



TWNIC Released its 2005 Semi-Annual “Internet Broadband Usage in Taiwan” Survey Results

On July 21, 2005, TWNIC released the results of its “Internet Broadband Usage in Taiwan” survey conducted in the upper half of 2005. According to the survey, up to June 30th, 2005, the Internet user population has grown by 14.66 million and the Internet users account for 64.78% of the total population (aged from 0 to 100) in Taiwan while users at the age of 12 and above account for 64.26% of the total population. Among the individual Internet users, 10.53 million are broadband network users, accounting for 54.70% of the total population. Among the individual broadband users, males (67.66%) are more than females (60.78%) while users aged from 12 to 25 accounts for more than 90% of the broadband users. Region-wise, the highest percentages of broadband users fall in the two metropolitan areas, Taipei City and Kaohsiung City, with 67.38% in the former and 62.45% in the latter, followed by Northern Taiwan (59.42%). Southern Taiwan has the lowest percentage (44.73%) of individual broadband users. The major purposes of broadband usage are for web page browsing (63.52%) and e-mailing (43.82%).

There are around 4.91 million households with Internet access in Taiwan, accounting for 68.34% of all the households while 4.08 million of them (56.84% of the total households) are using broadband network access. Most of the households using broadband network are located in the two metropolitan areas, Kaohsiung City (71.77%) and Taipei City (68.31%), followed by Northern Taiwan (64.54%) while Eastern Taiwan features the lowest percentage (41.65%). Among the households with non-broadband Internet access, 31.33% of them living in Kaohsiung City indicate they plan to subscribe to broadband in the coming six months, which is the highest among all the other regions, followed by Taipei City (20.31%) and Central Taiwan (18.08%). However, among all the households with non-broadband connection in Taiwan, only 15.33% indicate they plan to subscribe to broadband in the coming six months.

Acting Executive Director of TWNIC, Ai-chi Lu, indicated “According to TWNIC 2005 ‘Survey on Internet Broadband Usage in Taiwan’ report, the network and broadband development in Taiwan has reached maturity with a stable increase in both Internet-connected households and users of different age groups. The findings of this report indicates that there is a general improvement in the information

technology competence of citizens in Taiwan with more diversified Internet user composition. However, it is also noteworthy that, even though the government and the private sector have been actively promoting the use of wireless network, the citizens do not exhibit any significant changes in their Internet-using habits or the services they use. Therefore, the R&D of wireless network application software and innovative services will play a decisive role in the further development of the network information industry in Taiwan.”

Households with Internet Access

According to this latest survey, there are currently 4.91 million households with Internet access in Taiwan, accounting for 68.34% of all the local households. Almost more than 55% of the households in each area in Taiwan are connected to the Internet; particularly in Taipei City and Kaohsiung City where more than 84% of the households have Internet access. In addition, 77.89% of these households in Taiwan are Internet connected through ADSL, 6.35% through paid dial-up connection, 3.98% through Cable Modem and 1.49% through free dial-up connections.

The survey also finds that approximately 56.84% (4.08 million) of the households in Taiwan already have broadband access and most of them are using ADSL. In addition, the survey also indicates that more than 50% of the Internet users are satisfied with their current broadband ISPs and when deciding which broadband service supplier to subscribe to, they will mainly consider the factors such as the ISP's reputation, cost and stability. Among the ADSL-using households, 81.74% of them chose to subscribe to Hinet and 4.04% chose Seednet while the percentages of using services of other ISPs range from 2.54% to 0.66% only. Meanwhile, according to the survey, it is the first time when the percentage of households using the cable modem connections provided by local cable TV operators (45.15%) stands higher than that of those which use Internet connections provided by Asia Pacific Broadband (40.19%).

When asked about downloading speed in the survey, more than half of the interviewed households indicate they are not clear about the speed of their broadband connections. Among the ADSL-using households, 56.67% of them indicate they have no idea about the speed combinations of their connections. Nowadays, the mainstream speed combination in the market is still 256k/64kps (10.80%), the most basic one, while there are several households (9.05%) using the

combination of 2M/64kps. Among the households using Cable Modem, 19.45% of them select the rate of 256Kbps while 41.45% indicate they do not know the speed combinations of their broadband networks.

