

Looking for Reliable Internet Data?

by Gerald Oliver

Over the past 10 years, there have been a number of sources offering information about the Internet population. Some, such as the Irish website Nua (started by Gerry McGovern, who now lectures and teaches about Web content worldwide) achieved instant global acclaim because of their consistency and independence. HEDNA EMEA Steering Group member Jacques Dubois of Rezidor SAS has found another - Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).

So how many Internet users are there in the world? What's the Internet penetration of the Netherlands, as opposed to Sweden or Poland?* What's happening in the search engine wars between Google, Microsoft and Yahoo! - and which search engine is going to be best for you?

The Internet World Stats (IWS) website presents statistical Internet usage and the population data for over 233 countries and regions of the world, consolidated from various periodic surveys. The site is divided into several sections, each one providing specific market research information.

1. INTERNET USAGE AND WORLD POPULATION STATISTICS

The world population and Internet user information is the main demographic content. There are tables for the main geographical regions of the world, a general world summary page, top usage countries table, a most penetrated countries table, a most populated countries table and a table containing Internet usage by language.

2. REGIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY DIRECTORY

The second section is the world regional country pages, an international directory featuring over 233 countries and regions of the world, organized into ten web pages. Individual country and regional pages feature maps, information, and links to local search directories for the corresponding countries and regions.

3. MARKET RESEARCH HELP

Most of the statistics and demographic information displayed is free for personal and commercial use. Under each individual country a link is included to the official statistics page for that country (in English when available). There are also additional useful market research links, guides, and tips. They include:

- B2B Trade Exchanges
- Webmaster Tools and eMarketing Tips
- Broadband Usage
- The Digital Divide
- Market Reports
- Translation Tools
- Tutorials
- Web Services
- Links Directory

4. THE IWS NEWSLETTER

A regular newsletter provides updates on changes in Internet usage as well as other free Internet-related market research information.

5. THE INTERNET COACHING FREE LIBRARY

The Internet Coaching Library offers free help, tips, advice, and guidance on the Internet.

6. SEARCH ENGINE STRATEGIES

This site contains several pages relating to search engines, including practical help over maximising the use of search engines. (Unconnected with IWS, see also www.searchenginewatch.com, for detailed news and advice concerning search engine marketing.) Internet World Stats is run by Enrique de Argaez. His company headquarters are located in Bogota, Colombia.

*** The latest figures from IWS show 800,040,498 Internet users out of a total world population of 6.39 billion. North America has the highest penetration rate at 68.3%, followed by Oceania at 48.5% and Europe (31.6%). The Netherlands has a penetration rate of 66.5%, while Sweden has 74.6% and Poland 23.5%.**