

How do people use and search on the Internet in Quebec ?



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□ Introduction

There are many studies in Europe and in the USA about net surfers' behaviour. But, until last year, we did not have any data on French Canadians' habits.

Our study realized in 2007 has been relayed in many medias in Quebec and also all over the world. It offered us a first lighting on how people in Quebec search the Web. But the internet is moving very fast and so net surfers' habits are.

That is the reason why we decided to repeat the experiment in 2008 in order to have a better understanding of web surfers.

□ Methodology

We create an online survey, with about 20 questions asked to the members of [Toutacoup](#) emailing list. That allowed us to collect the answers of 9500 people (against 1300 last year)

□ Results

The results confirm last year study and show that French Canadians are really mature in using the Internet and searching the Web.



Important results of the study

- ❑ French Canadians are mature web users. 80% of them surf the Internet daily, and 55% made online shopping during the last 6 months.
- ❑ Their favorite news website is Canoë. Concerning travels, their favorite one is Expedia, for games and contests they visit [Toutacoup](#), and for daily life and entertainment they prefer MSN/Sympatico.
- ❑ Google still dominates search engines: 79% of people use it first.



- ❑ If a web surfer is not satisfied with the answers given by his favorite search engine, yahoo comes in second place for 21% of people.
- ❑ Most French Canadians (80%) are satisfied with search engines results. But 13% stays dissatisfied.
- ❑ 45% of respondents use 2 words in their search requests, 35% use 3.
- ❑ 37% of polled people have never noticed sponsored links in search engine. They were 40% in 2007.

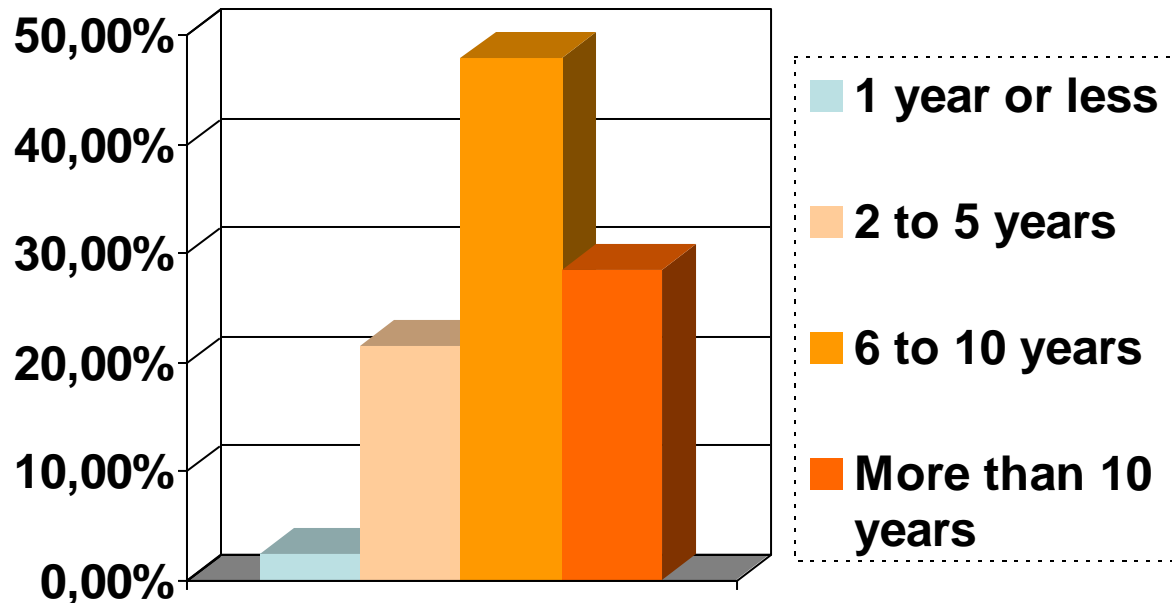




Summary of questions

1. How long have you been using the Internet for ?
2. How often do you use the Internet ?
3. What are your favorite websites ?
4. What do you mainly use the Internet for ?
5. Have you made any online purchases during the 6 last months ?
6. What was the average amount of these purchases ?
7. Which search engine do you use first ?
8. What other search engine do you use as an alternative ?
9. When you search on Google, do you use .ca, .com or .fr ?
10. Are you satisfied with your search results ?
11. How many key words do you use when you search the internet ?
12. Do you use advanced search, such as + or « signs ?
13. If you are not satisfied with a result, what do you do ?
14. If you can't find what you're searching, after how many result pages do you change your query or use an other search engine ?
15. Many search engines display sponsored links. Have you ever noticed them ?
16. Do you find those sponsored links relevant ?
17. Polled people's profiles

1. How long have you been using the Internet for ?

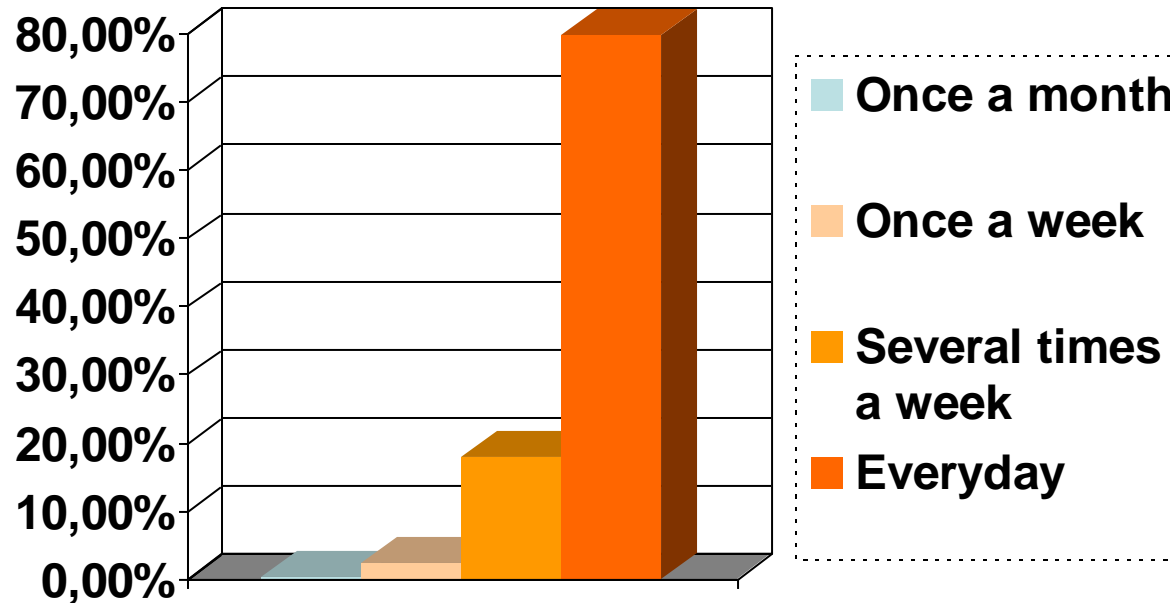


Using the Web has become a real habit for French Canadians.

28% of respondents have been surfing the Internet for more than 10 years, 47% for 6 to 10 years, 21% for 2 to 5 years and only 3% for less than a year.

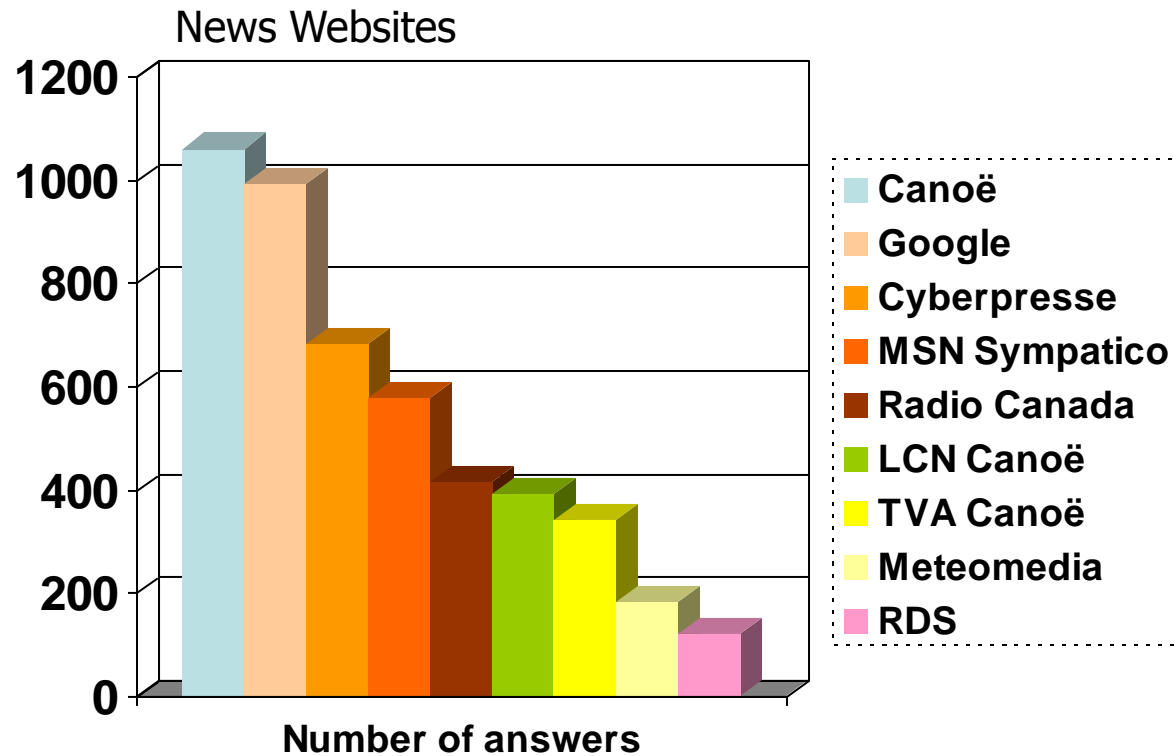
We can underline that those people are very mature and know very well this new way of communication.