As for the broadband fee, which the users concern most, 33.43% of the broadband users spend NT\$750 to 1,000 each month. 22.61% of the users think the reasonable monthly fee of 2M/sec broadband services should be NT\$251 to 500 while 13.98% think it should be NT\$501 to 750. Generally speaking, more than half of the users (52.46%) are satisfied with their broadband ISPs and the most frequent problems with broadband connections are unstable connection/poor connection quality (20.73%) and slow download speed (20.29%). It can be found from this survey that more and more broadband users in Taiwan expect lower connection fees.

Individual Internet Users (Note: Citizens Aged 12 and above)

In general, there are more male Internet users (67.66%) than female ones. Among all the individual users, 78.59% are connected to the Internet through ADSL. In broadband usage, there are also more male users (59.48%) than female ones (49.81%). Users in the age group of 21 to 25 accounts for the largest part (89.9%) of the broadband user population while users in the age group of 56 and above remains the smallest (9.85%) one. Region-wise, Northern Taiwan (including Taipei City) houses most of the broadband users (61.56%), followed by Central Taiwan (50.25%), Southern Taiwan (48.90%, including users in Kaohsiung City) and then Eastern Taiwan (46.32%). Compared with the survey results in January 2005, this survey indicates increases in broadband user populations in all the areas except Northern Taiwan.

Most of the interviewed broadband users (93.46%) indicated they go online at home. Meanwhile, most of the users (18.08%) spend one to two hours online in average during work days while other users (16.80%) spend two to three hours in average during work days. On holidays or days off, users who spend less than half an hour, two to three hours or uncertain amount of hours, each accounts for approximately 15% of the total user population. As for the favorite time slots of going online, more than 34% of the users frequently access the internet during 20:00 to 20:59 or 21:00 to 21:59. Their major purposes of accessing the internet are, in the order of frequency, web page browsing (63.52%), e-mailing (43.82%), data searching (29.59%), playing Internet games (21.16%), MSN/ICQ (20.69%), shopping (9.14%)

and file downloading (8.45%). Despite continuously improving data transmission rate and bandwidth as well as increasing usage of broadband network, most of the users still go online mainly for web page browsing and e-mailing. This finding indicates that there is still room for improvement in the promotion of diversified network usage. However, it can also be found that, as functions of interaction and communication on the Internet improves, there are also gradually growing business opportunities.

Wireless Internet Users

As indicated in this study, about 15.94% of the citizens in Taiwan are now using wireless Internet connections and the population of these users is also showing signs of a stable growth. Most of them (53.17%) use the wireless Internet at home and 28.37% in the office. Among the wireless Internet users, 30.61% use free wireless connections each month; and there are still more users in the metropolitan areas. Meanwhile, according to the report, close to 60% of the citizens are not clear about the governmental policies in building an environment of wireless broadband applications for citizens. The current usage of wireless Internet can be encouraged with the governmental promotion and related urban planning.

Mobile Internet Users

Currently, the mobile Internet users only account for 7.71% while most of them (47.87%) spend less than NT\$250 each month on the mobile connection services. Among them, 54.89% use GPRS, followed by WAP (17.44%) and then PHS (16.73%). The most popular service they request through mobile Internet is ring-tone downloading (44.31%), followed by information browsing (13.62%).

About this Survey

According to TWNIC, this survey was conducted during May 30th to June 30th, 2005, telephone interviewing residents aged 12 and above in 23 cities and counties in Taiwan. The survey collected totally 3,059 valid samples, using the Monthly Demographic Statistics Report released by Ministry of the Interior, Executive Yuan, in March, 2005 as the matrix data. The method of computer assisted telephone interviewing was used in the study with a reliability of 95% and errors of 1.77%. For further information, this survey report can be downloaded from the website of TWNIC (<http://stat.twmic.net.tw>).