



Online video games: A guy thing, mostly Ipsos-Reid study

SAN FRANCISCO, March 9, 2001 – It's what many parents have suspected all along. Online video games are far more popular among young male Internet users than among young females – around the globe.

An Ipsos-Reid survey of young people in 16 countries worldwide, *The Face of the Web: Youth*, reveals that 63 percent of boys aged 12 to 17 have tried online games, compared to just 34 percent of girls. Among those aged 18 to 24, some 47 percent of males and 25 percent of females have played online.

Internet video games are far and away the most popular among boys and young men in urban China, South Korea and Taiwan, where well over half of all youth surveyed have played online and a further 20 percent or so said they planned to in the next year.

In Canada, the United States and Sweden about half of respondents said they'd tried online games; another 13 percent said they intended to.

"When we look around the world, playing online video games has really caught on in certain markets, but has yet to take hold in others," noted Gus Schattenberg, Vice-President of Global Research with Ipsos-Reid, an international market research firm.

In the U.K., France, Italy, Spain and Japan the percentage of young people who have tried web-based games ranges from 27 percent (in U.K.) to 20 percent (in Japan). These percentages should swell to at least 50 percent of online youth within the next year in western Europe, the study noted.

"But even with the possibility of players doubling in number in certain parts of Europe, these markets won't come close to the Asian ones where almost everyone is doing this," said Schattenberg of Ipsos-Reid. "In China and South Korea, by next year, eight in ten young Internet users will have been initiated into the world of online games."

So what does the future hold?

"Continued growth, certainly, given the infectiousness of the activity," said Schattenberg. "Those who like online video games say they like them a lot. But it's difficult to say whether these games will remain something of a niche interest. Certainly younger girls are keener to try out this activity than their older female counterparts, so an age gap may be relevant. Perhaps women 18 to 24 consider themselves to have outgrown online video games. But there is also a clear gender gap, since 18 to 24 year old males still find this type of entertainment appealing."



Curiously, young Swedish Internet users stand slightly more aloof from this online “fad.” A third of those who had tried online games report that they have already lost interest, compared to about 20 percent in most other markets.

Methodology *The Face of the Web: Youth*

A two-phase survey conducted last year with over 10,000 youths between the ages of 12 and 24 in 16 countries. Half of the interviews were conducted with a representative sample of the youth populations in each country to track current Internet awareness, usage, and intentions to go online. The remainder of the interviews focussed on young Internet users in each country to investigate their Internet usage patterns and experience with Internet music, chat, and retail services.

National samples each consisted of 300 12–24-year-olds, except in the U.S., where 600 interviews were conducted. Results outside the U.S. are accurate within an error margin of no more than plus/minus 6 percentage points, 19 times out of 20; in the U.S., the results are accurate within an error margin of no more than plus/minus 4 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

About Ipsos-Reid

Ipsos-Reid has been tracking public opinion around the world for more than 20 years and has become a leading provider of global public opinion and market research to private, public and not for profit organizations in over 50 countries. With more than 1,300 staff in 11 cities, Ipsos-Reid offers clients a full line of custom, syndicated, omnibus and online research products and services. It is best known for its line of Express opinion polls, the *World Monitor* public affairs journal, and *The Face of the Web*, the most comprehensive study of global Internet usage and trends. It is a member of Paris-based Ipsos Group, ranked among the top ten research groups in the world.

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