2. How often do you use the Internet ?



French Canadian net surfers have been using the Internet for a long time now and they keep on surfing at a high rate. Indeed, we can underline that 80% are using it daily, 17% several times a week, 2% once a week and less than 1% once a month.

3. What are your favorite websites ?

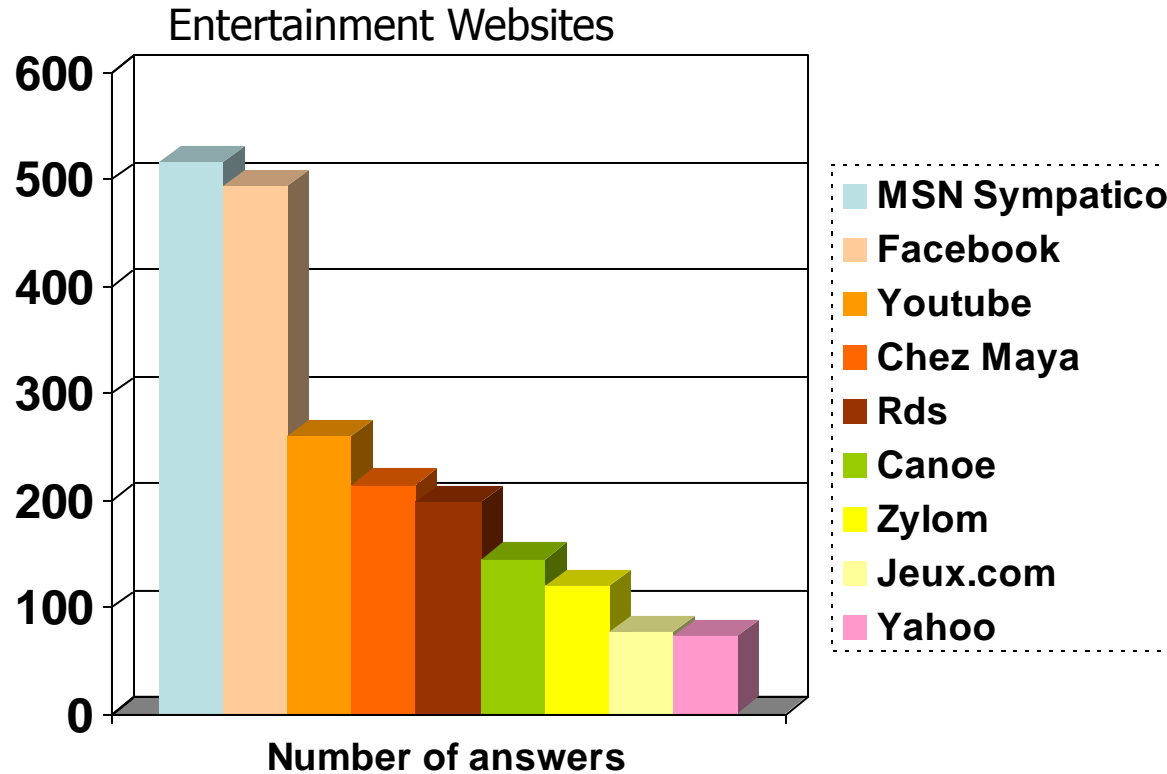


Canoë is the most visited website in Quebec concerning News. It is even more important if we take into account LCN Canoë and TVA Canoë.

Google comes second. Nevertheless, it is only a search engine, not a news website. Its reputation may have influenced the answers.

Cyberpresse is in third place. We also have to highlight the good 4th position of MSN Sympatico.

3. What are your favorite websites ?

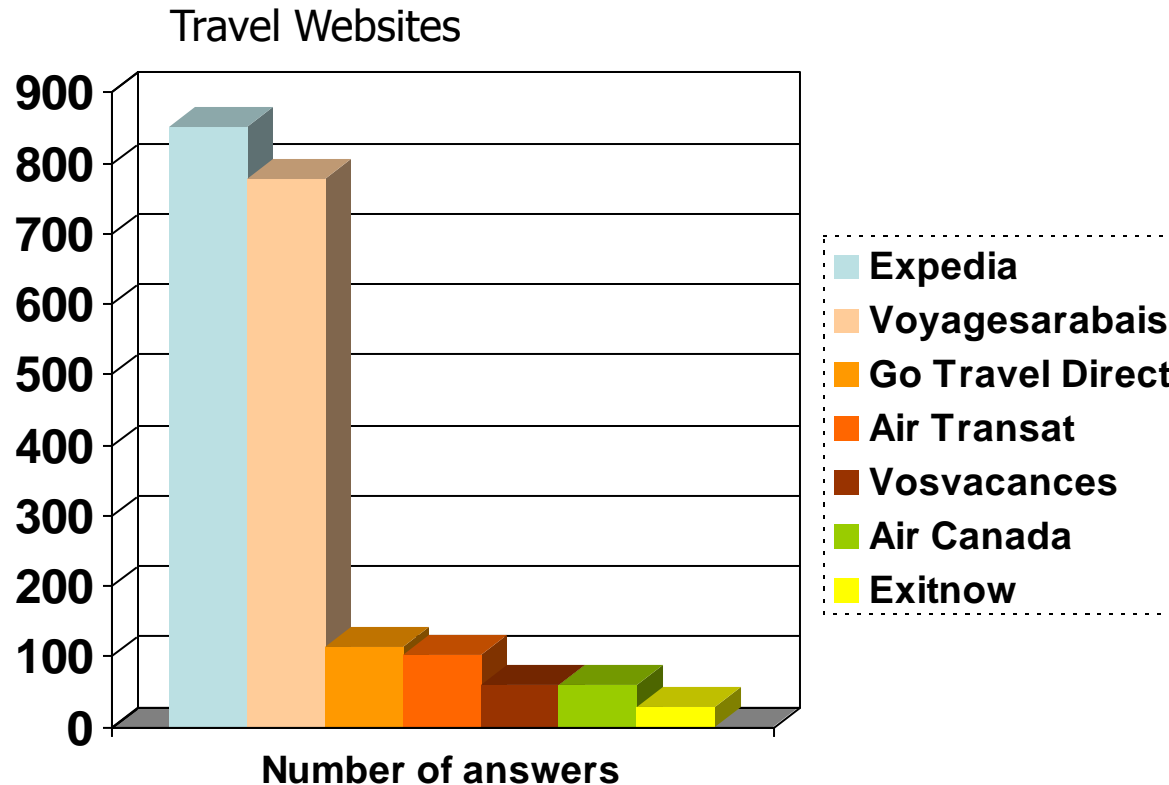


MSN Sympatico is the French Canadians' favorite entertainment website.

Facebook, comes second. The social phenomenon managed to seduce Net surfers. So it is essential to underline the strong marketing and advertising influence of this platform.

Youtube comes third.

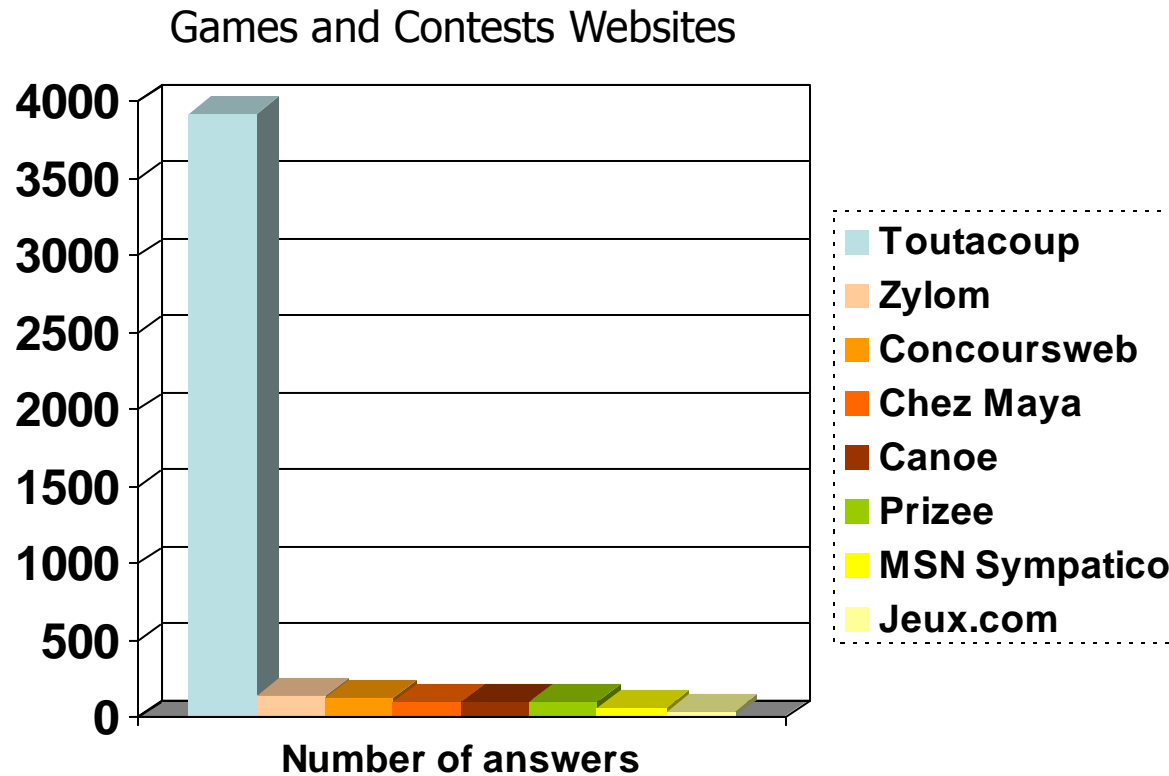
3. What are your favorite websites ?



