

Digital view: Life on the Danish Internet, Municipal election
special edition

Election Day: the effect of municipal elections on Danish news-sites

Tracking the difference in appeal of local news-, tabloid-
and omnibus-sites.



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 United States License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/us/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

“Digital view: Life on the Danish Internet” is written by Jon Lund.

You can download your own free copy at www.jon-lund.com. or order it at

Jon Lund
Byholmvej 10 // 2720 Vanløse // Copenhagen // Denmark
jon@jon-lund.com // +45 2819 9052
CVR: 32 17 61 19 // Bank: 2128-7563384616

INTRODUCTION

Digital view: Life on the Danish Internet provides a weekly overview of the evolution of traffic on Danish websites, as measured for nearly 300 of the largest Danish websites member of the Interactive Bureau of Denmark (Foreningen af Danske Interaktive Medier, FDIM).

Data stems from an ongoing research carried out by Gemius for FDIM.

Data is collected through a peer-reviewed, automatic, structured and rule-based methodology and is generally of very high quality.

THE EFFECT OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ON DANISH NEWS-SITES

Free voting are often seen as the single factor perhaps most constitutive of representative democracy. However other factors come into play as well in the democratic fabric of society. The rule of law and the division of power, eg, are prerequisites as are a well-educated and enlightened voter-population.

Election days themselves are in this manner virtual festivals of democracy, as they embody both the free voting and testifies to the existence of a deliberated public sphere.

How the analysis is performed

This report looks into the role played by the “deliberated public sphere” in a small part of this cheerfull democratic celebration, investigating the activity on Danish news websites during the elections to the local and regional councils in Denmark on November 17, 2009. (For more information on the elections can be found on the website of the Danish Ministry of the Intereor and Social Affairs on elections.ism.dk/local-elections/Sider/Start.aspx).

The report analyses the traffic on 16 selected websites. The selection is made to ensure that all major websites characterized primarily or exclusively by their general (non-niche) journalistic/editorial content (local web-sites being conceived off as general content websites in this context).

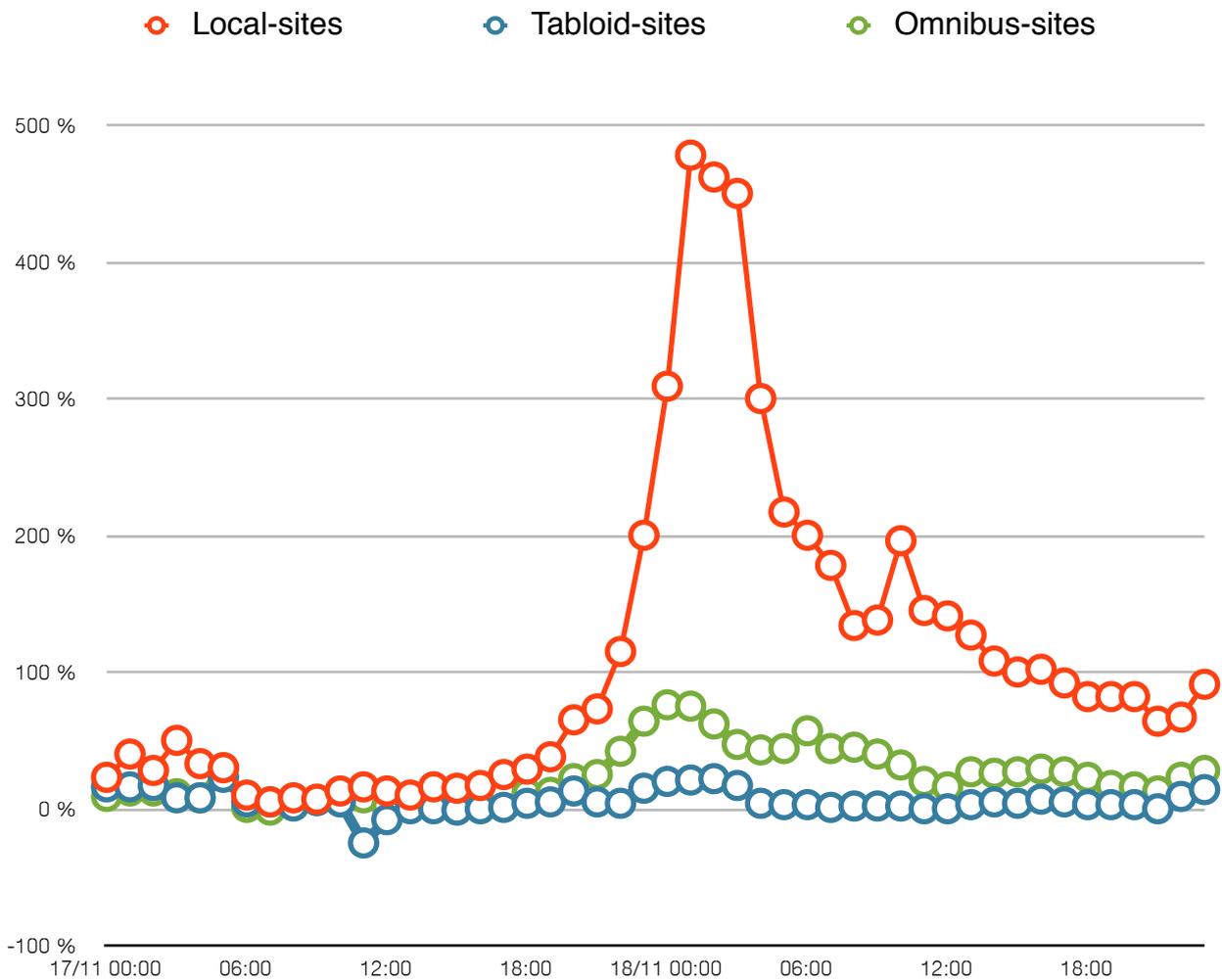
The websites falls into four different groups

