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More Internet Browsers Convert to Purchasers in the UK Than in 10 Other Major Markets

563 Million People Now Have Internet Access,
According to Nielsen//NetRatings' Global Internet Trends Survey

NEW YORK – November 22, 2002 – 70 percent of the people who browsed online for products or services in the UK in the third quarter went on to make a purchase, the highest conversion rate of the ten major markets studied in the Nielsen//NetRatings Third Quarter 2002 Global Internet Trends Report.

“eCommerce continues to gain momentum in many countries, as the adult population has increasingly browsed for and purchased products online in the past six months,” said Richard Goosey, international chief of measurement science, NetRatings. “In Q3, the UK was well ahead of all other Internet markets in the rate at which its browsers converted to purchasers, with a nine point lead over Sweden, the country with the second-highest conversion rate (see Table 1). But Internet shopping attracted a higher percentage of the total Swedish Internet audience in Q3, with 42 percent of Swedes with Internet access browsing online.” (see Table 2)

Table 1. % of Browsers (16+) Who Have Purchased, Past Six Months (Conversion Rate)

Country	Q3 2002	Q3 2001	% Change
UK	70	61	9
Sweden	61	59	2
Australia	56	50	6
Germany	52	67	-14
Netherlands	51	39	12
France	47	53	-6
Hong Kong	42	31	11
Brazil	39	45	-6
Italy	35	31	4
Spain	35	29	7

Among population 16+ in households with fixed line telephone(s) and who have browsed the Internet.

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings Global Internet Trends Q3 2002

“Internet shoppers in the UK and Australia have an inherent advantage in that their English-speaking populations can easily access and use the large US eCommerce providers,” Goosey said. “As a result, not only are the current conversion rates high for those markets, but they’ve also shown healthy growth over the same quarter last year, at nine and six percent respectively.”

Goosey also noted that Hong Kong, where 75 percent of the Internet population uses high-speed Internet access, ranked one of the lowest conversion rates for online purchases this quarter, despite the ease and speed that cable or fast telephone connections bring to the shopping experience. “The dense, urban environment in Hong Kong lends itself to easy physical shopping, suggesting that Internet users there use the Web to learn about products, but then purchase in person.”

Table 2. % of People 16+ Browsing and Purchasing Online, Past Six Months*

Country	Browsed Online in Past Six Months	Purchased Online in Past Six Months
Sweden	42	26
Netherlands	34	17
UK	32	23
Australia	32	18
Germany	24	13
France	24	11
Hong Kong	16	7
Italy	15	5
Brazil	14	5
Spain	11	4

Among population 16+ in households with fixed line telephone(s)

*And have current access (any location) and ever used

“Web sites in the Multi-Category Commerce sector attracted a record proportion of European users in both August and September of this year,” Goosey continued. “More than 44 percent of European surfers visited a site in this sector in September. The sector growth continues to suggest that European eCommerce might still enjoy a record-breaking Christmas despite the economic downturn. Europeans are using online eCommerce sites at nearly the same rate as their US counterparts, as Multi-Category Commerce Web sites attracted just over 49 percent of the active US Internet audience in September.”

Global Internet Access

The Global Internet Trends survey also found that the number of people worldwide with access to the Internet via a home PC increased from 553 million in Q2 2002 to 563 million in Q3 2002 (see Table 3). The US continues to have the largest Internet population, with 30 percent of the global audience attributed to that one market. Europe accounts for 23 percent of the world’s Internet population, followed by Asia and the Pacific with 13 percent, Latin America with two percent and markets not measured by Nielsen//NetRatings with the remaining 32 percent.

Table 3. Total Number of People 2+ with Internet Access via Home PC

	Number of People with Internet Access (in Millions)	% of World’s Internet Population
US	167.1	30%
Europe	129.5	23%
Asia & Pacific	75.0	13%
Latin America	14.0	2%
Rest of World	177.4	32%
Total	563	100%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings Global Internet Trends Q3 2002

Europe covers: France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

Asia & Pacific covers: Australia, Hong Kong, Japan

Latin America covers Brazil

Rest of World is based on countries not under Nielsen//NetRatings measurement at end of Q3 2002.

The findings are from the Nielsen//NetRatings Global Internet Trends service, a quarterly subscription service reporting information on worldwide Internet access and usage trends. The Q3 Global Internet Trends report is drawn from surveys conducted in July 2002 using consistent research methodology.

About Nielsen//NetRatings

Nielsen//NetRatings is the global standard for digital media measurement and analysis and is the industry's premier source for online advertising intelligence with its NetView, @Plan and WebRF services. Covering 70 percent of the world's Internet usage, the Nielsen//NetRatings services offer syndicated Internet and digital media ratings reports and custom-tailored data to help companies gain valuable insight into their business.

Editor's Note: Please source all data to Nielsen//NetRatings.