Respondents' favorite travel sites are Expedia and Voyages à rabais. They are really popular compared to the others. It seems a bit surprising to find Air Canada and Air Transat at the end of the classification.

Nevertheless, we can cumulate Air Transat and Exitnow since Exitnow belongs to Air Transat. Indeed the group comes 3rd in this category.

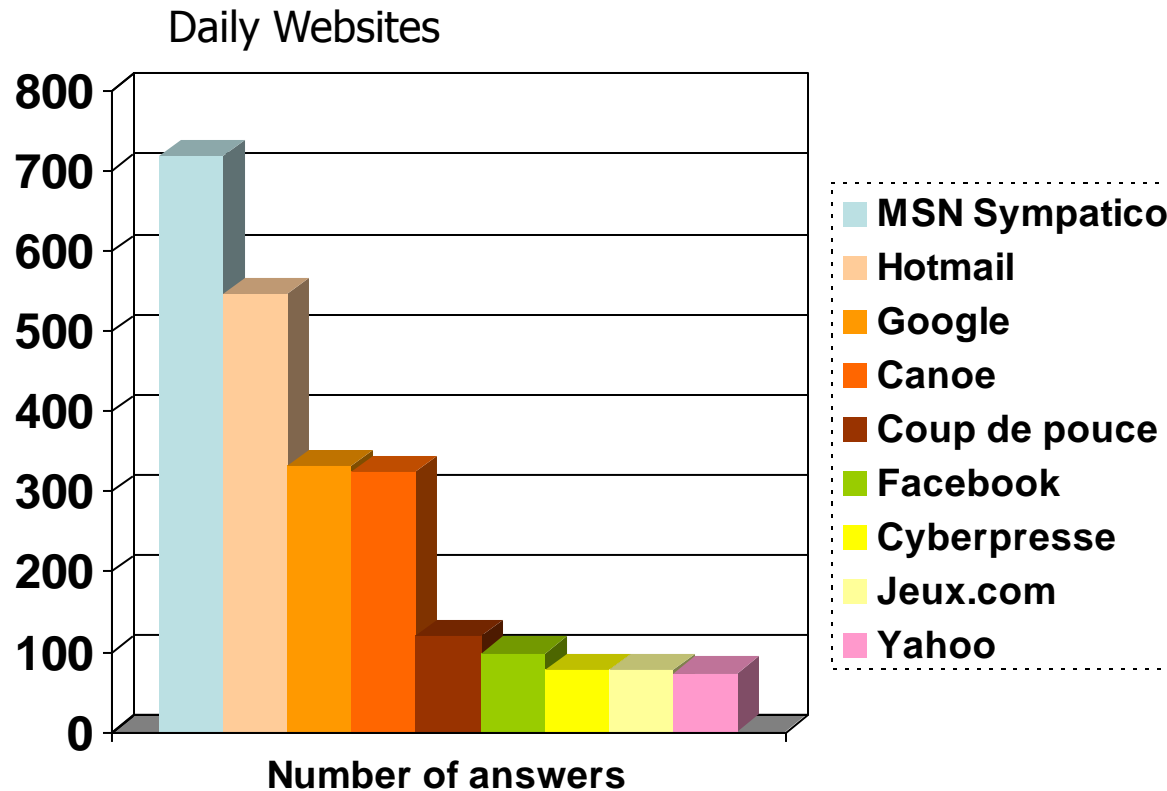
3. What are your favorite websites ?



[Toutacoup](#) is, without a doubt, the most popular contests Website in Québec. But, it is important to precise that this result is influenced by the fact that this poll was made on Toutacoup Website. This explains this wide gap between Toutacoup and other websites.

Results for other websites are not very relevant. Zylom comes 2nd, Concoursweb 3rd, Chez Maya 4th and Canoe and Prizee are 5th.

3. What are your favorite websites ?

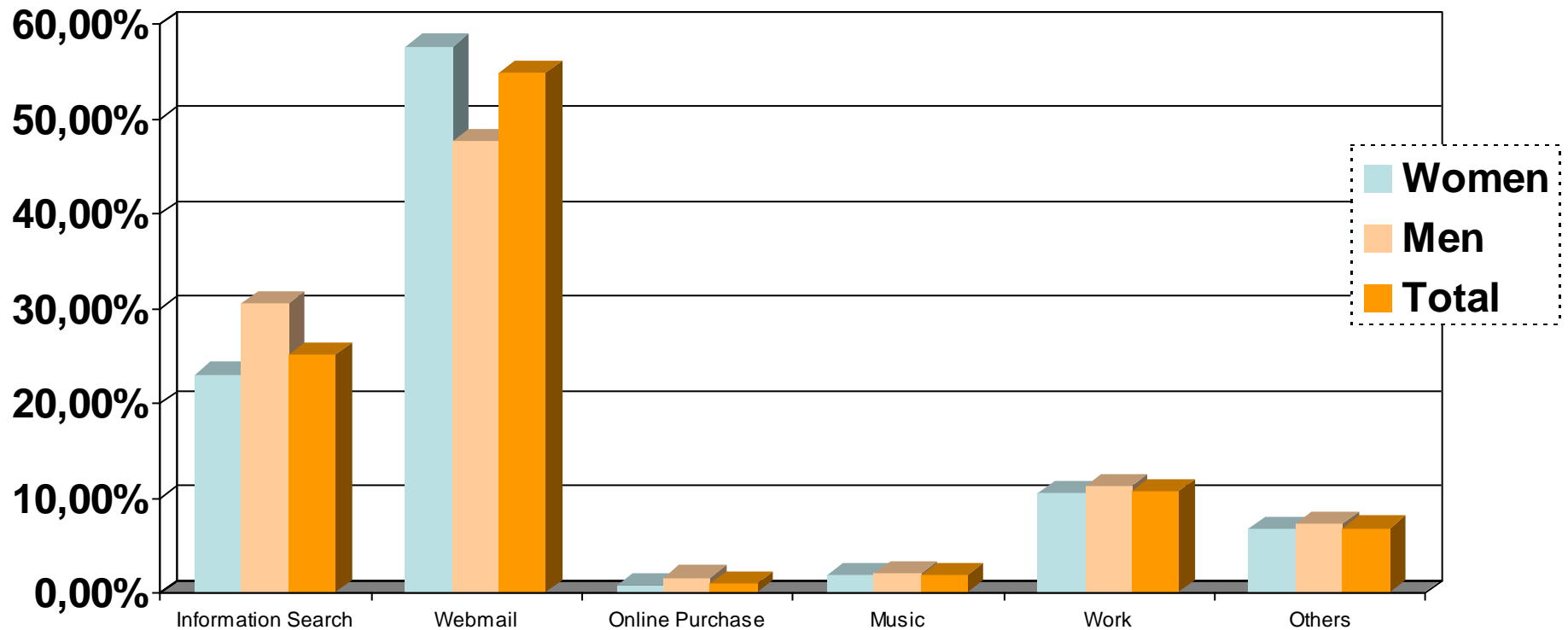


MSN Sympatico is Net surfers' favorite daily website. Then comes Hotmail : We can assume that French Canadians mainly use the Internet for their Webmail.

Then, we find Google and Canoe.

It is important to underline the domination of Microsoft in this category with MSN Sympatico and Hotmail, 1st and 2nd position (more than 1240 answers)

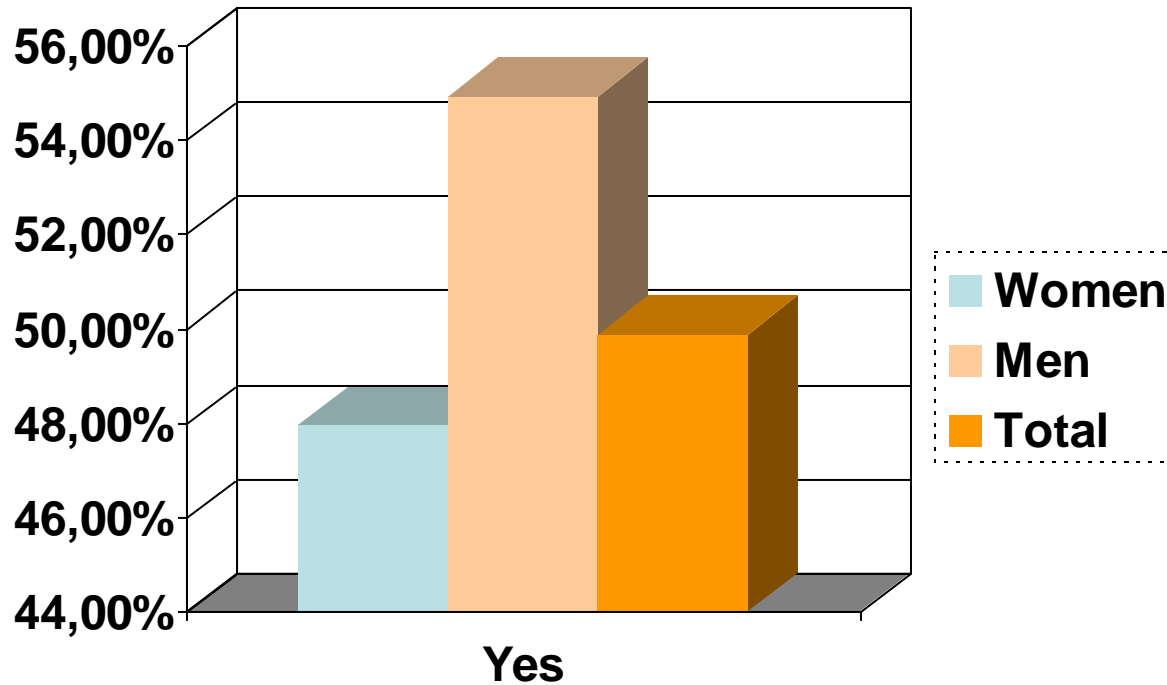
4. What do you mainly use the Internet for ?