- Local news-sites containing amtsavisen.dk, dagbladet-holstebro-struer.dk, dagbladet-ring-skjern.dk, folkebladetlemvig.dk, folketidende.dk, jv.dk, nordjyske.dk, nordvestnyt.dk, stiften.dk
- News-sites of tabloid newspapers containing bt.dk and ekstrabladet.dk
- News-sites of morning papers containing berlingske.dk, jp.dk, politiken.dk
- TV-station web-sites containing dr.dk and tv2.dk

In order to obtain a meassure of the effect of the municipal election on the internet news-usage, the change in the number of visits on each on the websites is calculated on an hour-by-hour-basis for the 48 hours spanning from November 17, 2009, 00:00 to November 18, 2009 24:00. The difference is calculated against a backdrop of the average number of visits for the given site and timeslot for the preceding three weeks.

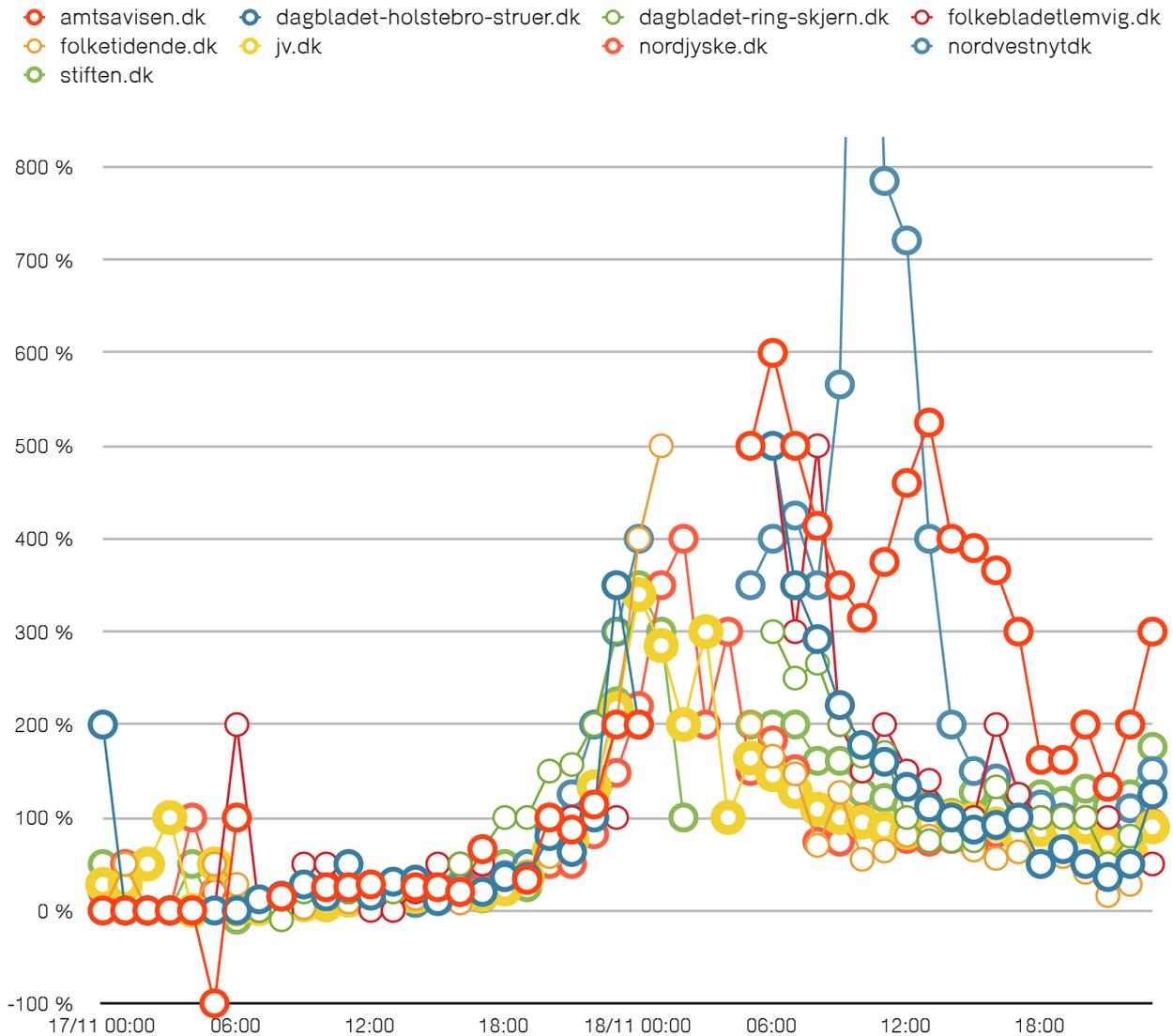
Local news-sites outperforms the rest

Plotting the data reveals four key findings. First, the sites of morning-papers and TV-stations follows the same patterns, and creates a new category: “omnibus-sites”. Second local news-sites grows at a much faster pace, than any of the other groups. Third, growth in activity doesn’t occur during the daytime on election day, but in the evening and following morning.



Growth in the number of visits, hour-by-hour during November 17 og 18, 2009. Data supplied by gemiusAudience/FDIM realtime.

Looking into the three categories reveals the performance of individual sites. Plotting the nine local sites in the graph area shows how traffic-growth is relatively stable up until 18.00 and takes off during the night and peaks the following morning. Especially nordvestjysk.dk makes a growth of 1500 percent between 10 and 11 in the morning of November 18. Despite huge differences, all local sites performs at levels above any other site in other categories.



Growth in the number of visits, hour-by-hour during November 17 og 18, 2009. Data supplied by gemiusAudience/FDIM realtime.

The reason for the extreme increase in traffic for nordvestnyt.dk in the morning on the 18th, is probably to be found in a news story published November 18 at 01:59, documenting how internal disagreement inside the Dansk Folkeparti-party evolved into physical scuffling - a story that was picked up quickly by other media.

The screenshot shows the website's navigation bar with categories like 'FORSIDE SPORT KRIMI DEBAT NAVNE INDLAND UDLAND' and a search bar. The main article is titled 'DF'ere i håndgemæng' (DF members in a scuffle), dated 18. november 2009 01:59. The article features a photo of two men scuffling. A sidebar on the right contains a 'JULEFROKOST-GUIDE' and 'SENESTE FODBOLDRESULTATER' (Latest Football Results) table.

