

# **MK2005 Integrated Marketing Communications**

## **Semester 2**

### **Assignment 1 - Audience Profiling**

**I confirm that this assignment which I have submitted is all my own work and the source of any information or material I have used (including the internet) has been fully identified and properly acknowledged as required in the school guidelines I have received.**

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# Staycations in the UK

**A report for GO UK, for of the UK Independent Family Travel Agency**

G20698339 - May 2018

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(Brown, 2016)

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## 1.0 Introductory Analysis

The first of the two groups discussed in this report is the target market of young couples between the ages of eighteen and thirty who live together, and may be married, but have at least one young child. The second group consists of older parents between the ages of thirty and fifty, and whose children have grown up and are older teenagers.

The young couple certainly require a safe and secure environment for their children as the first priority, as well as facilities for babies, and entertainment for young children (Horner, and Swarbrooke, 2007, p128-130). The parents enjoy staycations where they can feel relaxed knowing that their children are safe and entertained which means that the parents can enjoy and relax, which is why there has been a huge popularity in staycation resorts such as Haven (Haven, 2018) and CenterParcs (CenterParcs, 2018).

However, the second target market, due to it consisting of older teenagers, requires greater means of entertainment such as a theme parks, cinemas, or outdoor activities like playing golf (Acorn, 2018) and cycling (Worthington, 2018) as is seen in Figure 4. This target market will also require greater autonomy and more freedom from set activities and schedules, though oppositely, younger families will appreciate having children entertained and kept busy (Acorn, 2018).

Perhaps this is why the UK has seen an upsurge in the popularity of holiday rental properties jumping from 20% of British people surveyed in 2016 to 27% in 2017 (Worthington, 2017) as is seen in Figure 1. This has no doubt been especially strengthened since the introduction of the app and website, AirBnb (AirBnb, 2018), to the UK market in 2008 which allows consumers to easily find rental accommodations (Worthington, 2017). In addition to this, companies like HomeAway (2018) and Holidaycottages.co.uk (2018) have also seen upsurges in their own popularities in recent years (May, 2018) (Anon., 2016).

Staycations can consist of simple relaxation which resembles lounging around, sunbathing, and spending time leisurely (Scott, 2018), or may consist structured days of activities to the interest of the “staycationers” whether that be outdoor activities, indoor activities, or shopping (FamilyEducation, 2018).

A report from Mintel (McGivney, 2017) explored the booking habits of consumers which is essential to correctly executing any marketing strategy towards consumers in this industry. The Mintel report discovered that 24% of consumers surveyed used mobile booking for shorter breaks, while travel agents continue to lead the market for the booking of longer breaks at 19% while mobile booking stood at just 12% in that category.

However, all digital methods of booking combined far outweigh in-store, or telephone booking with accumulated figures for internet, tablet, and smartphone app bookings consisting of 25% for longer holidays (with in-store and telephone standing at 19%), and 50% for shorter breaks. Considering these figures, the development of digital channels for the booking of holidays would be essential in the marketing campaign for either of the two target markets, therefore it remains important that Go UK consider this.

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## 2.0 Detailed Profiling

Choosing the younger family for the option of focus presents a three-pronged structures to their detailed profiling as three main typologies of younger families emerge, and according to Acorn, a trusted consumer classification resource, these consist of the following categories:

- Career driven young families (type 18)
- Educated families in terraces with young children (type 32)
- Young families in low cost private flats (type 49)

According to Acorn's findings (2018), the members of the career driven young family ignore posters, television, and radio advertising, with the advertising channel of higher penetration being a text message. Another noteworthy aspect is that each of the parents do have smartphones and even the children may have iPads and tablets for their own entertainment which presents the fact that this family is digitally up to date. Although these families do not consider social media as a source of brand interaction, and they do not utilise social media as a channel to purchase goods, their phones remain important to them as a central aspect of their daily lives.

Acorn (2018) demonstrates that the parent members of type 18, especially the mothers, frequent blogs to gain insights into certain topics such as searching for reviews with certain bloggers gaining their trust over time which demonstrates a marketing opportunity for Go UK.

According to a report and survey conducted by Visit England (2015), as part of Visit Britain, since the UK economic downturn had officially ended in 2014, there had been significant worries that the popularity of staycations would wane as people's incomes revived. However, with the Brexit vote in 2016, the upsurge in staycations has continued (Coffey, 2017).