Respondents mainly use the Web for Webmail (55%). Then, 25% of them search information, and 10% use it for their work. Only 1% surf the Web to listen to music or to buy online.

Women and men almost have the same behaviour.

5. Have you made any online purchases during the last 6 months ?



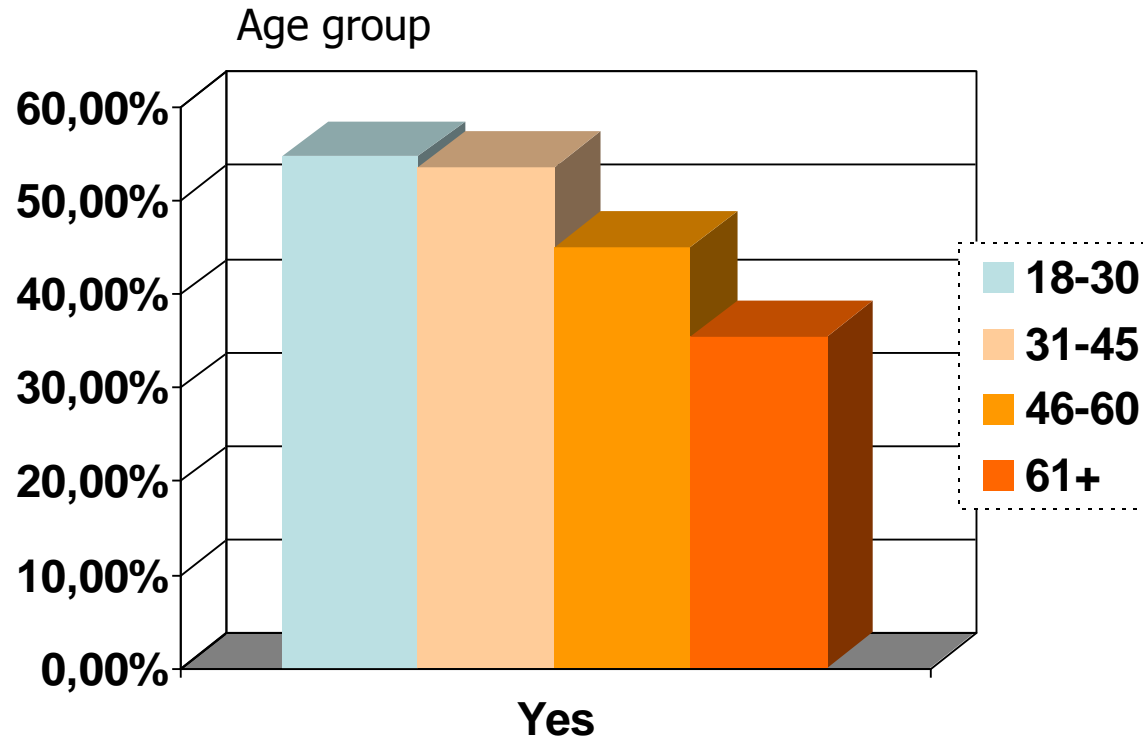
50% of polled Net surfers have bought something online durant the last 6 months. So French Canadians are not afraid of buying on the Internet.

But there is a certain gap between Women and Men. 54.85% of men have made an online purchase, against 48% of women in the last semester.

Men seem to be bigger online consumers than women.

We can assume that products sold online target more men than women, or that men have more affinities with new technology and with the fact of buying on a website.

5. Have you made any online purchases during the last 6 months ?



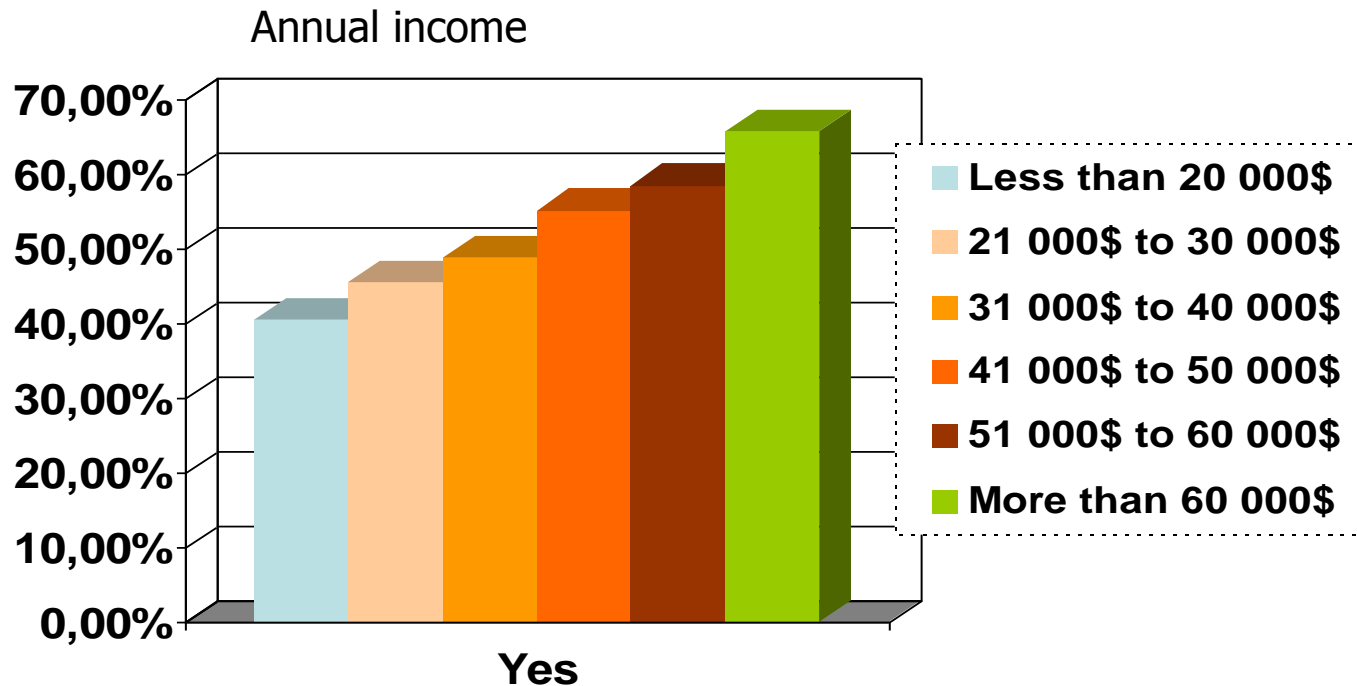
There is a general tendency : The older the people are, the less they buy online. This is a logical statement.

Young people are more used to the Internet and they grew up with it. Older people may feel less comfortable with online purchases.

The figures indicate that 52% of 18/30 years old people have made purchases online in the last semester, against 35% of the 61+ years old.

Those results are pretty good, and show that even older people do not hesitate to go and shop online.

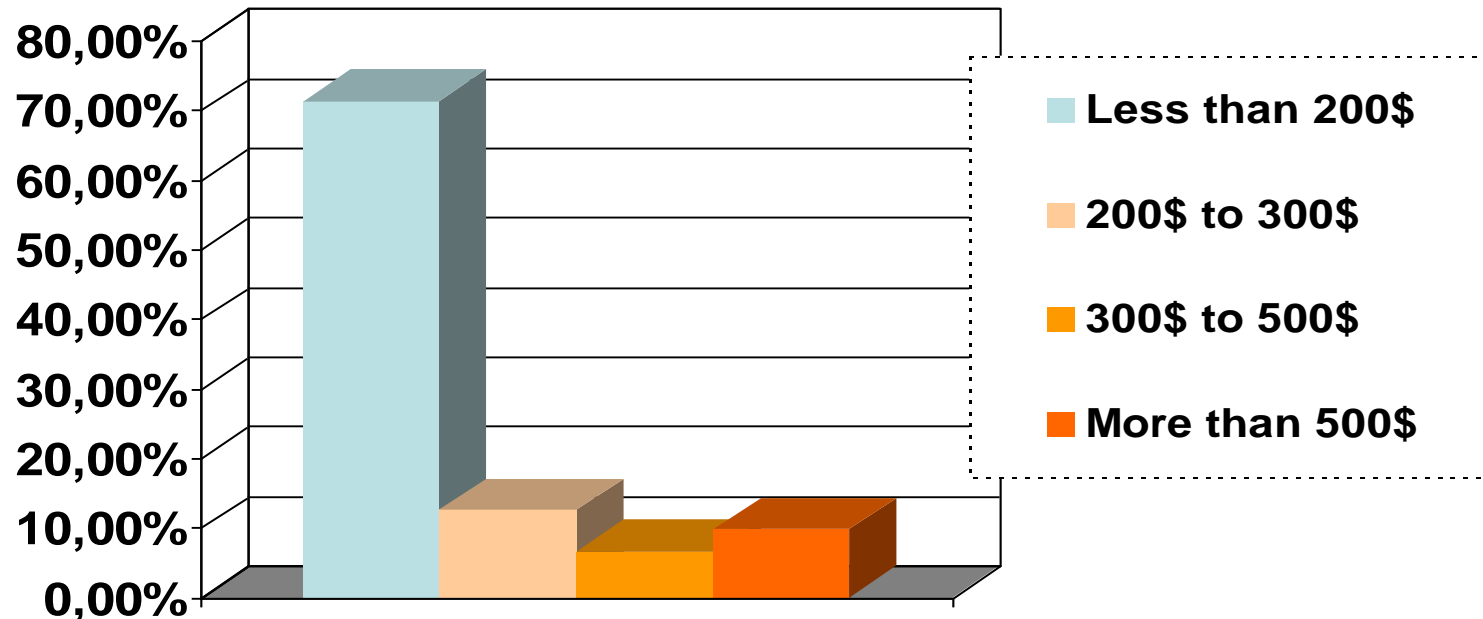
5. Have you made any online purchases during the last 6 months ?



