

73% of people hate mobile Internet

Consumer survey highlights problems with accessing the Internet on the move

London, 7th August, 2006: Research from Hostway has found that 73% of people hate using the Internet on the move. According to the survey, despite being able to access many internet services from their telephones and PDAs, just under three quarters of people are not taking advantage of this. Amongst the reasons for not using mobile Internet were being frustrated by slow-loading pages (38%), problems with navigating websites from a phone or PDA (27%) and some websites being completely unavailable on mobile phones (25%). The research, commissioned by Hostway, was conducted by independent research body TNS and surveyed 1484 consumers in the UK.

“At the moment, most websites just aren’t flexible enough to be accessed on mobile phones,” said Neil Barton, director, Hostway. “There’s nothing wrong with having a flash website with all the bells and whistles you can muster, but you’ve got to be aware that mobile users simply aren’t going to be able to access it. The research illustrates that even if people do wait for sites to load, quite often it’s impossible to actually get at the content itself because of the way that sites are built.”

However, the survey’s findings also suggest that if these problems could be remedied, people would be more enthusiastic about using Internet on the move. 90% of the survey said that they would use mobile Internet if they could be sure that pages would load faster and they wouldn’t incur high costs from their mobile operator.

With the dawn of Wi-Fi, GPRS and i-mode, there are many methods available to access a broad range of content on the move. Despite having many different ways to get online, people are still keen to access the core functions of the mobile ‘net, rather than downloading content, accessing “community” websites or writing blogs. Most people said that they would want to access their email on the move (71%) with around half saying that they would also access news and sport (47%) from their mobile.

“This research highlights a real problem with “mobile Internet” as it stands right now. Although many people have Internet-ready phones or PDAs that can access the Internet, they are not inclined to do so because of the problems with displaying or navigating the content. The findings also highlight the need for new standards in mobile Internet access, such as the new .mobi domain name,” continued Barton. “Any kind of regulation or technology which encourages

companies to develop mobile-friendly websites, and guarantees a better mobile experience is certainly a good thing. It is also interesting to see that the ways in which people use, or wish to use the mobile web is quite different to traditional Internet access. This is something that companies need to be aware of when developing sites - mobile Internet users' search requirements are far more specific compared to PC-based search which is more tailored to browsing a series of results. This is particularly well illustrated by the research finding that more consumers would access maps (49%) than news and sport (47%) from their phones.”

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For more information visit:

www.hostway.co.uk

For Press Inquiries Contact:

Kewal Varia/Christian Sharp

Spark Communications

020 7357 8612

Kewal@sparkcomms.co.uk

Christian@sparkcomms.co.uk