Researchers from Acorn (2018) have discovered that educated families living in terraces with younger children (type 32) have a smartphone ownership that is higher than average, and they download a variety of smartphone applications for the purpose of gaining information and making purchasing decisions. Another noteworthy finding is that they are willing to use their smartphones as navigation devices more than average, and they utilise their digital devices for the purposes of making travel/ social plans, buying products, and researching information.

Alternatively to type 18, this family category deems telephone and marketing texts unpopular, with lower penetration all round which demonstrates a divergence between the different classes of this same category. It has also been found by the Acorn researchers (2018) that this family is influenced by customer reviews on what they decide to purchase, as well as by internet adverts and posters.

From the data retrieved from Acorn (2018), we can easily derive that all of the categories of young families live in urbanised areas which is perhaps why some companies such as RuralRetreats.co.uk (2018) are targeting families to encourage them to take staycations in the British countryside in order to get away from urban life.

Turning to the financial aspect of these three young family classes, from the information sourced by Acorn (2018), and as seen in Figure 5 in the appendix, 125 people in the type 32 category said their household income was between £60,000 and £80,000.

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Comparing this to type 18 with the highest designated household income being £100,000+, chosen by 249 people, as seen in Figure 7 in the appendix, we see that these two types are more than capable of affording luxury rural retreats which is why companies such as Unique Home Stays (2018) are targeting their properties towards consumers seeking luxury for their staycation.

However, from type 49, which represents young families with lower incomes, 111 people designated their household incomes as below £20,000 per annum, as seen by Figure 8 in the appendix. This demonstrates the demand for affordable staycations which is why popular travel blogs are providing consumers with tips about how to plan staycations on a budget (Luxton, 2014).

To conclude our detailed profile of the three categories of young families, we apply their circumstances to the Family Life Cycle in order to derive their place within it, then analyse further, and make a conclusion about each category's habits from the concepts of the Family Life Cycle.

The market segment of young families that we have chosen to target will all fit into the third rung of the traditional family life cycle of family with young children (Askegaard et al, 2016, p438), as seen in Figure 3. However, the structure of these families is bound to vary greatly. The majority of which may consist of the traditional family structure which is predominantly the nuclear family, but other alternatives to this are the extended family, or even the joint family.

The greatest difference, especially in the change of familial structures in the last twenty years are the new modes of family that have emerged and are set to shape the structure of a large proportion of young families, the most common examples of which being the blended family, the unmarried family, and the single parent family (Askegaard et al, 2016, p442-443). Depending on how the family is affected by their structure, their consumption habits, and certainly their purchasing decisions are set to dramatically changed due to reduced incomes for single parent families, or greater outgoings for larger blended families (Piacentini, and Szmigin, 2015, p295).

## 2.1 Interests & Hobbies

Acorn (2018) identified the similar interests between the family types 18 and 32, consisting of shopping, fitness, travelling, fashion, and food, which were found to be even “more prevalent than average” for type 32. For type 49, Acorn's researchers (2018) discovered that again, shopping, downloading music, watching films and television were the most prevalent interests of the family members like in the other types, but also popular were online dating, using the internet, and playing video games.

From the research conducted by Acorn (2018), they found that fathers from all types were mostly interested in sports, especially cycling and football. However, it was also discovered that the mothers were more interested in crafts, interiors, and fashion. Shopping, and going to the cinema were found to be the most popular activities, especially for types 18 and 32.

To take advantage of the new boom in staycations across the UK, one of the most famous theme parks in Britain is directly targeting themselves towards being a destination for short breaks. Alton Towers (2018) is now using its website's headliner to describe itself as a “short break resort” as is evidenced by Figure 2, and other examples of this strategy are being implemented by Flamingo Land (2018) and



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Drayton Manor (2018).

Demonstrating the fierce strategies implemented by major entertainment and staycation providers proves how companies are positioning themselves to best take advantage of the effects of Brexit on British holidaymakers (Choat, 2016). Due to the nature of the entertainments they provide, the targeting of their websites towards children, and all inclusive packages they promote, it is evident that they remain determined to target young families to choose them for their staycations with two more examples including Butlins (2018), and Forest Holidays (2018).