40% of respondents who have an annual income under 20 000\$ have bought online during the last semester. This percentage reaches 64% for net surfers who earn more than 60 000\$ a year.

There is no surprise in those figures: The more people earn money, more they consume on the Web

6. What was the average amount of these purchases ?



71% of polled French Canadians have made a 200\$ or less purchase, 12% a 200 to 300\$ purchase, 6% a 300 to 500\$ and 10% a 500\$ or more purchase.

Indeed, the average online purchase is quite low. It may be explained by the nature of products sold online, and also by a certain fear of buying on the Internet.

Maybe ebusiness sites should reinforce their security and ergonomy to make customers feel more confident ?

Sum up : How do French Canadians use the Web ?

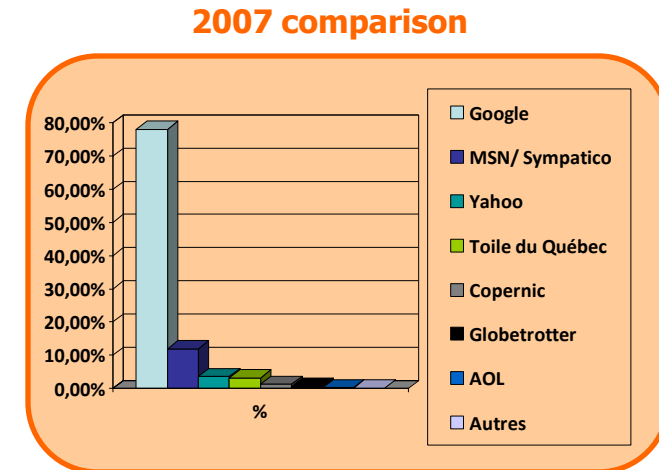
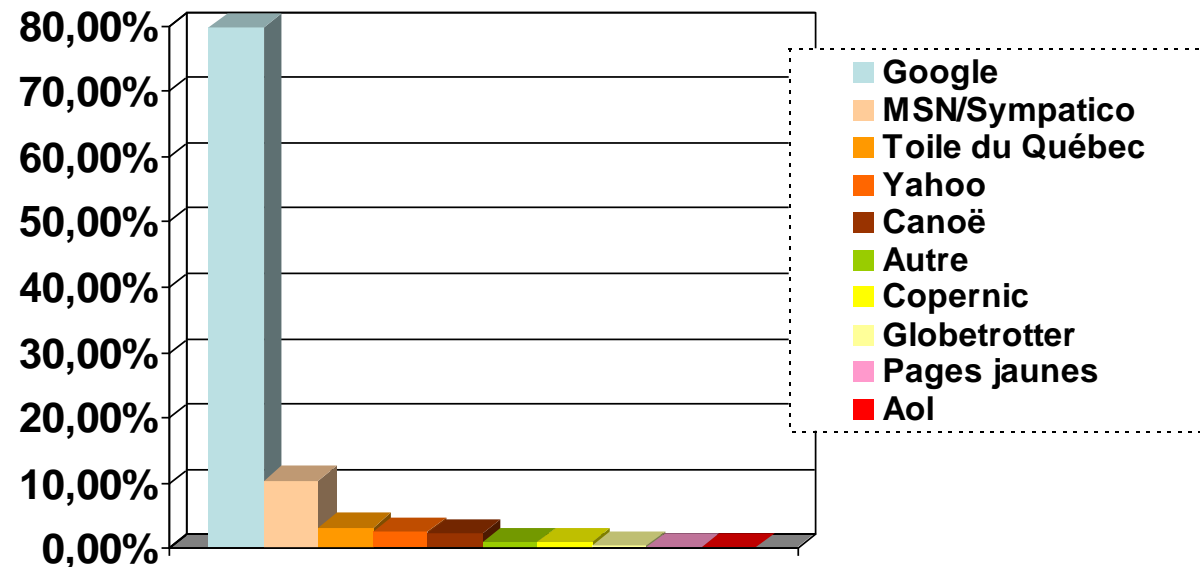
- ❑ From a general overview, French Canadians have a really good Internet knowledge since they have been using it for years now and surf daily.
- ❑ Their favorites websites are : Canoë for the news, MSN Sympatico for entertainment and daily life, Expedia for travels, and [Toutacoup](#) for games and contests .
- ❑ Online purchases are part of respondents' habits. Whatever their age or incomes, Internet surfers do not hesitate to buy online. Nevertheless, men seem to be bigger online consumers than women.
- ❑ The average amount of an online purchase stays quite low since it is under 200\$.



- ❑ It is easy to guess that in the years to come, those already pretty good figures will increase.



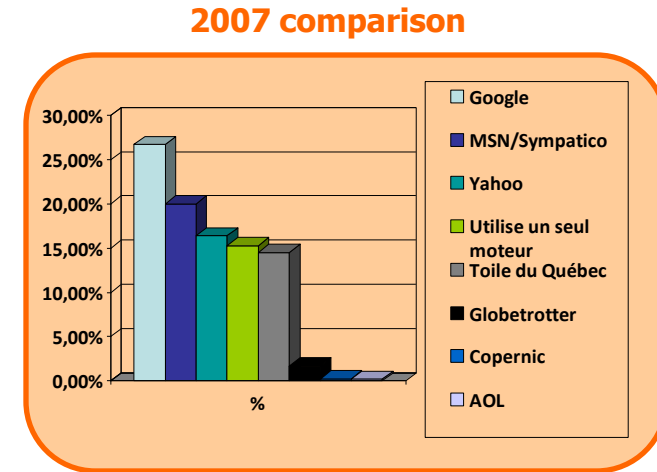
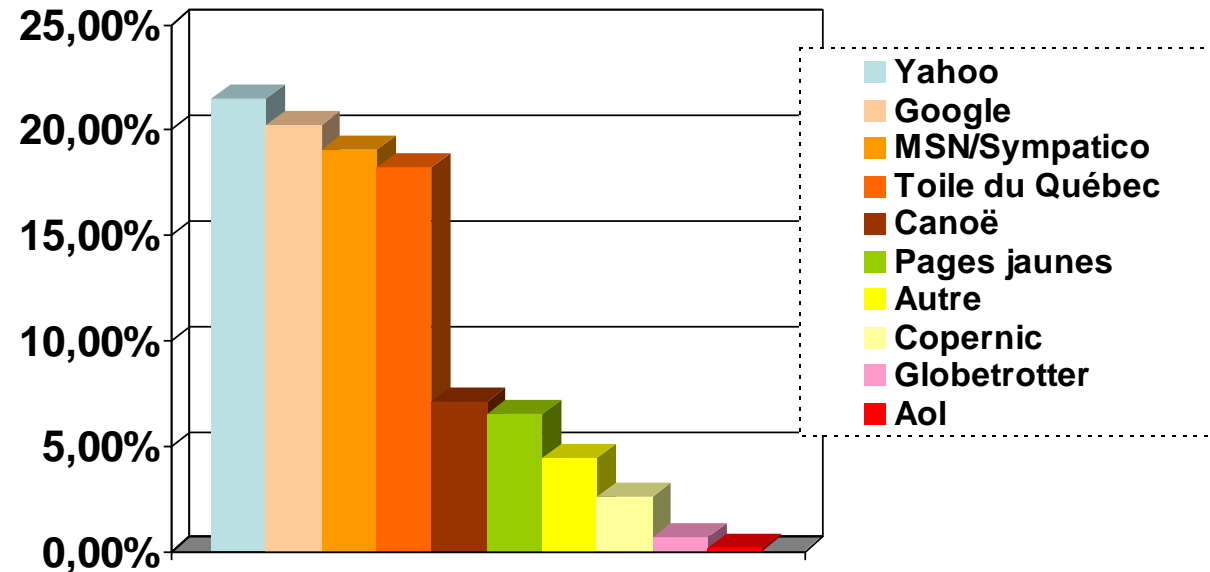
7. Which search engine do you use first ?



Google is still the most popular search engine. Almost 80% of Net surfers use it as their main search engine. MSN/Sympatico comes second with only 10%, and La Toile du Quebec comes 3rd with 3.20%.

In comparison with 2007, Yahoo lost one position : He was 3rd and he is now 4th.

