be applied to services involving auto parts or auto maintenance. According to data, these services are not often sought in Carbondale or the surrounding area. Cost, again, may also be a factor. However, these types of stores and services seem to be saturated in the local area and those that do advertise can reap top-of-mind awareness in the minds of readers of the Daily Egyptian.

Electronic and computer products see the majority of respondents very rarely shopping in Carbondale or the surrounding area. The Internet may play a key role in this data. The need for electronics the likes of CD players, DVD players, televisions etc. are no longer consumed in the same way or are being purchased less often. The advent of new technologies for playing music, see the iPod or broadband streaming radio or online music players, makes equipment that was necessary only a few years ago like a CD player obsolete. Computers can now be purchased online and delivered to a consumer's home that play music, CD's and DVD's. Electronic and computer products tend to cost more money today than a few years ago, which may contribute to the lack of respondents shopping for these types of products in Carbondale or the surrounding area.

Although southern Illinois has a plethora of recreational activities both indoors

and outdoors, it does not hold everything a consumer may enjoy. Also, what respondents consider being recreational may differ from one to the other. Figure 28 indicates that respondents do not frequently shop for recreational activities in Carbondale or the surrounding area. Reasons for this may be as simple as a respondent's particular preference for something to do or a complete lack of interest in recreational activities. In either case, recreational service advertising must still be present to attract those that are interested and obtain top-of-mind awareness in Daily Egyptian readers.

Beauty products are abundantly available at a variety of stores in Carbondale and the surrounding area. Figure 29 indicates that more respondents very rarely to rarely shop for beauty products locally or are in the middle. These types of products are available almost everywhere and are available in a variety of price ranges and quality. This underwhelming showing of very rarely shopping for beauty products responses may be indicative of males responding in this survey. Beauty products can also mean deodorant and toothpaste to hair gel, all products that males use. Advertising in the Daily Egyptian for beauty products may benefit more when it is geared more towards a specific event or promotion an advertiser is undergoing.

Insurance providers in Carbondale or the surrounding area do not have a large share of the university population. Over 70 percent of respondents indicated they do not use a local insurance provider. This implies that the university population either had other insurance from their home area before moving to Carbondale in some form or has no insurance at all. Those that indicated they do have a local insurance provider either are local to Carbondale or the surrounding area or inquired about insurance when arriving in Carbondale from their home area. Given that the majority of the Daily Egyptian's

readers are students, advertisers may garner more business from advertising with the Daily Egyptian by highlighting offerings relative to students.

Banking for respondents is not as home-based as attitudes for insurance. The benefits of banking locally outweigh using a non-local bank. It allows for consumers to have more freedom when dealing with their money insofar as depositing or withdrawing money as well as face-to-face customer service. The majority of respondents, over 70 percent, do bank in Carbondale or the surrounding area. This is a huge market for banks to reach through the Daily Egyptian. The percentage saying that they do not bank locally, under 30 percent, more than likely use a national bank that still allows them a satisfactory amount of freedom when banking.

The classifieds section of any newspaper has traditionally had a high level of readership because display advertising in this section of the paper has the highest rate for advertisers. There appears to be a disconnect with this idea. Respondents say they very rarely reference the classifieds when making a purchasing decision. Here, it may be suspected that when respondents are looking for something specific that they feel they can acquire cheaply and what they are looking for is readily available, they will reference the classifieds section. For instance, when consumers are looking for free puppies or kittens or perhaps are looking for a new vehicle, they may reference the classifieds. There is also the idea that free, online classifieds are taking business away from newspaper-classified advertising. While this idea may have some weight, the benefits of classified advertising may still be worth the placement in a newspaper because of how readily available the Daily Egyptian is, i.e., a computer with an Internet connection is not required.

### Objective Three

This objective focuses on the website, [siuDE.com](http://siuDE.com). Data here will be used to examine traffic to the website. The results from the question regarding whether or not respondents had visited the website are promising with 86 percent of respondents indicating they had visited the website. This illustrates that awareness of the website is high. This data can be used sell the website to advertising clients that may not have considered online advertising. Sequentially, news (59%), sports (28%), and opinion (23%) are the top three most visited pages on the website. Interestingly, web extras received 17 percent of the responses. This indicates that respondents use the website as a news source first. Sports traditionally receive a high amount of attention at the university. Opinion (voices) tends to be more sensationalistic and allows for individuals to have their individual voice expressed helping to explain its high share of respondents in Figure 34. Web extras, video, photos, etc., allows for respondents to interact with the news in a way that the regular print edition cannot.

Questions regarding the likelihood that a visitor to the website would click on an obvious advertisement or advertising related section provide much needed information into attitudes toward online advertising. Understanding these attitudes will help the Daily Egyptian better equip itself when approaching advertising clients for online advertising. Here, data indicate that skyscraper advertisements are not likely to receive clicks by visitors to the website nor are the special sections created specifically for advertisers like the Dining Guide or Dawghouse.

## LIMITATIONS

There were limitations encountered during this study. To begin, as the name suggests, convenience sampling is easy to conduct. However, convenience sampling may not always garner an accurate and or effective pool of respondents. In this case, however, while random sampling may have been more beneficial, an accurate and effective pool of respondents was collected. Add to this the fact that the pool consists of 200 respondents, the data collected can be seen as reliable and valid and reflects that of the university population of students, faculty and staff.