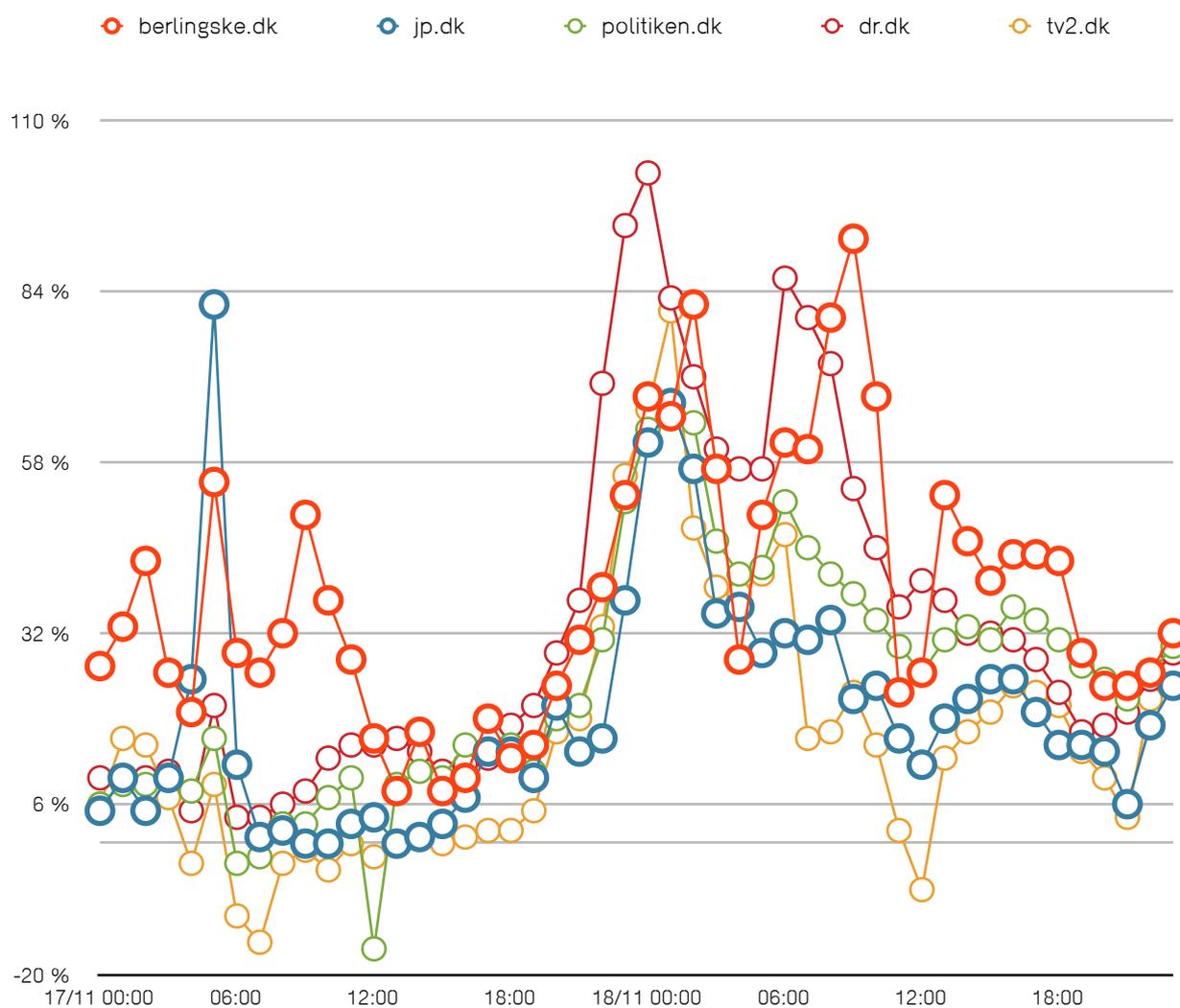
SENESTE FODBOLDRESULTATER	
2. division øst	Skjold - Nordvest FC 1 - 2
2. division øst	Nordvest FC - Søllerød-Vedbæk 2 - 5
Spillemestersen	Ølstykke - Holbæk 0 - 4