## 2.2 Psychographics & Social Grades

A number of factors have shaped the psychographic attitudes and opinions of British holidaymakers in recent years, with one of the main influences being terrorism in affecting British people's decisions to go abroad (Heyden & Parkinson, 2015). In addition, the Brexit vote has caused many people to rethink their holiday destinations, with 37% of people surveyed saying they wouldn't go abroad primarily because of Brexit, as was discovered in a report by Mintel (Fricker, 2017) which hints at the wider impact of economic and political uncertainty on consumer behaviour and wider consumer psychologies (Kumar, 2015, p17-18).

After compiling data found from Acorn (2018), as well as the National Readership Survey (NRS) (2018), it is easily derivable that the majority of young families will fall in either the C1 social grade for supervisory, clerical or junior managerial roles, or the skilled manual workers classification which is C2. From using Acorn's data, we can derive that types 18 and 32 would sit within the C1 social grade and type 49 would sit within the C2 grade. Understanding this allows us to comprehend in greater depth, the financial circumstances and the career statuses of each young family type which certainly affect their purchasing decisions (Brassington, and Pettitt, 2013, p103).

## 2.3 VALS Types

The three classifications of young families that have been identified by Acorn researchers can be applied to the VALS types (2018), of which there are eight different categories. The first family classification, type 18, can be placed into the achievers consumer group. This family type demonstrates their ambitions and the achievement of their career goals as the central aspect of their lives with a goal oriented, hardworking, and professional attitude (VALS, 2018).

Secondly, type 32 can be placed into the VALS' strivers consumer group because of their ambitions to better their lives, their use of films and video games as a form of fantasy, and the fact that their employment is regularly changed; this demonstrates less stability in their finances than type 18 (VALS, 2018).

Finally, type 49 can be considered as part of the survivors consumer group of VALS types due to them enjoying familiarity in the people they interact with, they are loyal to the brands they purchase from, and they are heavy viewers of television, especially football, music, and fashion-related programmes (VALS, 2018).

## 2.4 IMC Consumption

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Although Acorn's researchers did not specify the websites and blogs that parents from young families would regularly use, for the context on which we focus, the most prominent sites would be TripAdvisor (2018) and Zoover (2018) as these are prominent consumer review sites for travel. To support this, review sites are identified by Acorn (2018) as an important aspect in how these families come to their decisions.

When attempting to understand the consumption habits of consumers, Hello! magazine demonstrates its popularity with younger audiences as those aged 34 and under make up 40% of their total readership (2005). Similarly, Cosmopolitan (2017) boasts a readership of 2.6 million between the ages of 18 and 24, which forms the bulk of the target demographic of the brief, further demonstrating the traditional consumer habits of young audiences.

Websites such as Families Online (2018) provide us with ideas about the latest trends, hobbies, and interests for young families, in addition to acting as central hubs for parents to read reviews, and get ideas for lifestyle, things to do, and holiday ideas.

Social media advertising has been identified by Acorn's researchers (2018) as an integral source of promotion and various social media sites are positioning themselves towards assisting businesses in using the platform to promote their products and services (Pinterest, 2018). We see this through various social media networks such as Pinterest as it holds a 7.8% market share of 2018 UK social media traffic as well as Facebook which boasts a massive 74.03% market share (2018).

### 3.0 Advertising Copy Recommendation

Founded upon the trusted research conducted and the facts that have been proven about the consumption habits, as well as the requirements of young families from their holidays, there emerges a three-pronged approach to the development of a comprehensive marketing communications strategy.

Firstly, this consists of the creation of a website that is fully mobilised to accept online bookings, is geared towards children and their needs, and provides demarcated holiday packages for easy accessibility and a clear understanding of what is included.

Secondly, the approach to advertising should be wholly digital as that has been proven to be the trajectory for the industry by the research that has been collated in this report. This can be further broken down into search engine advertising and social media advertising.

Thirdly, partnering with third-party influencers such as bloggers, popular websites such as Families Online (2018), and organisations like Visit England (2018) as part of Visit Britain, has been proven to be a powerful marketing technique to reach the target consumer segment of young families, as has been rationalised by the research of consumption trends and purchasing habits.