8. What other search engine do you use as an alternative ?

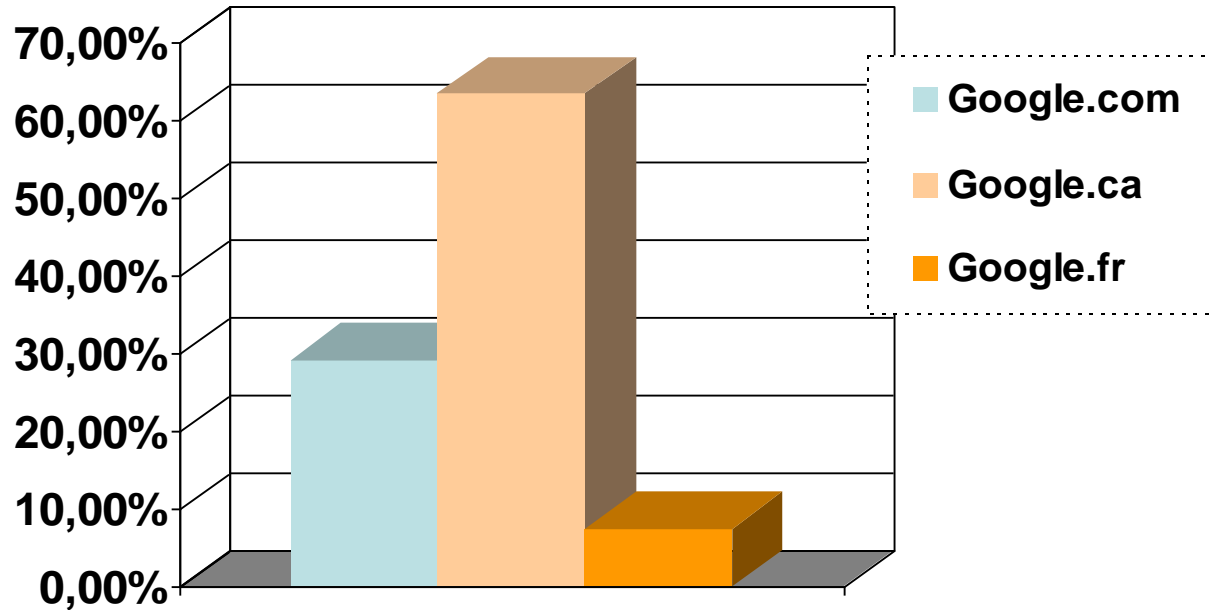


If web surfers are dissatisfied with the results of their favorite search engine, they will mainly use Yahoo as an alternative.

This results is a bit odd since we have just seen that Yahoo is less and less popular. However, Yahoo is not only a search engine. Indeed, it is also an information portal and it may not be used for the same reasons as Google is.

From a more global point of view, 4 search engines are much more popular than the others : Yahoo, Google, MSN/Sympatico and la Toile du Québec.

9. When you search on Google, do you use .ca, .com or .fr ?



63% of respondents use Google.ca when they search, 29% use .com and 8% .fr.

This result is quite logical and French Canadians may be aware of the relevance of .ca.

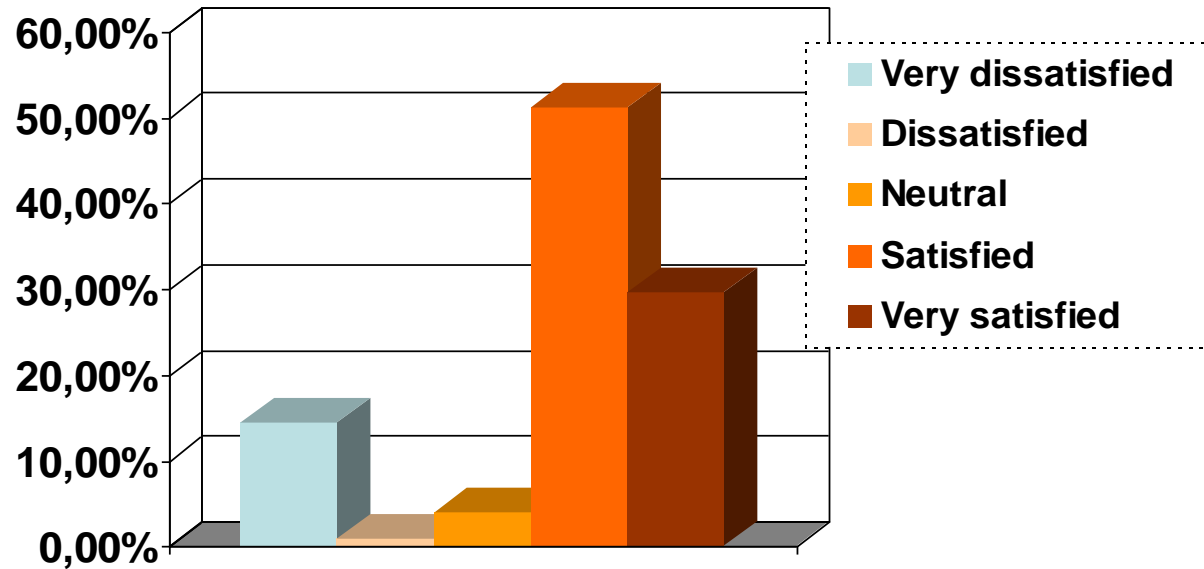
We can guess that people who use .com are more english speaking persons.

For .fr, it may represent the french community in Quebec or also people who search information for their future holidays in France.

10. Are you satisfied with your search results ?

A large majority of net surfers is satisfied with the results of search engines.

Nevertheless, we can notice that almost 13% are dissatisfied with the results, This is an inscreasing figure compared to last year (8.8%)

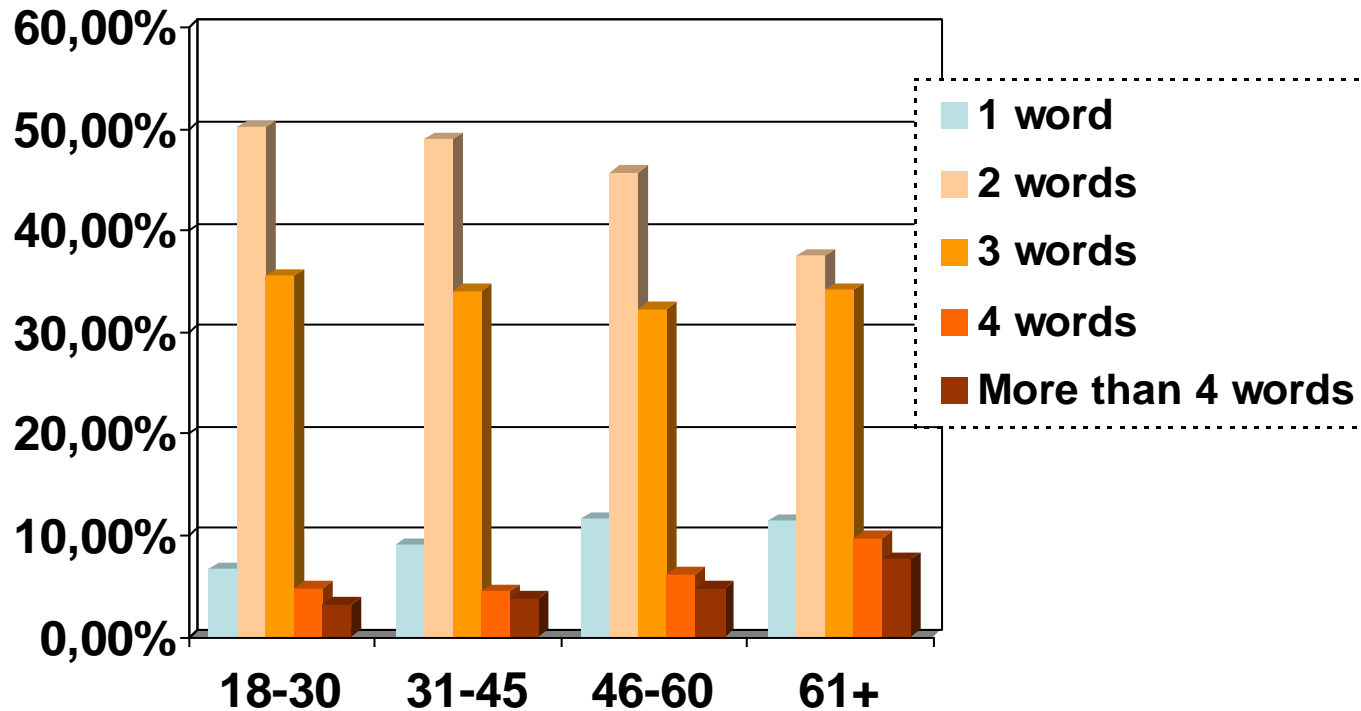


When will a new and more effective search engine be invented ?

In that race to performance, Google is ahead and it is easy to assume that the company is already working on it.

Today, Search engines still operate on an archaic base since they interpret 2 or 3 words requests. Can we dream of a cerebral engine, half-human, half-machine ?

