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23rd JANUARY 2006

2005's TOP 10 FASTEST GROWING BRANDS IN THE UK

Nielsen//NetRatings, the leading provider of Internet research, today reveals the fastest growing online brands of 2005 in terms of the UK audience. To find the biggest web success stories in 2006 one needs to look away from the traditional giants such as Google, Microsoft and Yahoo!

User-led communities are the web future

Photo website builder tool and community site Piczo was the most successful brand in the UK in 2005 in terms of audience growth with an astonishing 9669% growth. In other words, its audience got 97 times bigger – growing from just 12,500 visitors in December 2004 to over 1.2 million in December 2005.

What's even more extraordinary is that Piczo's success is driven mainly by an audience of women under 18 years old. In November this group accounted for almost half (45%) of Piczo's audience – making it the most likely website in the UK to be visited by that demographic.

Piczo technology gives the user the ability to create a comprehensive personal website - including pages that contain photos, text, guest-books, chat boxes and music - without requiring html code. This service and the audience most likely to be using it provide a tantalising clue as to where the Internet, driven by the explosion in broadband and digital technology, is heading.

Alex Burmaster, European Internet Analyst comments, "The future, it seems, is user-generated content centred around community sites that ride the rise of the Internet as a tool to communicate, exchange ideas and pictures."

Top 10 brands in 2005 by UK Unique Audience (UA) growth*

Rank	Brand	UA % Growth Dec 04-05	UA (000's) Dec 05*	Nature of Business
1	Piczo	9669%	1,227	Photo website builder & community
2	AmericanGreetings	2152%	888	Greeting cards
3	Shopzilla	1614%	1,787	Shopping guide & directory
4	Starware	1353%	1,066	Toolbar & search software
5	LimeWire	666%	2,354	File sharing software
6	OD2	525%	1,144	Digital music distributor
7	Wikipedia	326%	2,298	Communal encyclopaedia
8	Skype	296%	1,076	Internet Telephony (a.k.a VoIP)
9	Nickelodeon	256%	981	Games & chat for children
10	Blogger	231%	1,655	Blogging guide & service

Source: NetView UK Home & Work Data, Internet Applications Included, Dec 04-05

*Minimum requirement: Dec 05 UK Unique Audience ≥ 650,000

The community and consumer-led content theme of the Top 10 continues with sites such as LimeWire, which provides file sharing software, Wikipedia, the 'free communal encyclopaedia that anyone can edit', Skype, Internet telephony, and Blogger, one of the original blogging guides and services – now owned by Google. Proof of the younger communities thirst to communicate through the web, demonstrated through Piczo, is further enhanced by the appearance of Nickelodeon in the Top 10. Nickelodeon provides discussion and chat facilities for children and has seen its audience grow over 250% in the last year and is now visited by almost one million surfers each month – over half of them under 18.

Burmaster adds, "The inclusion of other brands such as AmericanGreetings, whose staple is e-greetings cards, Shopzilla, the shopping directory, and OD2, the digital music distributor co-founded by musician Peter Gabriel are further proof of how online continues to provide a more effective means for meeting the needs and interests of our daily personal or business lives."



Growth amongst the most popular brands

There were two major changes in the Top 10 most popular brands in the UK in 2005. Google overtook Microsoft and MSN to hold the top spot and Apple entered at the expense of ISP Wanadoo. Apple, zeitgeist of the broadband and digital revolution - through iTunes and the iPod - experienced the biggest audience growth of the Top 10 with 56%. AOL fell two places and was the only incumbent to experience a drop in audience.

Top 10 brands, overall, in 2005 ranked by UK Unique Audience (UA) growth

Overall Rank	Brand	UA % Growth Dec 04-05	UA (000's) Dec 05	Overall Rank Change (December 04-05)
8	Apple	56%	6,187	+5
4	Yahoo!	32%	13,980	0
6	BBC	29%	11,439	0
1	Google	24%	17,836	+2
5	eBay	24%	11,580	0
7	Amazon	23%	9,235	0
9	Real	21%	5,877	+1
2	Microsoft	9%	17,388	-1
3	MSN	5%	16,498	-1
10	AOL	-7%	5,724	-2

Source: NetView Home & Work Data, Internet Applications Included, Dec 04-05

Burmester comments, "Despite the ubiquitous publicity of Apple's impressive growth over the last year, their figure is proof it is important to look beyond the traditional big web-hitters to find the most exciting developments in the Internet for 2006. Whilst a growth of 56% is the strongest amongst the most popular web brands in 2005 there are 81 others with a current audience of at least half a million people who outperformed Apple's growth."

The Top 2005 Online Brands for the UK for the following specific categories are also available; please use the contact details below to request:

- eCommerce
- Entertainment
- Home & Fashion
- Family & Lifestyles
- Travel
- Finance

EDITOR'S NOTES

The information contained in this release is based on the UK audience only.

Please source all information to Nielsen//NetRatings.

Please note that ACNielsen and Nielsen are both separate, unrelated companies and should NOT be quoted when sourcing the attached data. If an abbreviated name is required then please use NetRatings

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About Nielsen//NetRatings

Nielsen//NetRatings is a global leader in Internet media and market research, providing companies with valuable insight into their businesses. Nielsen//NetRatings offers the industry's premier source of actionable Internet data and digital media research on Website usage, online advertising, consumer attitudes and competitive analysis.