Finally, an approach that places Britain as a country with a rich history and huge abundance of landmarks and places of interest, as well as places of retreat, is essential to the marketing communication approach. For young families living in rural areas, offer them cities to visit that embrace urban life, and for young families living in urban areas, offer them rural retreats and seaside resorts to escape from their urban lifestyles. An example of how this could be presented in advertising copy is "Get Your Staycation On!" in order to portray staycations as interest, exciting, and memorable.



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## 4.0 Conclusion

To conclude, the younger family market is our recommended target segment for Go UK's campaign for staycations, the reasons for this has been evidenced throughout this report. Contributing factors to this decision were that of income, as researched by Acorn, their generally positive attitudinal approaches to staycations, and the psychographic analysis that has been conducted on each young family classification.

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## 6.0 Appendix

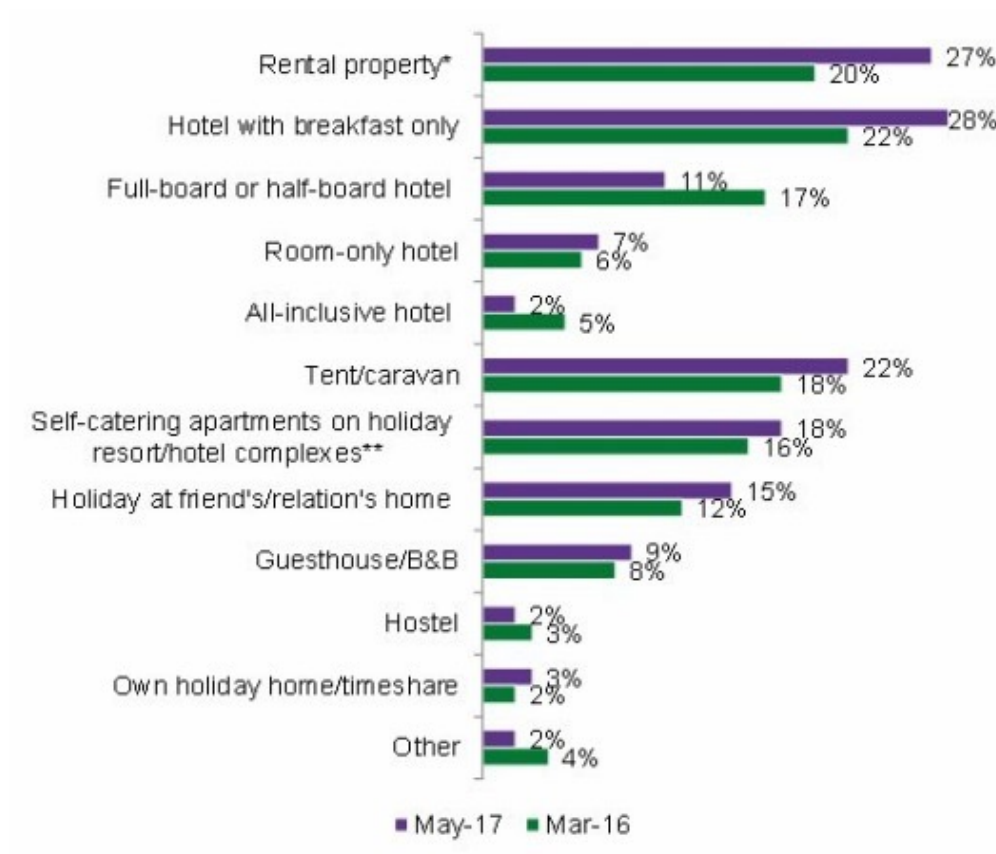


Figure 1: Bar chart demonstrating the increase in rental properties (Worthington, 2017)

