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TOP SEARCH TERMS REVEAL WEB USERS RELY ON SEARCH ENGINES TO NAVIGATE THEIR WAY TO COMMON WEB SITES, ACCORDING TO NIELSEN//NETRATINGS

November Search Share Rankings Show Flat Growth for Google, Yahoo! and MSN

NEW YORK– January 18, 2006 – Nielsen//NetRatings, a global leader in Internet media and market research, today reported that Web surfers often use search engines to navigate their way to common Web sites rather than typing the Web site's URL directly into the address bar. Web users' top search terms were popular, well-known Web site names, such as "ebay" and "google," according to Nielsen//NetRatings MegaView Search from November 2005. Nielsen//NetRatings reports that 43 percent of online searchers use the search box much like an address bar.

Leading the top 10 most popular search terms for November was "ebay" with 13.9 million requests, followed by "google" and "yahoo," with 13.3 million and 8.0 million requests, respectively (see Table 1). Interestingly, five of the top 10 search terms were for sites with search engines themselves, supporting the argument that Web visitors are not likely to be loyal to a single search engine.

Other popular search terms were for retail and auction sites including eBay and Wal-Mart, as well as sites that offer a service, such as Mapquest and pogo.com. What all ten search terms had in common was that they were the names of popular Web sites rather than topics. The first topical search term, "weather," ranked No. 23.

"There are two types of online searchers that type a Web site's URL into a search engine rather than into the browser's address bar: Those inexperienced enough not to appreciate the difference between the two, and those that are so experienced they have become habituated to using the search engine as their portal to the Internet," said Ken Cassar, chief analyst, Nielsen//NetRatings. "Whether this behavior is driven by ignorance or savvy, the end result is the same: The search engine is the focal point of the online experience for Internet users across the spectrum."

Table 1: Top 10 Search Terms for November 2005 (U.S., Home and Work)

Search Term	Number of Requests (000)
1. "ebay"	13,871
2. "google"	13,301
3. "yahoo"	7,997
4. "mapquest"	7,431
5. "yahoo.com"	6,528
6. "pogo.com"	4,062
7. "walmart"	3,688
8. "ask jeeves"	3,389
9. "msn"	3,166
10. "ebay.com"	3,125

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings MegaView Search, January 2006

Top Search Engines

Nielsen//NetRatings today also released the top 10 search engines for November 2005 (see Table 2). Google Search continued its lead with 46 percent of all searches, followed by Yahoo! Search at 23 percent, and MSN Search at 11 percent. AOL Search garnered seven percent of searches, and My Way



Search saw three percent. The total number of searches conducted in November was 5.1 billion, which remained flat from the previous month.

“The top five players have held their respective positions for the past six months, demonstrating the benefits of incumbency in the search arena,” said Cassar.

Table 2: Top 10 Search Engines Ranked by Search Share for November 2005 (U.S., Home and Work)

Provider/Vertical	Searches (000)	Share of Searches
1. Google Search	2,365,998	46.3%
2. Yahoo! Search	1,194,519	23.4%
3. MSN Search	583,304	11.4%
4. AOL Search	350,899	6.9%
5. My Way Search	129,555	2.5%
6. Ask Jeeves Search	119,679	2.3%
7. EarthLink Search	32,172	0.6%
8. Dogpile.com Search	31,563	0.6%
9. Netscape Search	30,434	0.6%
10.iWon Search	27,670	0.5%

Source: Nielsen//NetRatings MegaView Search, January 2006

About Nielsen//NetRatings

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

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