11. How many keywords do you use when you search the internet ?

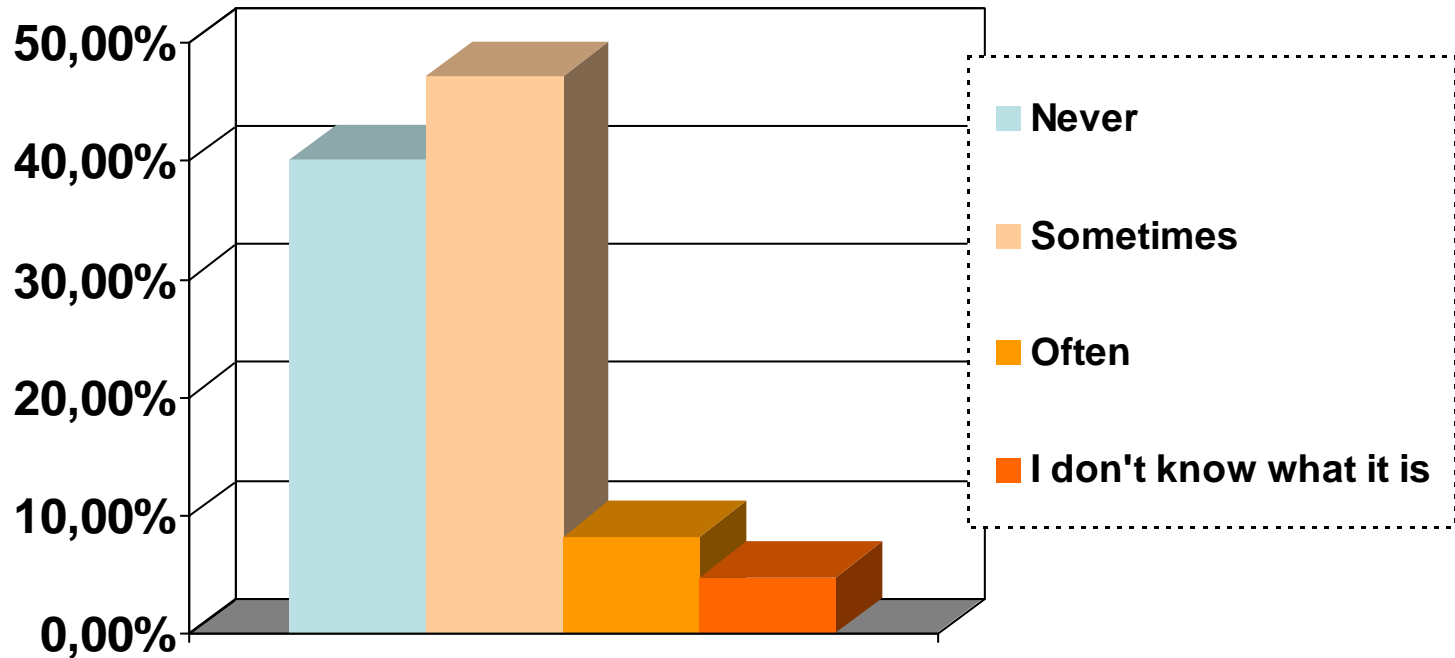


Whatever their age, respondents mainly (40%) use 2 keywords in their requests. 35% use 3 words. This is a proof of maturity in their way of searching the web.

As a comparison, 22% of French people use 2 words and 29% use 3 words.

The study also underlines that the older category (61+) uses more keywords in its requests. Indeed 17% use 4 or more keywords. Those people are less used to the Internet and they may not have the right reflex while they search the Web.

12. Do you use advanced search, such as + or « signs ?



We saw it before : French Canadians feel at ease with search engines. This new question confirm it : 46% of them sometimes use advanced search signs and even 8% often do it.

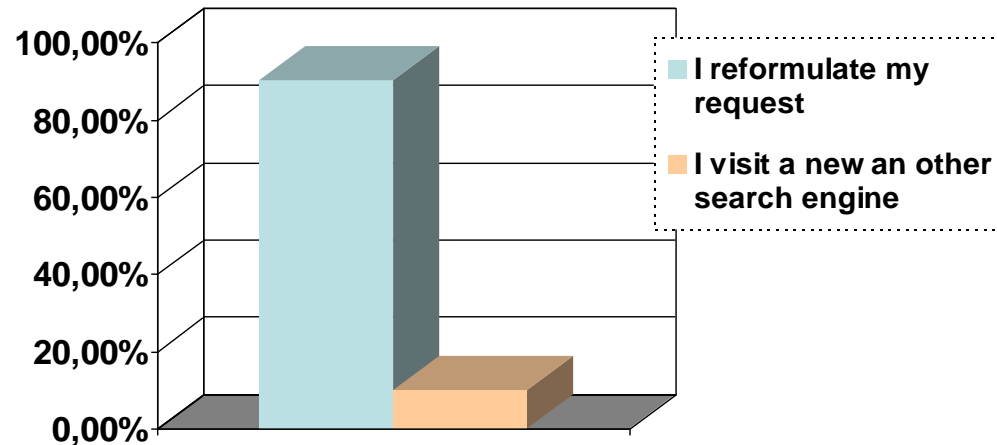
In 2007, only 39% used them. So this is a nice improvement in search techniques.

13. If you are not satisfied with a result, what do you do ?

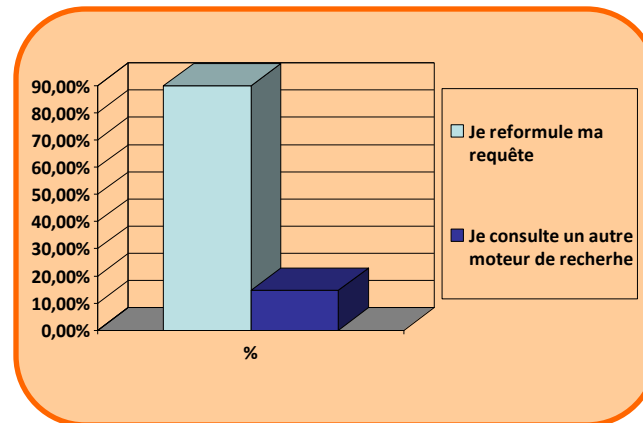
In most cases, french Canadian net surfers who are not satisfied with a result reformulate a new request.

89% do it using the same search engine, and 11% visit a new search engine.

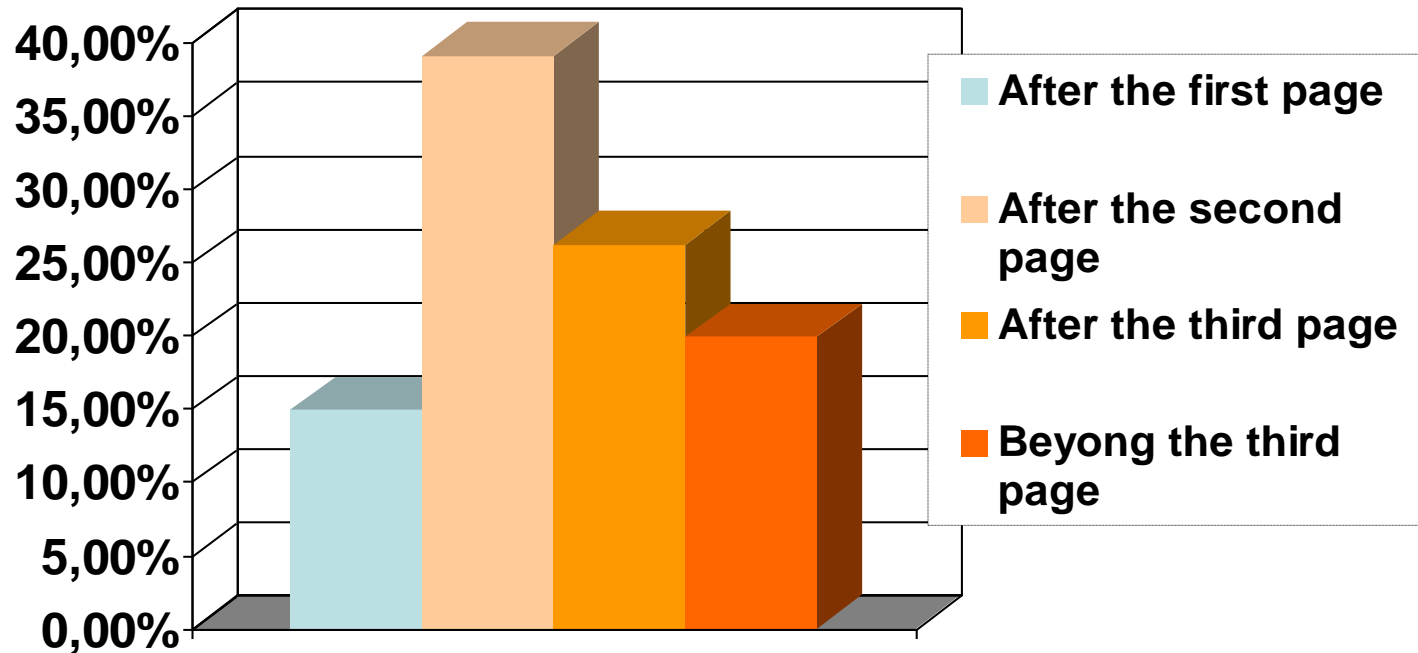
Those figures have not changed since 2007.



2007 comparison



14. If you can't find what you're searching, after how many result pages do you change your query or use an other search engine ?



38% of french Canadians reformulate a request after having looked at the two first results pages (which corresponds to 20 results). 25% make a new request after the third page, and 20% beyond that page.

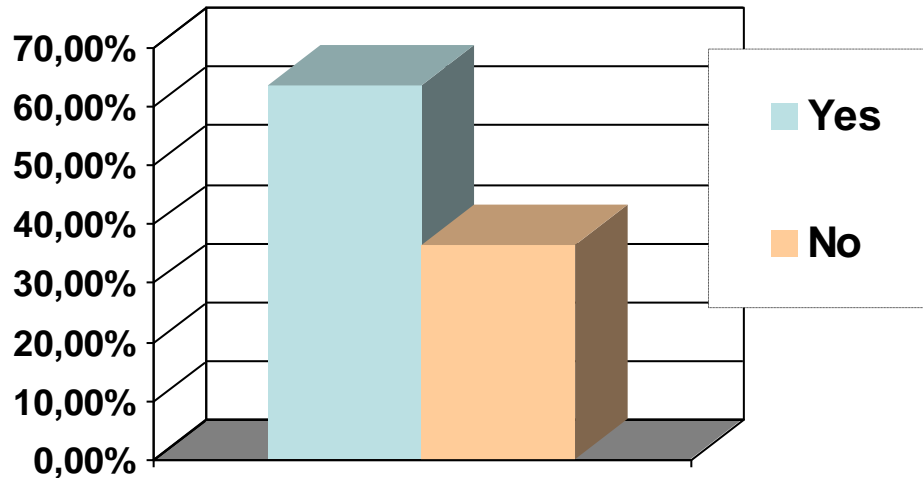
That underlines the importance of positioning a website in the first results pages of search engines.