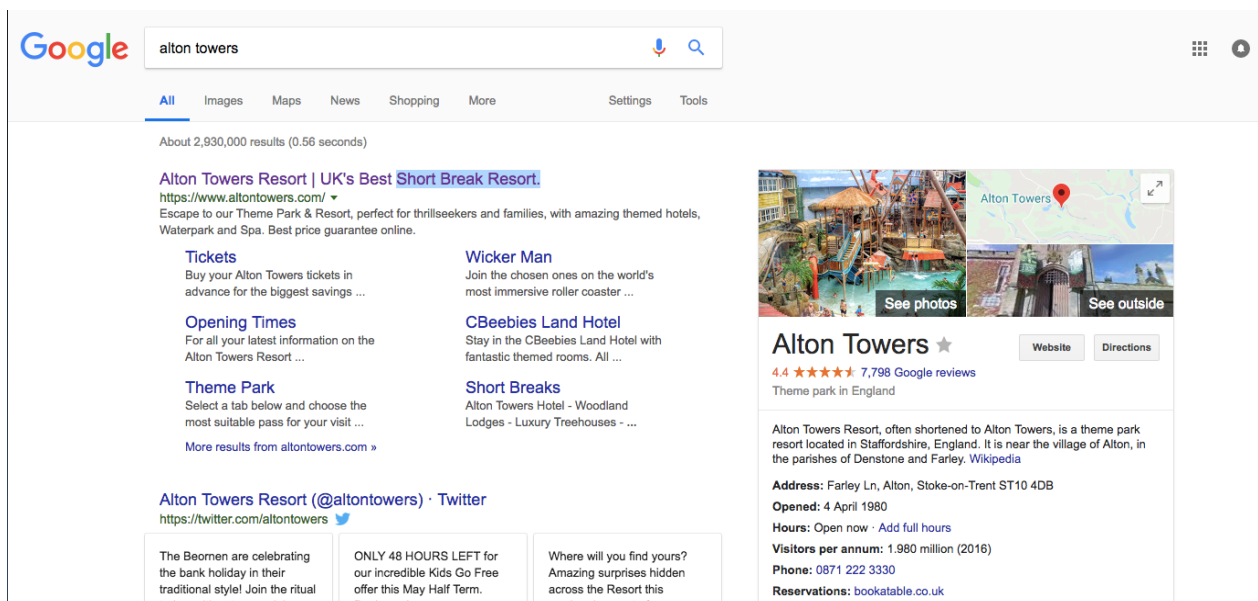


Figure 2: Screenshot of Alton Towers Google search demonstrating their positioning as a “short break resort” (Alton Towers, 2018)

