
May/June 2004 Tracking Survey
Data for May 14 – June 17, 2004

Final Topline

6/22/04

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Princeton Survey Research Associates International
for the Pew Internet & American Life Project

Sample: $n = 2,200$ adults 18 and older

Interviewing dates: 05.14.04 – 06.17.04

Margin of error is plus or minus 2 percentage points for results based on the full sample

Margin of error is plus or minus 3 percentage points for results based on Internet users

WEB2 I'm going to read you another short list of activities. Please tell me if you ever do any of the following when you go online. Do you ever.../Did you happen to do this **yesterday**, or not?

Based on Internet users [N=1,399]

	TOTAL HAVE EVER DONE THIS	DID YESTERDAY	HAVE NOT DONE THIS	DON'T KNOW/ REFUSED
Use an online search engine to help you find information on the web				
Current	84	30	16	*
Jan 2002	85	29	14	1

I have a few questions about how you use online search engines...

SE1 First, how often do you use search engines to find information online? Several times a day, about once a day, 3-5 days a week, 1-2 days a week, once every few weeks, or less often?

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

	CURRENT	
%	23	Several times a day
	12	About once a day
	18	3-5 days a week
	18	1-2 days a week
	15	Every few weeks
	14	Less often
	*	Don't know/Refused

SE2 How many different search engines do you use on a regular basis? **(READ 1-3)**

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

	CURRENT	
%	44	Just one
	48	Two or three
	7	More than three
	1	(VOL) None/Don't use any search engines on a regular basis
	1	Don't know/Refused

SE3 Which search engine do you use MOST OFTEN?

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

	CURRENT	
%	47	Google
	26	Yahoo
	7	MSN
	5	AOL
	2	AskJeeves
	1	Netscape
	4	Other
	1	None/Don't use any one engine more than others
	7	Don't know/Refused

SE4 How much do you, personally, rely on Internet search engines as a way of finding information? Would you say...

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

	CURRENT	
%	32	You couldn't live without Internet search engines
	50	You like using Internet search engines, but could go back to other ways of finding information
	17	You wouldn't really miss Internet search engines if you could no longer use them
	1	Don't know/Refused

SE5 Thinking about your own Internet searches...How much of the information you search for online is information that you absolutely NEED TO FIND, for instance to accomplish an important task or answer an urgent question you have?

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

	CURRENT	
%	12	All
	32	Most
	31	Some
	24	Very little
	1	Don't know/Refused

- SE6** How much of the information you search for online is information that you wouldn't bother looking up if you didn't have access to an Internet search engine?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	8	All
	25	Most
	41	Some
	24	Very little
	2	Don't know/Refused

- SE7** In general, do you think Internet search engines are a fair and unbiased source of information, or do you think search engines are not a fair and unbiased source?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	68	Yes, fair and unbiased source of information
	19	No, not fair and unbiased source
	5	(VOL) Depends
	8	Don't know/Refused

- SE8** When you use a search engine to look for information online, how often do you actually FIND the information you're looking for?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	17	Always
	70	Most of the time
	11	Only some of the time
	1	Hardly ever
	1	Don't know/Refused

- SE9** How confident do you feel about your own searching abilities when using a search engine to find information online?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	48	Very confident
	44	Somewhat confident
	6	Not too confident
	2	Not confident at all
	*	Don't know/Refused

- SE10** In recent years, most Internet search engines have begun providing customers with TWO DIFFERENT KINDS of search results – some that are PAID or SPONSORED results, and others that are UNPAID results. Were you aware that search engines now do this, or were you not aware of this?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	38	Yes, aware of it
	62	No, not aware
	*	Don't know/Refused

- SE11** Have you ever used a search engine that provided customers these two different kinds of results?

Based on Internet users aware that search engines provide paid results [N=443]

CURRENT		
%	68	Yes
	27	No
	5	Don't know/Refused

- SE12** Can you always tell the difference between the PAID results and UNPAID results you get from a search engine, or are you not always able to tell?

Based on Internet users aware that search engines provide paid results [N=443]

CURRENT		
%	47	Can always tell
	45	Not always able to tell
	8	Don't know/Refused

- SE13** Do you ever click on search results that you know are paid results?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine that provides paid results [N=297]

CURRENT		
%	54	Yes
	44	No
	2	Don't know/Refused

SE14 Which of these two statements comes closest to your own opinion on search engines providing PAID or SPONSORED results...

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT

%	70	I'm okay with search engines providing some PAID or SPONSORED results, because the revenue this produces means I don't have to pay to use the search engine
	21	I don't think search engines should provide any PAID or SPONSORED results, even if it means I have to pay to use their service
	2	(VOL) Both equally
	2	(VOL) Neither
	6	Don't know/Refused

SE15 Which of the following do you think would be the MOST EFFECTIVE way for search engines to distinguish PAID results from UNPAID results, so that customers could always tell the difference?

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT

%	42	Label paid results with the words PAID or SPONSORED
	20	List paid results in a different SIZE or a different COLOR than other results
	19	List paid results in a different SECTION of the page
	12	Provide an EXPLANATION about paid results on the search engine's results page
	1	(VOL) Some other way
	7	Don't know/Refused

SE16 If you learned that a search engine was accepting fees from websites, and was listing those websites without making it clear that they were PAID or SPONSORED, would you stop using that search engine, or would you continue to use it?

Based on Internet users who have a used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT

%	45	Would stop using it
	49	Would continue using it
	6	Don't know/Refused

- SE17** Some search engines keep track of how each customer uses their search engine and what they search for. Search engines say this helps them provide customers with better search results. Have you heard or read about search engines keeping track of how each customer uses their search engine and what they search for, or have you not heard or read about this?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	43	Yes
	57	No
	*	Don't know/Refused

- SE18** In general, do you APPROVE or DISAPPROVE of search engines keeping track of how each customer uses their search engine and what they search for?

Based on Internet users who have used a search engine [N=1,165]

CURRENT		
%	37	Approve
	55	Disapprove
	3	(VOL) Depends
	4	Don't know/Refused

- SE19** What if search engines that track how each person uses their service made it CLEAR to customers that they did this... In that case, do you APPROVE or DISAPPROVE of this practice?

Based on Internet users who disapprove of search engines tracking customer use [N=749]

CURRENT		
%	51	Approve
	44	Disapprove
	5	Don't know/Refused

- SE20** If you learned that a search engine was keeping track of YOUR searches, would you stop using that search engine, or would you continue to use it?

Based on Internet users who disapprove of tracking customer use even when customers are aware [N=370]

CURRENT		
%	67	Would stop using it
	25	Would continue using it
	7	Don't know/Refused

Methodology

The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates from May 15 to June 17, 2004, among a sample of 2,200 adults, 18 and older. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 2 percentage points. For results based Internet users (n=1,399), the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys may introduce some error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed numbers). The design of the sample achieves this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

New sample was released daily and was kept in the field for at least five days. This ensures that complete call procedures were followed for the entire sample. Additionally, the sample was released in replicates to make sure that the telephone numbers called are distributed appropriately across regions of the country. At least 10 attempts were made to complete an interview at every household in the sample. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. Interview refusals were recontacted at least once in order to try again to complete an interview. All interviews completed on any given day were considered to be the final sample for that day. The final completion rate was 30.9%.

Non-response in telephone interviews produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis. The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the Census Bureau's March 2003 Annual Social and Economic Supplement Survey. This analysis produces population parameters for the demographic characteristics of adults age 18 or older, living in households that contain a telephone. These parameters are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distribution of all weighting parameters.