Below the photo, a caption reads: 'Det gik drabeligt for sig, da lokale DF'ere overfaldt deres spidskandidat og chefforhandler Steen Egede Jensen. Foto: Per Christensen'. Another sidebar features the headline 'Hvem kan redde kommunens økonomi?' (Who can save the municipality's economy?) and 'Følg med i valget på Nordvestnyt.dk' (Follow the election on Nordvestnyt.dk) for 'Kommunalvalg 2009'.

"Members of Dansk Folkeparti scuffling". News story and footage on nordvestnyt.dk pushing traffic to record-levels.

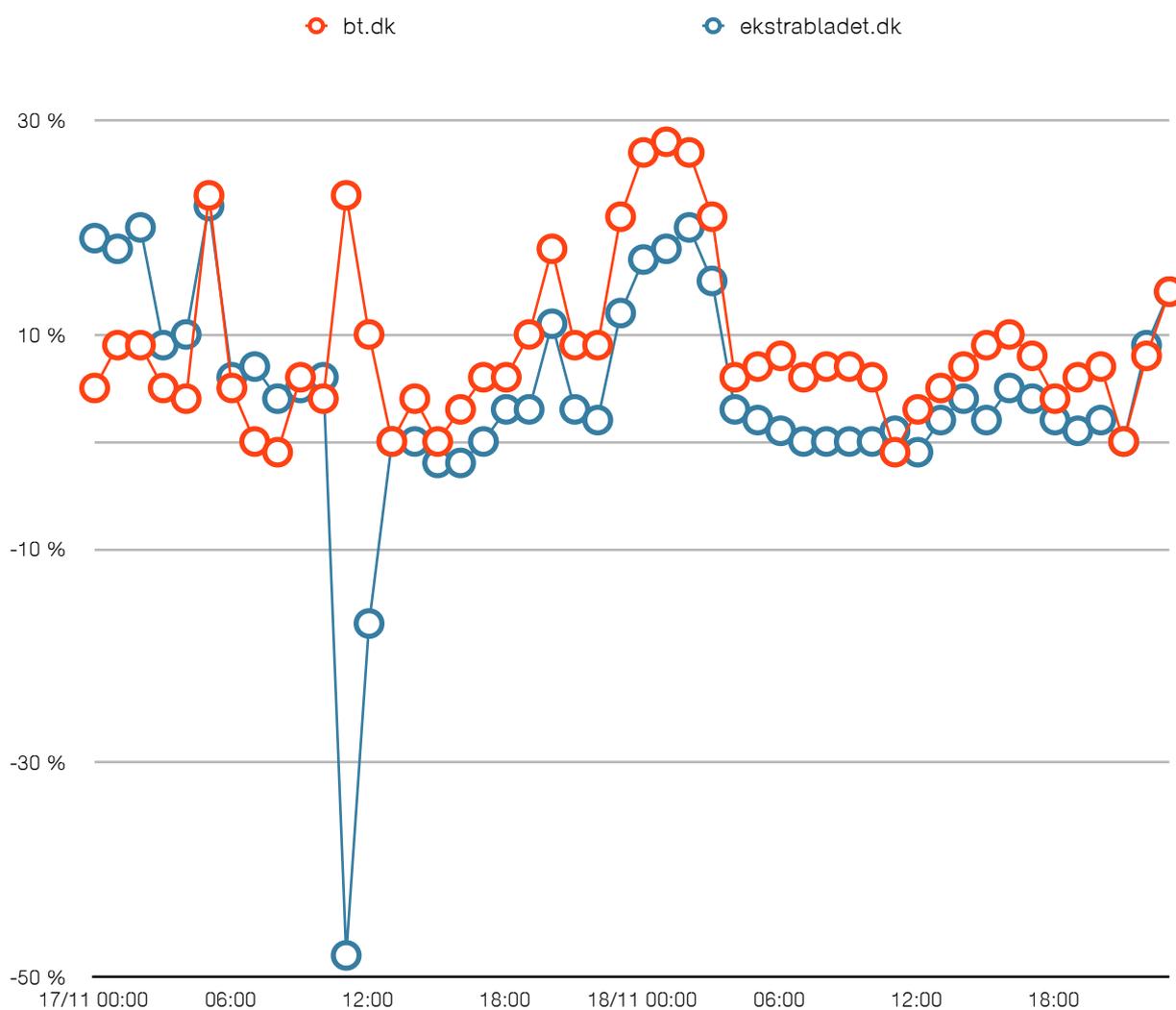
Also Lokalavisen.dk - one of the dominant players among local news sites in Denmark - reports of record-high activity with (not included in above numbers), with close to 150.000 visits and more than 4.000 views on their election-webtv - the normal number of an entire week.