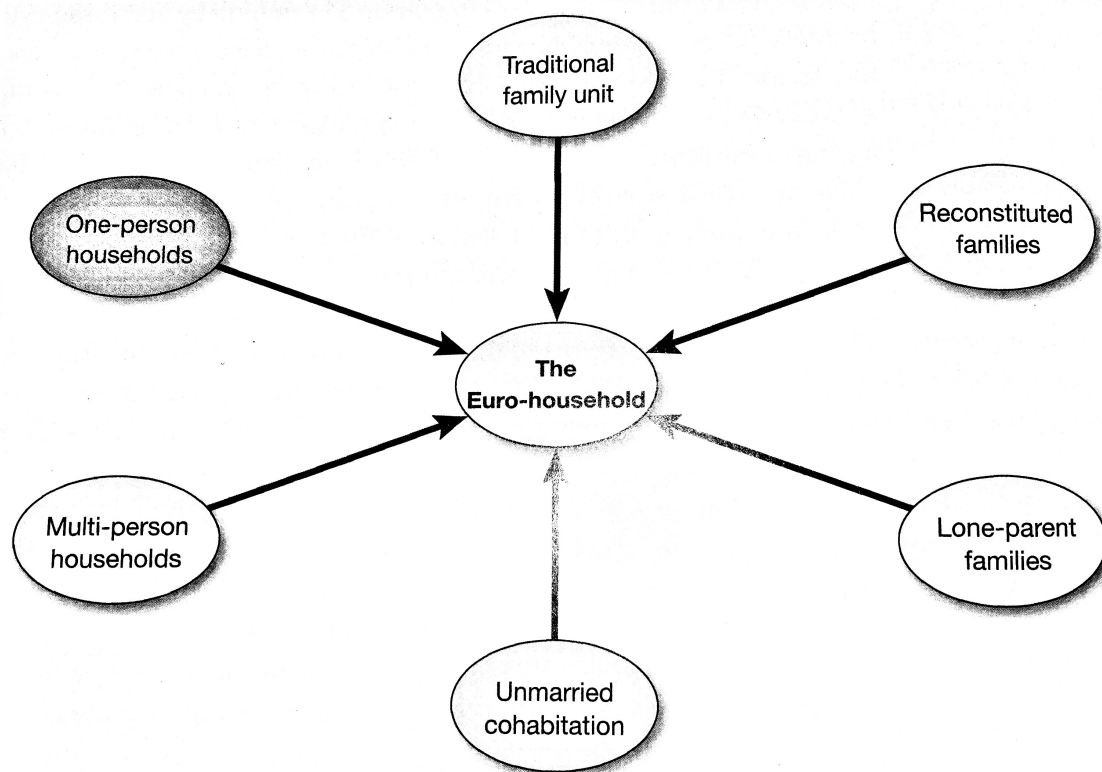


Figure 3: Family life cycle chart for euro-household (Askegaard, et al, 2016, p438)

Figure 8: Interest in cycling activities and purchases, December 2017

Base: 1,229 internet users aged 16+ who currently cycle or would consider cycling; \*575 female internet users aged 16+ who currently cycle or would consider cycling

"Would you be interested in doing any of the following in the future? Please select all that apply."



Figure 4: Bar chart for hobbies and interests for people aged 16+ (Worthington, 2018)

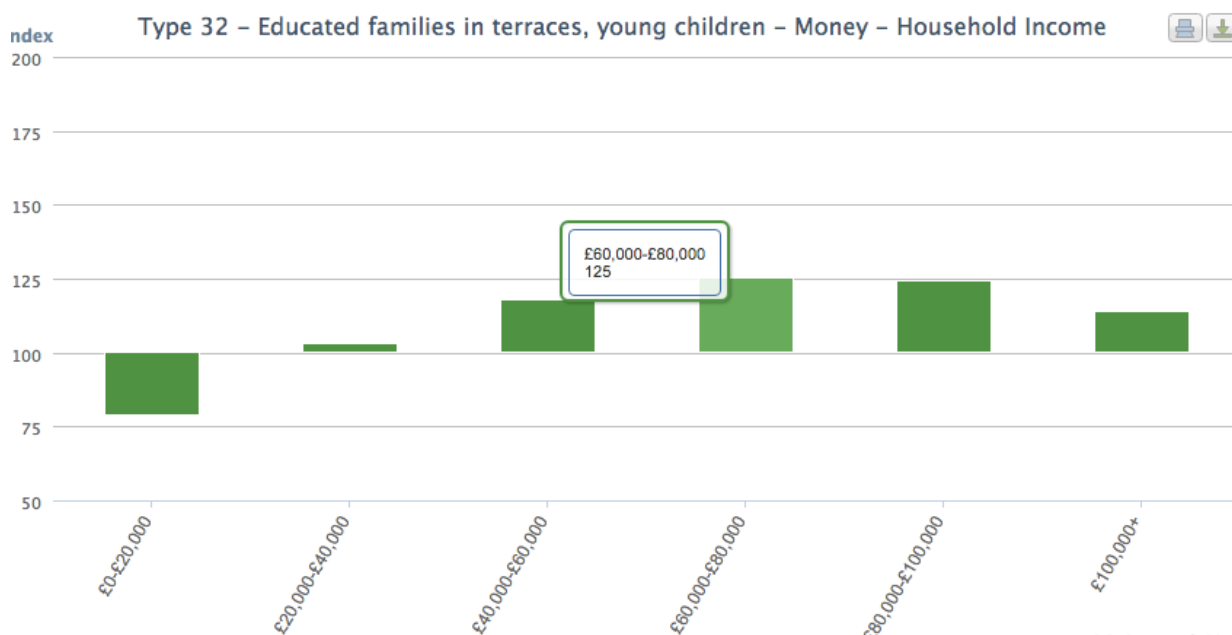


Figure 5: Analysis bar chart of household income index for Type 32 (Acorn, 2018)



