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AMERICAN WEB SURFERS BOOST TRAFFIC TO FOREIGN NEWS SITES IN MARCH, ACCORDING TO NIELSEN//NETRATINGS

Aljazeera.net Skyrockets 1200 Percent, While BBC More Than Doubles its Online Audience in the U.S.

NEW YORK — April 24, 2003— Nielsen//NetRatings, the global standard for Internet audience measurement and analysis, shows that American surfers flocked to foreign news sites in March 2003 for additional and alternative coverage of the war in Iraq.

Aljazeera.net experienced a 1,208 percent increase in traffic in March 2003, drawing more than one million surfers from the U.S. (see Table 1). About a third of these surfers, or 328,000, visited the English version of the site, which launched last month. British news site, BBC World Service surged 158 percent to 5.3 million surfers in March, attracting 3.2 million more unique visitors since February 2003. Both Aljazeera.net and BBC World Service drew predominantly male visitors comprising nearly 70 percent of the sites' total audience.

Traffic to Reuters.com jumped 72 percent month-over-month, posting more than 2.1 million visitors. Like many other news sites, Reuters launched special streaming media content and coverage during the war. Newsmax.com and Fox News followed, increasing site traffic 51 and 43 percent, respectively.

CNN and MSNBC, the two biggest online news sources in the U.S. continued their dominance in the overall unique audience rankings, attracting 26.2 and 24.3 million unique visitors in March, with both sites increasing traffic by nearly a quarter over the previous month.

"While established news sources maintained their strong audience levels, the war in Iraq also sparked interest in different perspectives on world events," said Greg Bloom, senior Internet analyst, Nielsen//NetRatings. "The Web catered to that curiosity by allowing Americans to complement their mainstream domestic news sources with an international perspective not as readily available during the first Gulf War in 1991."

Table 1: Nielsen//NetRatings Fastest Growing General Online News Sources, Ranked by Percent Growth for March 2003 (U.S., Home and Work)

Brand or Channel	Unique Audience (000)		
	Feb. 2003	Mar. 2003	% Growth
1. Aljazeera.net*	79*	1,037	1208%
2. BBC World Service	2,053	5,295	158%
3. Reuters	1,223	2,103	72%
4. NewsMax.com	1,203	1,820	51%
5. Fox News	4,343	6,216	43%
6. Drudgereport.com	1,777	2,529	42%
7. News International	1,774	2,470	39%
8. Google News	1,910	2,609	37%
9. NPR Online	1,376	1,771	29%
10. NYP Holdings	2,115	2,663	26%
11. MSNBC	19,640	24,333	24%
12. CNN	21,376	26,249	23%
13. The Boston Globe	2,414	2,812	16%
14. Yahoo! News	16,214	18,724	15%
15. NYTimes.com	8,349	9,546	14%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings, March 2003

***Note: Traffic to Aljazeera.net in February 2003 fell below Nielsen//NetRatings' reporting cutoff.**

About Nielsen//NetRatings

Nielsen//NetRatings is the global standard for Internet audience 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 research reports and custom-tailored data to help companies gain valuable insight into their business. For more information, please visit www.nielsen-netratings.com.

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

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