



INTERNET USE STATISTICS

The aim of this document is to illustrate how the Internet is being used today, and why monitoring Internet use can help an organization get the most out of their Internet resources.

On any given day, about 40 million Internet users go online just for fun or to pass the time. (Pew Internet) Recent studies have shown a large increase in time spent online, some to the extent that people are spending more time online than watching television.

People do use the Internet inappropriately in the workplace

87% of employees surf non-work-related websites whilst at work, with 46% engaging in personal web surfing everyday. ([Vault](#))

Over one quarter (26.2%) of Internet access time in the workplace is used for personal reasons unrelated to job duties. One in five employees regularly visits social networking pages or plans travel and over 15% play online games, download music and job hunt.

With one third of employees stating "staying connected and informed" as a reason for their personal Internet usage, it is not difficult to believe that more than half regularly send personal emails or Instant Messages, and check the latest news. Other reasons for personal Internet usage include boredom, habit and higher-speed connections. ([BurstMedia](#))

Access to broadband Internet, available in over 80% of workplaces([ABS](#)), increases the number of webpages viewed by each person by 55%, and increases the amount of time spent online by 23%. ([Nielsen//NetRatings](#)) Internet misuse is costing American corporations an estimated \$178 billion annual productivity loss. ([InfoWorld](#))

Internet, Email and Monitoring in the workplace:

- 25% of employees spend over an hour surfing the Web at work and 28% take precautionary measures to avoid detection (Vault)
- 4% use their Internet access to obtain pornography (Vault)
- 70% of employees admit to sending or viewing adult-orientated personal email at work (NFO Worldwide)
- 13% of employees receive sexually explicit emails regularly (Vault)
- 25% of employees send more than 5 personal emails per workday (Vault)
- 33% of employees and 50% of employers believe that surfing the Net decreases productivity (Vault)
- 92% of employees and 82% of employers support legislation that would require notification of any Internet or email monitoring (Vault)
- More than 60% of companies have disciplined, and more than 30% have terminated, employees for inappropriate Internet use (Centre for Internet Studies)

Another growing concern is the increase in unintentional access of inappropriate or illicit material. Many adult content web sites (stealth sites) use web addresses that are close to familiar sites, i.e. yahoo.com, ten.com, nytimes.com. Internet phenomena such as the 'rick roll', chain email forwards and spam/junk mail are other examples of content that may be accessed unintentionally.

However, the Internet is a useful resource for work

The Internet is not only useful for completing tasks that directly require access. The wealth of information and knowledge, which is easily obtained, can be used to enhance employees' work performance. Gathering information online may be useful in communicating with other businesses, research and training.

Some personal use of the Internet can even benefit companies – provided it is well balanced. For example, rather than needing an extended lunch break to pay a bill at the post office, employees could conduct their banking online. If employees who normally make or receive personal telephone calls could use email instead, then the company would reduce their phone bill.

Emails have reached the stage where they are an essential tool for communication in most workplaces, and there has been a large increase in the number of companies using instant messaging clients for inter-office communication.

Most employees view email as a facilitator of good working relationships, helpful for completing their job and an easier alternative to telephone calls or facsimiles. ([Pew Internet](#)) It is also a method of keeping written records, and most email clients provide the ability to search historical correspondence

In fact, two thirds of American workers with Internet access believe that using the Internet enhances their productivity, ([Wirthlin Worldwide](#)) and 85% of Canadians who can use email at work believe it has made them much more productive. ([Ipsos-Reid](#))

The Internet is also a useful resource tool for schools

Students who have access to the Internet at school are effectively provided with a large knowledgebase that can assist with their learning. The Internet allows students to:

- Visit libraries and museums
- Communicate and collaborate with others
- Access learning materials and resources
- Access alternative methods of tuition

By 2002, 99% of US schools provided Internet access. By 2005, 97% of public schools used broadband connections and 45% were using wireless. 72% of students were also accessing the Internet at home. ([NCES](#))

For students who have access to the Internet, almost all use it as a tool to assist with schoolwork. As well as research, over 60% use email or instant messaging to discuss educational topics. ([NSBA](#))

More than 80% of teachers believe that computers and access to the Internet improve the quality of education, and over 70% use the Internet for teaching purposes. Teachers use the Internet to provide learning resources that would otherwise be unavailable in a classroom (such as simulators and animations), evaluate curriculum material, and research education topics. ([QED](#))

Some schools provide a classroom website, intranet or online access area, to provide assignments, worksheets and other education materials to students electronically. Online education is also increasing, with educational programs, tuition services, virtual classrooms and online distance education providing additional or alternative education.

People are comfortable with Internet monitoring

More than 75% of companies monitor Internet usage, with the primary concern being inappropriate Internet usage. 80% of these companies inform employees that they are being monitored. ([AMA](#))

71% of European workers agree that workplace Internet monitoring and management is appropriate, with the view most widely held in Germany and Britain. ([Taylor Nelson Sofres](#))

A survey of 200 US executives found that 82% believed that Internet use in their company should be monitored, highlighting the growing concern about the use of Internet resources in the workplace. ([Information Week](#))

73% of Canadian workers believe that their employer has the right to monitor email and Internet usage at work. 55% admit to personal email use, and 46% admit to personal web browsing. ([Ipsos-Reid](#))

Internet monitoring is also being used outside the workplace, with Institutions such as Schools and Universities monitoring their pupils' Internet access.

Promote sensible Internet usage in your school or workplace

It is increasingly clear that Internet access is essential in contemporary workplaces. However, it is also clear that there are problems with providing Internet access – including productivity losses and use of inappropriate materials.

Acceptable Internet Use Policies provide users with a clear definition of how they can use the Internet. Policies may include issues such as acceptable use, personal use, unacceptable use, confidential information, responsibility, copyright, monitoring and enforcement. Development of an Acceptable Email Use Policy is also worth consideration.

Informing and educating users about Acceptable Use Policies provides many benefits, including voluntary compliance, reduced company liability from staff misuse, and heightened awareness to prevent virus, spyware, spam and other security concerns. Enforcement of an Acceptable Use Policy is much easier if it is well known and supported by management.

Using WebSpy software in conjunction with an Internet Acceptable Usage Policy will promote responsible Internet use, by monitoring and regulating your school or organization's Internet usage.

WebSpy provides a range of solutions, with one to suit every type of organization. Our product range is designed to:

- Encourage sensible usage of web resources
- Preservation of corporate bandwidth
- Assist with policy compliance and risk mitigation
- Demonstrate active duty of care procedures
- Eliminate or reduce non-productive time
- Facilitate a secure online environment

WebSpy Analyzer

[WebSpy's Analyzer](#) software range offers comprehensive Internet and email reporting and analysis designed to help encourage productivity while providing a balance for the personal and social needs of employees. It also helps reduce the costs and the risks associated with providing Internet access and email resources to employees.

WebSpy Vantage

[WebSpy Vantage](#) is an award-winning software product that provides you with a common reporting window into all the key functions of your network and its usage within your organization. The comprehensive information provided by Vantage can assist in identifying and resolving network problems, reducing security vulnerabilities, as well as maximizing employee productivity by encouraging responsible usage of system resources.

WebSpy Vantage Giga also comes with an additional Web Module that enables administrators to securely distribute reports and information throughout an organization. Employees can log into the Web Module to view their reports, and conduct ad-hoc drilldowns into their storages, providing up to date information whenever they need it. Access to information is controlled through customizable permission levels, ensuring employee and company privacy.

For more information about WebSpy please visit <http://www.webspynet.com/>

Contact WebSpy Ltd

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