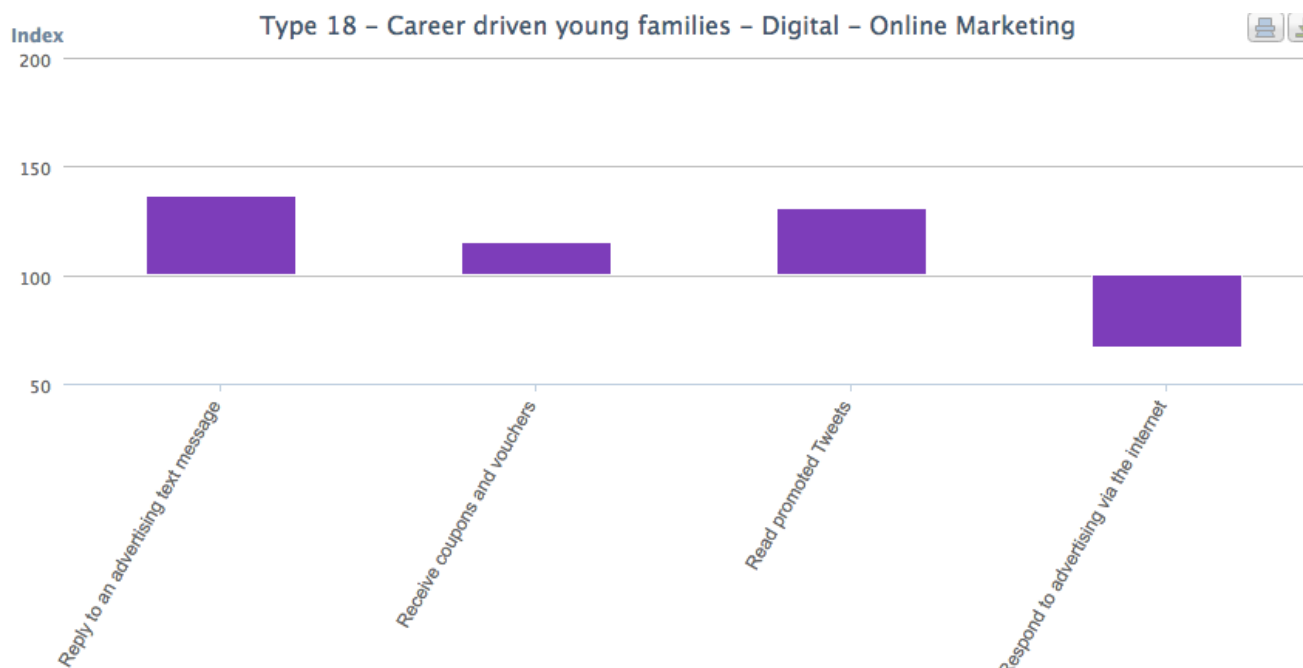


Figure 6: Analysis bar chart of online marketing habits for type 18 (Acorn, 2018)