The group of omnibus-sites shows the same general pattern, considerable growth in activity during the evening of and morning after the November 17 - albeit growth at a much lower level than the local sites. However a few sites, most stable berlingske.dk, has significantly increased activity during the daytime of election day.



Growth in the number of visits, hour-by-hour during November 17 og 18, 2009. Data supplied by gemiusAudience/FDIM realtime.

The two traditional Danish tabloid newspapers, BT and Ekstrabladet, occupies a category for themselves, not reaching the 30 % growth rate mark - Ekstrabladet even showing a sharply decreasing growth-rate around mid-day on November 17.



Growth in the number of visits, hour-by-hour during November 17 og 18, 2009. Data supplied by gemiusAudience/FDIM realtime.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

“Digital view: Life on the Danish Internet” provides a weekly overview of the evolution of traffic on Danish websites, as measured for nearly 300 of the largest Danish websites member of the Interactive Bureau of Denmark (Foreningen af Danske Interaktive Medier, FDIM).

The Data stems from an ongoing research carried out by Gemius for FDIM, measuring all pageviews of the sites taking part of the survey, and published on <http://fdim.dk/?pageid=123>

The querying and processing of data, identification of key parameters for selected sites showing significant trends is done by Jon Lund based on a profound experience in traffic-analysis and an in-depth knowledge of the Danish internet-landscape.

Data is collected through a peer-reviewed, automatic, structured and rule-based methodology and is generally of very high quality.

The preliminary number of visits used in this report, has a general uncertainty of +/- 5 % within a 95% level of confidence. This uncertainty is, as FDIM notes, explained as follows: ”In the regular gemiusAudience measurement, the definition of publications (websites) is given in the rules for the said study, especially the concept of “Look & Feel”. The definition hereof can vary from month to month. The final definition of a given publication for a given month is decided upon, after all data have been gathered for the month in question. For the estimated realtime figures, the last known definition of each site is used - that is the definition stems back to the latest officially published gemiusAudience measurement, being two month prior to the present month (m-2).”

Apart from the preliminary figures for number of visits, FDIM publishes an official statistic, carried out by Gemius, based on monthly reporting. This statistic, which is not been drawn upon in this particular analysis, includes information on the socio-demographic makeup of audiences of individual websites, and information on websites not being member of FDIM, like Google.com, facebook.com, wikipedia etc. The official statistics are available on www.fdim.dk and through a special analytics application.



ABOUT JON LUND

Jon Lund is advising, speaking and analyzing the impact of new media and new technology on business and society. Jon Lund views openness and transparency as factors contributing to the growth of business, the welfare of societies and the well-being of individuals. Open up, give away data, figures, facts and opinions, invite customers, business-partners and society in general to engage with you, in the long term will leave you better off.

From 2004 to 2009 Jon Lund was general manager of IAB Denmark (Foreningen af Danske Interaktive Medier, FDIM) and headed as such the official measurement of activity and ad spend on the internet.

Jon Lund is member of the board of IAB Europe and has held honorary positions as member of the Danish Ministry of Cultures advertising forum, member of the board of directors of the forum of the Danish Media, member of ICC Denmark's marketing committee. He holds a masters degree in Political Science and has worked with internet since starting his own agency in 1995.