

Wireless Internet Use Rises As We Dream Of Surfing From Our Gardens

Submitted by: AOL UK

Tuesday, 29 August 2006

- More than a third of UK Internet users have access to a wireless connection
- Garden voted preferred surfing haven, ahead of bedroom and beach
- One in six say they have stolen someone else's wireless bandwidth

Broadband Britons are increasingly opting for a wireless world and dreaming of surfing the Net from wherever they choose, be it backyard, bedroom or beach, according to a new survey from Internet provider AOL.

More than a third (35%) of the online population in the UK now has access to a wireless connection, reveals the survey of more than 2,000 UK Internet users, carried out for AOL by human behaviour research company Populus.

Half of all those surveyed chose the garden as their dream location to surf wirelessly, ahead of the bed or the beach. Just a quarter said they would most like to have wireless access from the bedroom, while 15% said they dreamed of surfing on sandy shores.

Those aged 18-24 were less keen to venture out of doors though, with 41% of this age group choosing their bedroom as their surfing sanctuary.

The majority (84%) of those who are already wireless have access in the home, with 12% using it at the office and the remainder using Internet hotspots. Three quarters of wireless users have started using it in the last year and over half (39%) have done so within the last six months, showing rapid growth in uptake recently.

Jemma Dunn, Director of Broadband at AOL, said: "Wireless not only stops the cable clutter, but frees you to get your email and catch up on the latest content from wherever you want, in or out of the home. As British summers get warmer and longer, it is no surprise that we all want to be freed from the phone point to be in the garden enjoying the sunshine and the Web at the same time."

Most of the people surveyed (63%) simply felt that the freedom of wireless was the greatest benefit, though nearly one in four (23%) felt it was tidier. This is more sensible than many might realise as a surprisingly high number of people suffer domestic injury from cables cluttering up the home.

According to figures from The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), more than 3,000 people every year are the victim of a domestic accident involving an electrical appliance lead or extension*.

Nearly one in six say they have stolen someone else's wireless bandwidth, with men (22%) far more likely to do it than women (6%) and it being more prevalent in London and the South East than elsewhere in the UK. Four out of five people believe that bandwidth thieves should be punished, with two thirds preferring a fine as punishment over a Net ban or prison sentence.

Of the third of online users with wireless access already, nearly half are 'professionals', with 41% living in London and 39% living in other areas of the South East. Nearly half are 18-24 year olds (43%) indicating significant use by young people who have been first to see the benefits of a wireless connection.

-ends-

* RoSPA figures based on the years 2002-2004. RoSPA provides this data to the Department of Trade and Industry.

More information can be found at www.rospace.com.

For further information and survey results breakout please contact Emily Field on emily.field@shinecom.com or Ben Hooper on ben.hooper@shinecom.com, or call 0207 553 3333.

About AOL

AOL is a leading provider of digital communications and content to UK consumers. AOL offers dial-up, broadband, voice and portal services and has more than 2.2 million subscribers in the UK, including more than 1.4 million on broadband.

AOL subscribers in the UK spend more than two hours a day on average connected to the internet. The AOL service and portal deliver a range of market-leading online content, including music, film, sport, news, shopping and community, as well as email, instant messenger, VOIP, safety and security features. AOL is also one of the leading online destinations for advertisers in the UK.

The AOL branded services are supplied to UK subscribers by AOL Europe Services SARL, a company in the AOL group based in Luxembourg. AOL (UK) Limited provides marketing and other support services. Both companies are part of AOL Europe, a business unit of AOL LLC, which operates a leading network of Web brands and is a majority-owned subsidiary of Time Warner Inc.