Secondly, the Google Documents program used to create and compile respondent data is in its beta testing stage. There were some kinks encountered during its use. Sequencing of questions for cohesion and proper grouping of the different types of questions were occasionally rearranged because of some of the program issues. As a result, the survey seems to not be properly put together. This does not necessarily affect the validity of the results. In retrospect, additional choices of responses for respondents, specifically providing the option of “none” to certain questions that may not have pertained to a particular respondent, would have been beneficial.

Proper approval of the survey by the Office of Research Development and Administration took longer than expected. This resulted in a smaller time frame to complete the survey and analysis of results. If it were not for this reason, hard copies of the survey would not have been disseminated and all data would have been collected online via email or the Facebook event.

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## APPENDIX

## ONLINE SURVEY

**Daily Egyptian Reader Survey**

My name is Zach Englum, and I am a graduate student in the College of Mass Communications and Media Arts studying professional media and media management studies. This survey is a portion of my study examining the readership and buying patterns of individuals that read the Daily Egyptian. This study will be used to help the Daily Egyptian better serve its readers and advertising clients. This survey consists of 38 questions and will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. I thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

\* Required

**What is your gender? \***

Male

Female

**What is your current status at SIUC? \***

(Choose only one)

Freshman

Sophomore

Junior

Senior

Graduate Student

Faculty

Staff

**Do you read the Daily Egyptian? \***

Yes

No (Thank you, you have completed the survey)

**Which days do you read the Daily Egyptian? \***

(Check all that apply)

Everyday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

**On average, how much time do you spend reading an issue of the Daily Egyptian? \***



- 5-10 minutes
- 11-20 minutes
- 21-30 minutes
- Greater than 30 mins

**Which of the following publications have you read in the past week? \***

(Check all that apply)

- Carbondale Times
- Southern Illinoisan
- Chicago Tribune
- Nightlife
- St. Louis Post Dispatch
- None

**Did you read the Back to Campus edition of the Daily Egyptian? \***

(This edition is only distributed in August)

- Yes
- No

**How often do you shop for entertainment services (CD's, DVD's, video games, video/video game rentals,etc) in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Not Often				Very Often

**What is your primary source to gain information about local entertainment? \***

- Daily Egyptian
- Nightlife
- Southern Illinoisan
- Carbondale Times
- Other

**Based on your readership of the Daily Egyptian in the past week, which sections do you remember reading? \***

(Check all that apply)

Local News  
 National News  
 International News  
 Sports  
 Comics  
 Opinion (Voices)  
 Entertainment (Pulse)  
 Features (Currents)  
 Classifieds

**Have you ever used a coupon found in the Daily Egyptian when making a purchasing decision? \***

Yes  
 No

**How frequently do you shop for clothing in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**How frequently do you shop in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**Do you bank in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

Yes  
 No

**Approximately how many coupons have you used from the Daily Egyptian in the past 30 days? \***

None  
 1-2  
 3-4  
 5 or more

**In which types of stores have you used a coupon that you found in the Daily Egyptian in the last 30 days? \***

(Check all that apply)

Clothing

- Insurance
- Auto Products/Services
- Medical Services
- Electronic/Computer
- Professional Services
- Entertainment Services
- Restaurant/Fast Food
- Groceries
- Banking
- Recreational Activity
- Specialty Shops
- None

**How frequently do you shop for groceries in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**How frequently do you consider grocery store advertisements in the Wednesday edition of the Daily Egyptian when considering grocery purchasing decisions? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**Approximately how much money do you spend on entertainment activities (bars, clubs, wineries, etc) in an average month in Carbondale? \***

- Less than 20 dollars
- 21 - 50 dollars
- 51 - 100 dollars
- 101 - 150 dollars
- 151 - 200 dollars
- More than 200 dollars

**How frequently do you shop for professional services (lawyers, medical, etc.) in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**How frequently do you eat out at restaurants or eat fast food in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**Do you find the Daily Egyptian conveniently available to you? \***

Yes  
No

**How frequently do you shop for auto parts or repair work in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**How frequently do you shop for electric or computer products in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**How frequently do you shop for recreational activities in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**How frequently do you shop for beauty products or services in Carbondale or the surrounding area? \***

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**Are you currently insured by a local insurance provider? \***

Yes  
No

**How frequently do you reference the Daily Egyptian when searching for campus events? \***

(Ex. concerts, public policy events, sporting events, lectures, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely				Very Frequently

**Do you notice certain locations that tend to run out of copies of the Daily Egyptian quickly? \***

If yes, please choose other and mention the location.

No

Other:

**What location do you usually pick up a copy of the Daily Egyptian? \***

On campus

At work (Off campus)

Restaurants

Local businesses (Other than workplace)

Other:

**How frequently do you use the classified section in the Daily Egyptian when making a purchasing decision? \***

1 2 3 4 5

Very Rarely

Very Frequently

**Which of the following sections do you use on siude.com? \***

(Check all that apply)

News

Sports

Opinion (Voices)

Web Extras

Find-it

Dawghouse

Blogs

Dining Guide

Pulse

Poll

**In the past week, have you used the Daily Egyptian when making an entertainment decision? \***

Yes

No

**How likely are you to visit a restaurant featured on the siude.com Dining Guide? \***

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Unlikely						Very Likely

**Do you feel that there are enough copies of the Daily Egyptian available on any given day? \***

Yes  
No

**Have you ever visited siude.com? \***

Yes  
No

**How likely are you to use a listing featured on the siude.com Dawghouse? \***

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Unlikely						Very Likely

**How likely are you to click on a banner or skyscraper ad found on the siude.com website? \***

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very Unlikely						Very Likely

**You have completed the survey. Thank you for your time and input. If you have any additional comments, please use the space below.**

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