Sum up : French Canadians and their way of searching the Web

- ❑ Since the 2007 study, there have not been major changes in net surfers' behaviours
- ❑ Google is still the unavoidable leader of search engines. But it is essential to notice the increasing dissatisfaction of users concerning search results : They were 8.8% in 2007, and they are now 12%.
- ❑ From a general point of view, we have to highlight the maturity of respondents when searching the Web : They use 2 or 3 keywords and even use advanced search techniques.
- ❑ They are also aware of the relevance of using Google in its canadian version (.ca).
- ❑ Last, 80% of polled people never go beyond the third results page : That is why it is so important to position a website in top results.



15. Many search engines display sponsored links. Have you ever noticed them ?



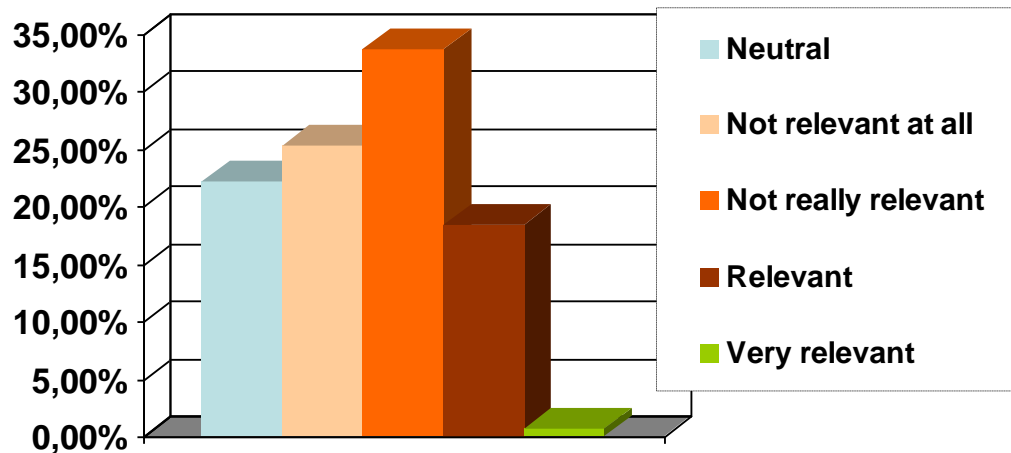
An important part of web surfers have already noticed sponsored links in search engines.

But there are still 37% who have never seen them.

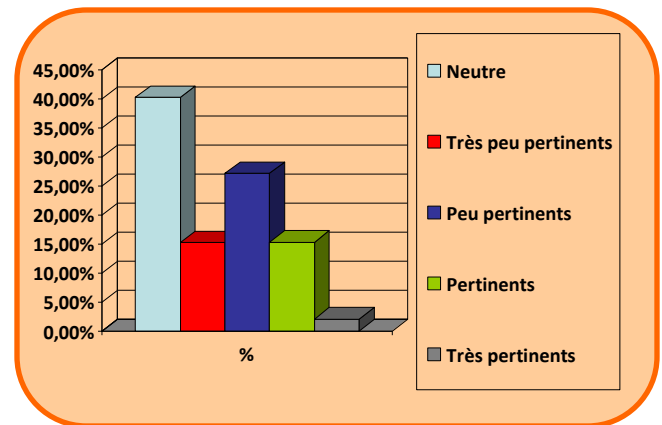
That is amazing since those commercial links are present on most of search engines and are clearly indicated.

But those figures are changing, more and more people notice them.

16. Do you find those sponsored links relevant ?



2007 comparison



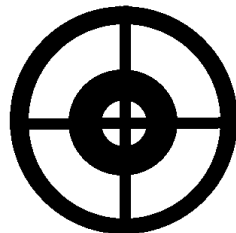
22% of net surfers do not have any advice on the subject whereas they were 40% in 2007. This change underlines a bigger awareness of commercial links.

The graph shows that 60% of people judge those links not really relevant. This may be due to the multiplication of those links less and less qualified.

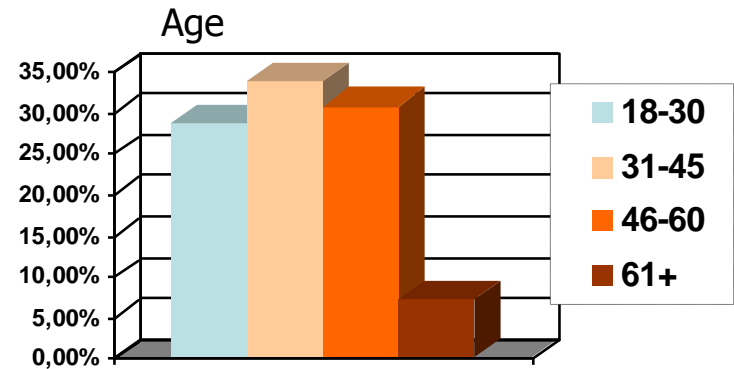
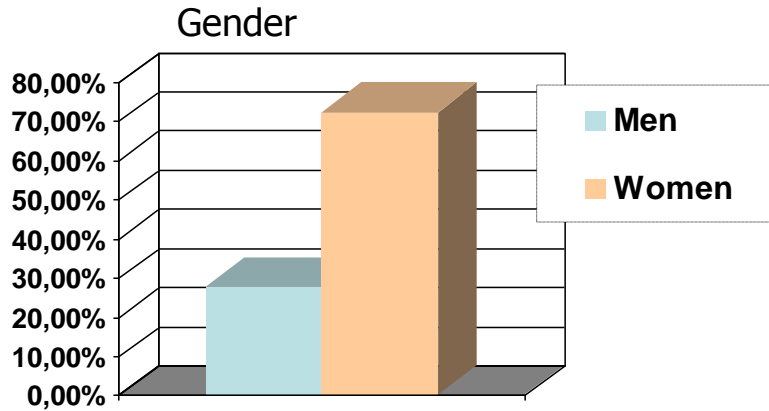
It seems that editorial rules and search engines control should be reinforced.

Sum up : French Canadians and sponsored links

- ❑ Too many French Canadians are still unaware of sponsored links. 37% of them have never noticed those commercial links. This figure has a bit decreased since 2007.
- ❑ Nevertheless, respondents who notice them judge they are less and less relevant. They are now 60% while they were 40% in 2007.
- ❑ This negative feeling may be explained by the multiplication of those links, not always well-targeted.

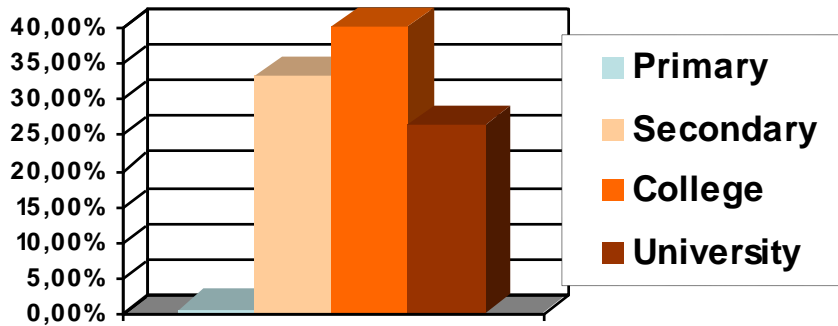


17. Profile of polled people

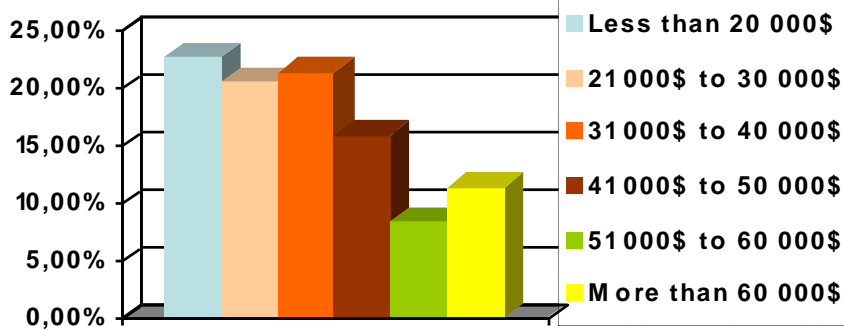


17. Profile of polled people

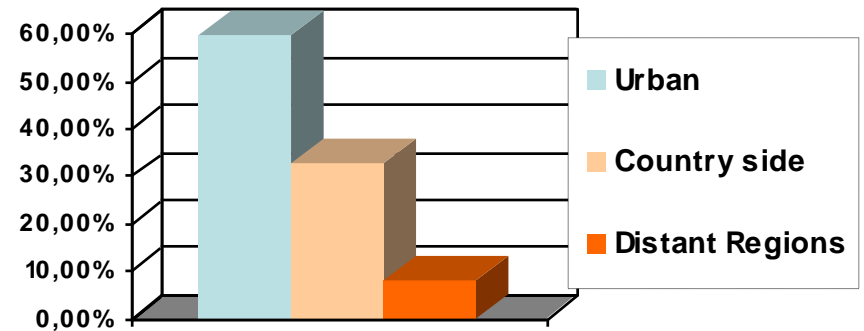
Scholarship level



Average incomes



Living environment



If you want to have more information about that study,
or if you wish to get a more detailed study on a certain
target, do not hesitate to contact us :

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