

Web Design Related Statistics
7/17/03

Popularity of Major Web Browsers

- **Internet Explorer 6.x:** ~62% of page accesses, up from 40% a year ago. It will likely continue to climb as users upgrade from older browsers.
- **Internet Explorer 5.x:** ~32% of page accesses, down from 51% a year ago. Usage peaked at 82% in Aug 2001, then tumbled with the advent of IE6. It will likely continue to plunge as users move to IE6, especially since Microsoft dropped IE5.5 in Mar 2003.
- **AOL:** ~5-6% of page accesses. These accesses are also included in the percentages for Internet Explorer, since AOL's primary browser uses Internet Explorer. This percentage should remain about the same in the near term.
- **Gecko-based Browsers** (Mozilla, Netscape 6+, etc.): ~2.3% of page accesses. [B3] This has been growing slowly.
- **Opera:** ~1.2% of page accesses. [B1]
- **Netscape 4.x:** ~1.1% of page accesses, down from 3% a year ago. This percentage should continue to shrink steadily as users switch to IE6 and the Gecko-based browsers.
- **Internet Explorer 4.x:** ~.95% of page accesses, down from 3% a year ago. [B2] This percentage should continue to shrink steadily as users upgrade.
- **MSN-TV (WebTV):** no page accesses are reported for MSN-TV users, but this is likely due to poor browser-detection code: sloppy code can identify most MSN-TV browsers as IE4. Indirect evidence suggests that ~0.8% of page accesses might be MSN-TV users. **Note:** since MSN-TV is available only in certain regions, the percentage will be much higher for sites attracting visitors from these regions.
- **Older Browsers:** very few use older versions of Internet Explorer, Opera, or Netscape; web designers can generally disregard them.

Resource:

Charles A Upsdell's Browser News:
http://www.upsdell.com/BrowserNews/stat_trends.htm#browser

Screen Resolution Trends

- **544x372** (MSN-TV [WebTV] / NTSC): this is the MSN-TV resolution. There are about a million MSN-TV users, but there are no good stats available about how many pages they access: it does seem likely that MSN-TV appliances account for under 1% of page accesses. This should change little in the short term, as the number of MSN-TV users has changed little for several years: changes in the long term depend on how avidly consumers embrace such appliances, and on how well MSN-TV competes with similar iTV products. [R1,R2]
- **640x480** (VGA): this accounts for ~2% of page accesses, down from 4% a year ago. Most users likely have old PCs. The percentage will continue to drop, slowly, as older PCs are retired, but will remain significant for several years. [R3,R4]
- **800x600** (XGA): this accounts for ~45% of page accesses, down from 51% a year ago. Some users surely have old PCs, with little video memory; the rest likely have PCs whose resolutions are set lower because (a) many new PCs default to a lower resolution, and (b) many PCs have monitors too small for readable higher-resolution text. The percentage will likely decrease steadily as higher resolution displays grow more common, but will remain popular for many years. [R3,R4]
- **1024x768 and higher** (SVGA): this accounts for ~51% of page accesses, up from 43% a year ago. Most new PCs have enough video memory for high resolution displays, but many are set to a lower resolution because (a) many new PCs default to a lower resolution, and (b) many PCs have monitors too small for readable higher-resolution text. The percentage of high resolution users will continue to grow steadily. [R3,R4]
- **Other**: other resolutions are found among net appliances and some PCs. For example, the Sony eVilla had a portrait-mode display, with the height greater than the width. Right now such appliances account for relatively few page accesses: this will surely change, but how - and by how much - will depend on the vagaries of the market.

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Color Depth

This discusses trends in the colour-depths of browser displays.

These are colour-depths of special interest to website designers:

- **8-bit** (256 colours): this accounts for ~3% of page accesses, down from ~4% a year ago. Most users likely have old PCs. The percentage of PCs will continue to drop slowly as older PCs are retired, but will remain significant for several years. [D2]
- **AOL 8-bit** (256 colours): this accounts for ~5-6% of page accesses, by users of an AOL browser with image compression enabled: compression severely restricts the number of displayable colours. This percentage will likely remain about the same in the near future. [D1,D2]
- **16-bit** (65 536 colours): this accounts for ~39% of page accesses, down from ~47% a year ago. Some users surely have old PCs, with little video memory; the rest likely have PCs whose colour-depths are set lower because many new PCs default to a lower colour-depth. For PCs the percentage will likely drop slowly. [D2]
- **24-bit and more** (16 777 216 colours, and more): this accounts for ~53% of page accesses, up from 44% percent a year ago. Most new PCs have enough video memory for high colour-depths, but many are set lower because many new PCs default to a lower colour-depth. The percentage will likely rise slowly. [D2]

COLOUR-DEPTH NOTES

D1: AOL does not say how many have compression enabled (the default): AOL says only that "most" have it enabled, so there is some uncertainty in the number. The real number is surely less, but only AOL knows by how much.

D2: a computer display's colour-depth is limited by the amount of video memory and - in the case of flat-panel displays - by the display technology: more memory and denser flat-panels permit higher colour-depths. Typical resolutions increase as these become more affordable.

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