People Generally Know In Advance Exactly What They Want To Watch on TV

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Outline

Company Introduction: Samsung
The Problem & Current Solutions
The Challenge
The Method
Findings
Conclusions & What's next

Company Introduction

Samsung Electronics designs and manufactures consumer electronics devices including TVs. Samsung designs the software and services for its TVs. Our TV service group, designs TV apps (e.g., Samsung TV Plus) and contributes to the design of the Samsung Smart TV platform.

The Problem & Current Solutions

Samsung wants its TVs to have the best user experience: to provide the most benefit to the most people. Thus, it is important to know how most people typically interact with TV.

When people watch TV, do they generally know in advance what they want to watch (e.g., routinely-watched content?) Or do they typically not know, and browse through alternatives before choosing something to watch? The answer has significant implications for the design of the TV's "first screen".
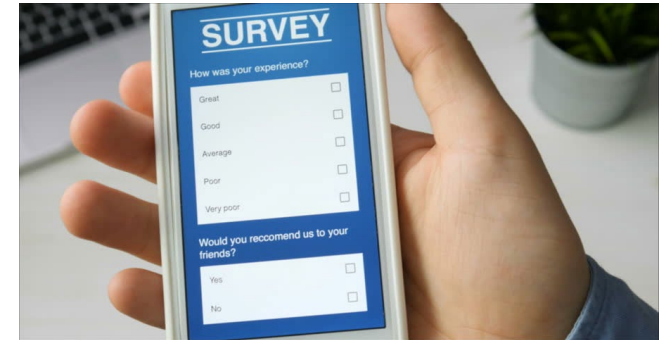
Should the first screen prioritize showing a person's routinely-watched content, to facilitate easy access, or should it prioritize showing relevant alternatives for the person to browse through?

The Challenge

Prior research on the question of whether people generally know in advance what they want to watch on TV revealed that they do know. But these studies were based on surveys where people reported what they do in the "typical case". This method assumes people know what they typically do.

We wanted to test this question using the "recent case" survey method asking people to report on only their most recent TV watching experience (usually the same day or the previous day), rather than what they believe they typically do. We also asked a series of questions to see if their answer differed by content type, viewing mode, age, gender, etc.
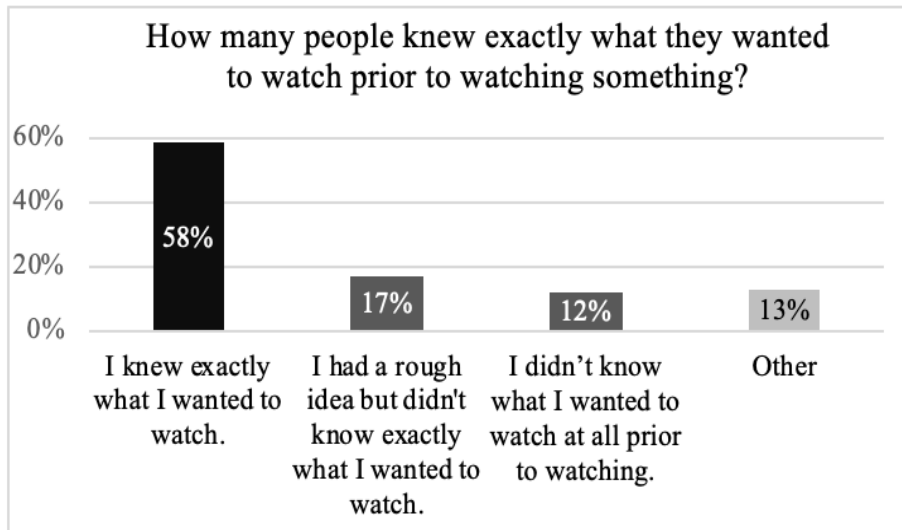
The Method

Eight-hundred sixty-seven respondents in the US filled out an online survey, answering a series of questions about the last thing they watched on TV. The "key" question was

Which of the following best describes how you chose the last thing you watched?
- *I knew exactly what I wanted to watch*
- *I had a rough idea but did not know exactly what I wanted to watch*
- *I didn't' know what I wanted to watch at all prior to watching*
- *I didn't choose it, someone else did*
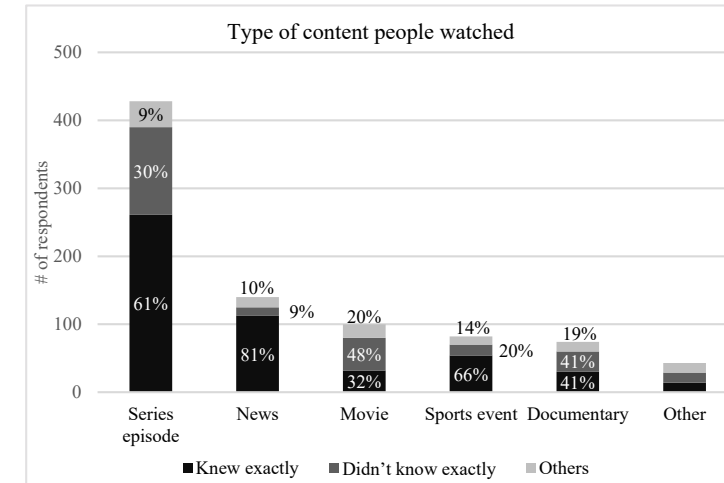- *I don't remember*

Findings

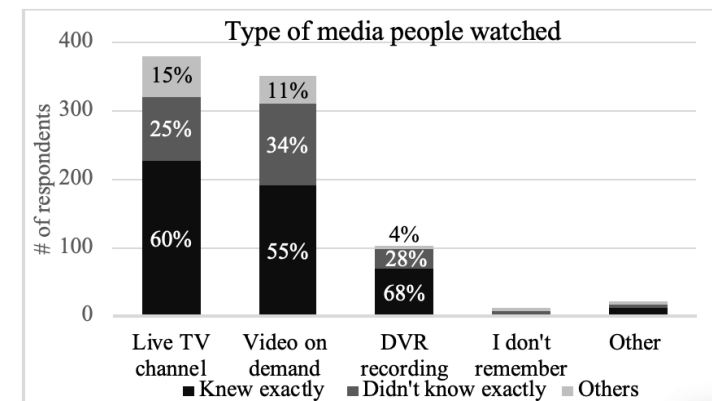Most people reported that they generally knew in advance exactly what they wanted to watch

(Full color charts and many other detailed findings will appear in the full presentation)

Most people reported that they knew in advance what series, news and sports event they wanted to watch

Most people reported that they knew in advance for all types of media including Live TV, Video on Demand and DVR/PVR

Conclusions & What's next

These findings suggest that when people sit down to watch TV, most of the time they know exactly what program or channel they want to watch

The implications for TV design are that the TV should prioritize making it easy and quick get to known content. One should consider prioritizing the display of routinely-watched content on the TV's first screen, as well as providing voice commands to go directly to known content