

Hooked on the Internet: Brits Spend 30 Hours a Week Online



Released on: October 1, 2009, 9:45 am

Author: uSwitch.com

Industry: [Internet & Online](#)

Brits just can't get enough of the internet when it comes to both their professional and personal lives, according to new research from uSwitch.com, the independent price comparison and switching service. By using the web for work, rest and play, they are clocking up an astonishing 30 hours a week online, with every indication that this is set to soar even higher.

On a typical working day, the average person now spends 5 hours online - 2 hours for professional or work purposes and 3 hours for pleasure and leisure, including online shopping, managing their finances, socialising and emailing family and friends.

Brits are also addicted to the web at the weekends too, spending an average of 3 hours a day online during their 'down time'. And this looks set to grow in the future as younger age groups come to the fore. 18 - 24 year olds already spend 7 hours a day online during the week, but they supplement this with 5 hours a day at the weekend too. However, almost two in ten 18 - 24 year olds (19%) now spend more than 8 hours a day online at the weekend - barely leaving time for anything else and possibly contributing to rising obesity levels amongst the young.

The social networking boom is one of the main reasons why Brits now spend so much time online. A quarter (25%) of adults say they need to use sites such as Facebook and Twitter at least once a day and almost a third of 18 - 24 year olds (30%) spend more than 5 hours a week on them. People even have to log in while on holiday with over a third of under 25s (36%) admitting to checking these sites while away.

But, while the influence of these sites cannot be under estimated, only 27% of people think that social networking is a good thing - almost half (46%) are still weighing it up saying that for them, at least, the jury is still out. Social networking has also led to a new generation gap - while 41% of over 65s agree that social networking is the future and they should get used to it, over two thirds (67%) aren't joining in, preferring not to socialise online.

With the recession pushing people to hunt for bargains and people keen to save both time and money, 93% of the population now shops on the internet. Over 38 million people (79%) spend up to two hours a week doing so. Brits are also spending time managing their money online - just 18% say they don't use their bank's online services. Over a quarter (28%) spend between one and two hours a week banking online while nearly half (44%) spend up to an hour a week.

Jason Glynn, communications expert at uSwitch.com, says: "This research shows the huge impact that the internet is having on British life. [Broadband](#) is rapidly becoming a necessity - as important to our quality of life as gas or electricity. Our reliance looks set to increase dramatically over the coming years as younger generations come to the fore, putting the Government under even more pressure to deliver universal broadband access across the whole country.

"However, we are also seeing growing signs of a 'digital divide' and the risk of social exclusion for those who are unable or unwilling to go online. As we move towards 'Digital Britain' some groups, such as the elderly, are in danger of being left behind - more work needs to be done to encourage greater take-up amongst these groups, who could otherwise be left disadvantaged.

"As usage increases it is going to become even more important that consumers fully understand broadband packages so that they are able to choose one that is cost-effective and right for their needs - at the moment this could save them up to £140 a year. Ofcom should be pushing suppliers to ditch the small print, tell people exactly what they are getting for their money and be upfront about any limits to their service - [unlimited broadband](#) should be exactly that."

[See the full version of this press release.](#)

For more information please contact:
Jo Ganly 0207 802 2915 / joganly@uswitch.com

About

uSwitch.com is a free, impartial online and telephone-based comparison and switching service, helping consumers compare prices on gas, electricity, water, heating cover, home telephone, broadband, digital television, mobile phones, personal finance products and car insurance.

uSwitch:

~~~~~

Press release distributed via EPR Network (<http://express-press-release.net/submit-press-release.php>)