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Online Banking Reaches More Than 30 Percent of the Active Web Population in Five Countries, According to Nielsen//NetRatings Global Index

NEW YORK – January 8, 2003 – Online banks reached more than 30 percent of the active Internet audience in five major markets in November, according to Nielsen//NetRatings, the global standard for digital media measurement and analysis (see Table 1).

"The online financial services sector is one of last year's success stories," said Richard Goosey, international chief of measurement science, NetRatings. "Between October 2001 and October 2002, the number of European surfers visiting financial services sites grew from 15 to 25 million, while the percentage of European Internet users who regularly visit a financial services site steadily rose to 37 percent."

On a country-by-country basis, online bank domains in Sweden attracted the highest percentage of active users in November, with more than half that country's surfers visiting a bank or credit union site and spending an average of more than an hour on those sites during the month.

"In virtually every market, it is the traditional, established brick and mortar banks that are attracting the biggest audiences," Goosey said. "With full service banks and credit unions drawing well over a third of the active audience in November in such markets as Australia, France, the Netherlands and Brazil, the predicted death of the brick and mortar bank is proving to be one of the wildest exaggerations of the Internet boom years."

"Customer loyalty in the online banking sector is very high, creating a natural barrier for pure-play online banks. A large majority of online customers are most likely also customers of the in-person bank branches," he said. "The exception in Europe is Egg.com, a pure-play online bank which is currently the most popular European banking site. Egg.com is achieving overlaps of around 20 percent with its major competitors, suggesting that its success is built on being a convenient second account for traditional banking customers."

Table 1. Full Service Commercial Banks & Credit Unions, November 2002, At-Home

Country	Reach: % Active	Unique Audience	Visits per Person	Time per Person
Sweden	51.3	1,984,000	6.04	1:05:23
Australia	39.6	2,470,000	5.89	0:52:48
France	38.7	3,647,000	6.82	0:44:47
Netherlands	38.5	2,278,000	4.88	0:46:45
Brazil	36.2	2,585,000	7.45	0:59:31
United Kingdom	28.7	4,862,000	5.95	0:41:09
Hong Kong	21.2	454,000	5.01	0:34:27
Switzerland	19.4	482,000	4.44	0:39:44
Germany	19.3	4,036,000	5.42	0:38:14
Spain	18.6	1,107,000	5.2	0:44:58
US	12.5	14,929,000	4.72	0:42:47
Japan	9.6	2,418,000	2.82	0:19:24
Italy	8.3	876,000	5.57	1:21:26

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, November 2002



With the November Global Internet Index, Nielsen//NetRatings adds measurement of Swiss Internet activity to its worldwide measurement of Web audience and usage patterns. Nielsen//NetRatings now measures 13 countries comprising 70 percent of the global Internet audience universe.

“With the recent success of online banking, it’s fortunate timing for Nielsen//NetRatings to add Switzerland – one of the most formidable banking markets in the world – to our global coverage,” Goosey said. “Though banking and credit union domains in Switzerland ranked towards the lower end in terms of the percent of the active audience attracted in November, they still pulled a very respectable 19 percent of that country’s surfers that month.”

In addition, the Nielsen//NetRatings November Global Index also ranked Sharman Networks and eUniverse Networks as the biggest gainers in the top 25 global Web properties (see Table 2), each gaining five spots since October.

Table 2. Top 25 Global Web Properties, At-Home, November 2002

Rank by Unique Audience	Change in Rank, Oct-Nov*	Property	Unique Audience	Reach: % Active	Visits per Person	Pages per Person	Time per Person	Rank by Page Views
1	0	Yahoo!	113,655,134	48.17	10.03	168	1:20:07	1
2	0	MSN**	104,122,778	44.13	9.18	94	0:52:14	3
3	1	AOL Time Warner	91,718,559	38.87	7.71	49	0:32:32	4
4	-1***	Microsoft	82,796,684	35.09	3.04	14	0:10:19	11
5	0	Google	66,000,843	27.97	6.00	55	0:18:14	5
6	0	Lycos Network	51,063,977	21.64	3.49	39	0:18:06	7
7	0	Amazon	44,095,621	18.69	2.46	29	0:15:29	9
8	0	eBay	42,342,756	17.95	7.30	248	1:39:41	2
9	0	About-Primedia	31,160,877	13.21	2.46	22	0:10:49	16
10	0	CNET Networks	23,258,476	9.86	2.18	15	0:08:10	28
11	1	Sony	19,765,572	8.38	3.33	20	0:11:28	25
12	-1	Walt Disney Internet Group	18,833,644	7.98	2.61	27	0:16:07	21
13	0	T-Online	17,241,297	7.31	8.34	76	0:46:57	8
14	5	Sharman Networks	17,053,817	7.23	5.54	10	0:18:27	64
15	0	Wanadoo	17,006,395	7.21	5.50	43	0:22:22	13
16	2	AT&T	16,999,165	7.20	5.09	32	0:21:01	20
17	-1	Vivendi Universal	16,896,749	7.16	2.36	20	0:09:58	32
18	-1	Real Networks	16,726,939	7.09	2.25	10	0:12:36	69
19	-5	Symantec	15,862,528	6.72	3.78	8	0:09:25	94
20	1	Macromedia	15,397,514	6.53	1.79	8	0:09:48	98
21	5	eUniverse Network	14,775,317	6.26	2.44	18	0:09:38	40
22	0	Tiscali	14,569,027	6.17	3.46	24	0:11:11	29
23	-3	InfoSpace	14,298,339	6.06	2.28	16	0:09:01	50
24	0	The Gator Corporation	13,992,682	5.93	7.15	52	0:19:56	14
25	-2	Nifty	13,019,645	5.52	6.49	51	0:27:13	17

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, November 2002

*Due to the increase in coverage between October and November, change in rank cannot be re-calculated to match the 12 countries measured in October.

**The MSN property does not include the nineMSN, XtraMSN or T1MSN properties. The Lycos Network property does not include the Sympatico-Lycos property. These properties are reported as distinct properties in their own right.

***Working with Microsoft, Nielsen//NetRatings transferred the passport.net traffic from the Microsoft property to the MSN property in November, resulting in a decline in audience data for Microsoft.

As of November, the Global Index includes data for: Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK and the US.

The page views per surfing session and the time spent during a surfing session each rose around three percent in November, while page views per month and the number of unique domains visited also rose nearly two percent (see Table 3).

Table 3. Average Usage, At-Home, November 2002

	November	October	% Change
Number of Sessions per Month	20	20	-1.46%
Number of Unique Domains Visited	51	50	1.62%
Page Views per Month	819	807	1.57%
Page Views per Surfing Session	41	39	3.08%
Time Spent per Month	10:57:12	10:50:53	0.97%
Time Spent During Surfing Session	0:32:39	0:31:52	2.47%
Duration of a Page viewed	0:00:48	0:00:48	-0.59%
Total Internet Audience Sample	109,975	110,504	-0.48%
Active Internet Universe	233,455,025	232,548,653	0.39%
Current Internet Universe Estimate	388,230,556	388,068,332	0.04%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, November 2002

In November, the Global Index includes data for 13 countries; in October, the Global Index included data for 12 countries. To enable a trendable month-over-month comparison, data in this table does not include audience activity for Switzerland.

Internet audience sample, Active Internet Universe and Current Internet Universe Estimate Data for the US includes Digital Media Universe tracking, which combines Web-based traffic with Internet applications and browser channel audience data. All other measures exclude Internet applications data.

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, AdRelevance, @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. For more information, please visit www.nielsen-netratings.com.

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