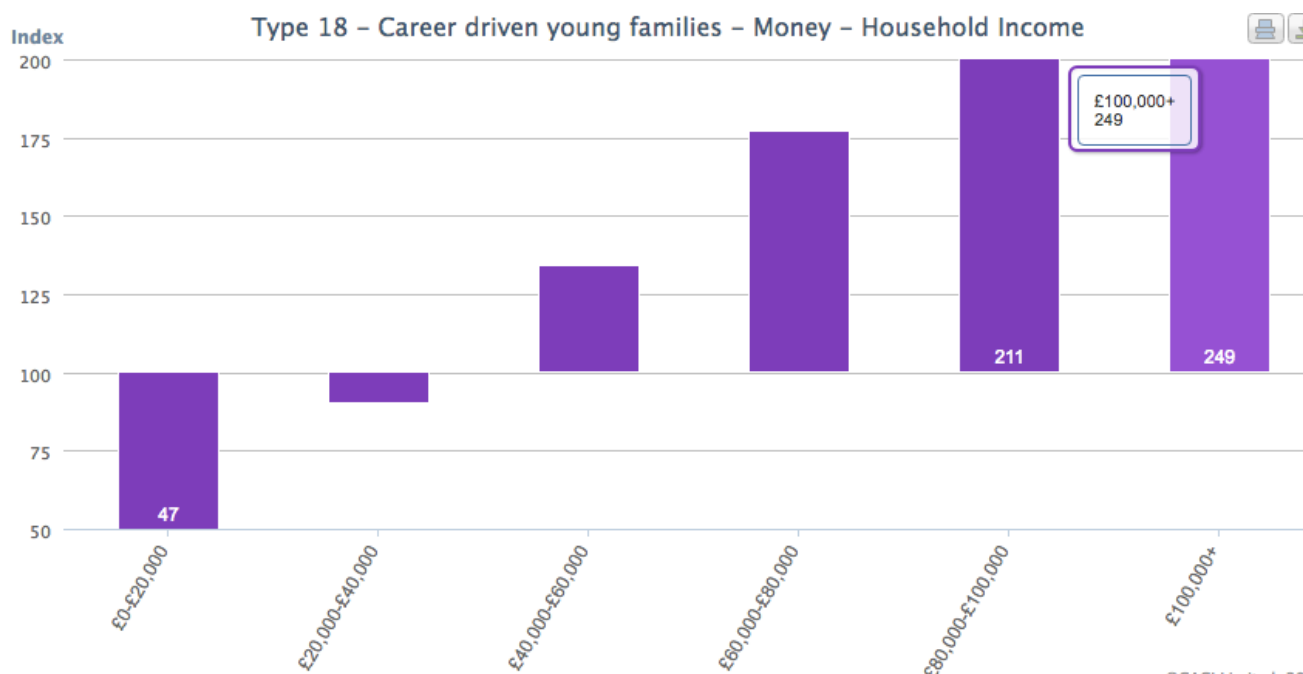


Figure 7: Analysis bar chart of household income index for Type 18 (Acorn, 2018)

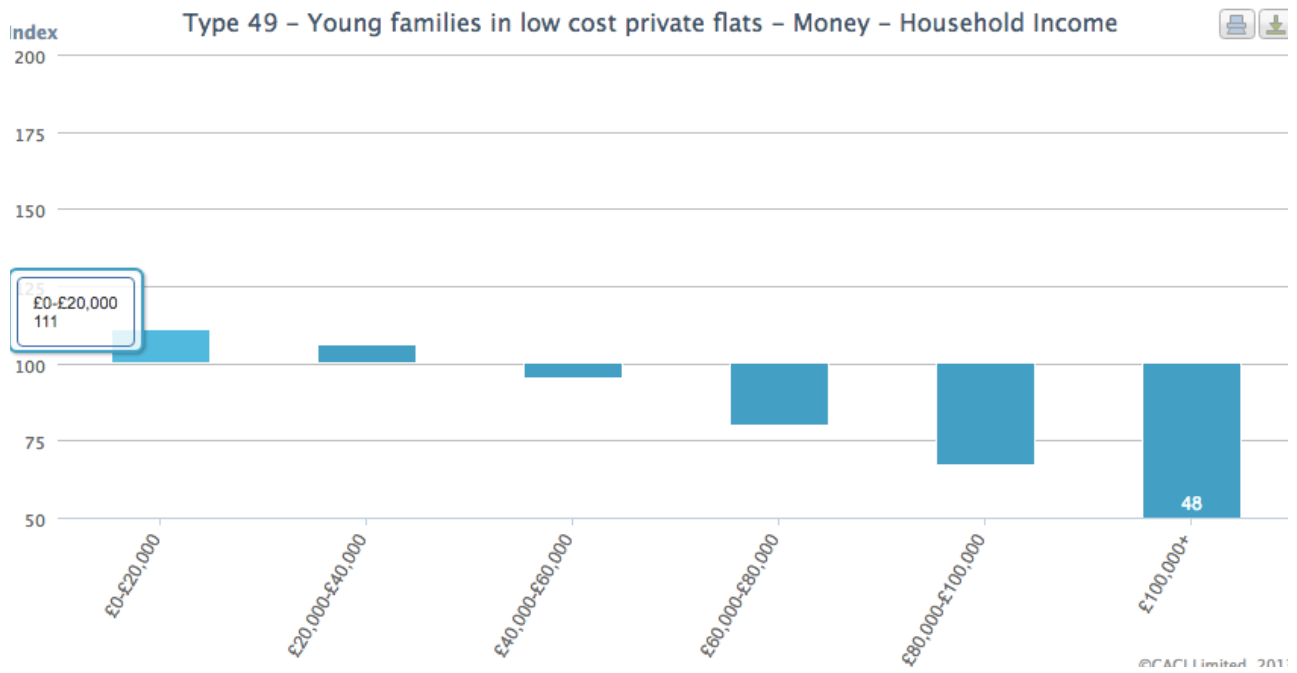


Figure 8: Analysis bar chart of household income index for Type 49 (Acorn, 2018)