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Personal Net Usage Pervades Workplace

29 April 2004

In its fifth annual Web@Work study, Websense finds that 51% of US employees who use the Internet at work spend between 1 and 5 hours online at the office for personal reasons.

Harris Interactive surveyed 500 US employees between February and March for Websense, which analyzed the data and reports that the most popular sites for employees to visit at work for personal reasons are news sites (84%), travel sites (64%) and personal e-mail accounts (56%).

Most Popular Categories of Non-Work Related Web Sites Visited by US Employees at Work, February-March 2004 (as a % of respondents)



Note: n=500

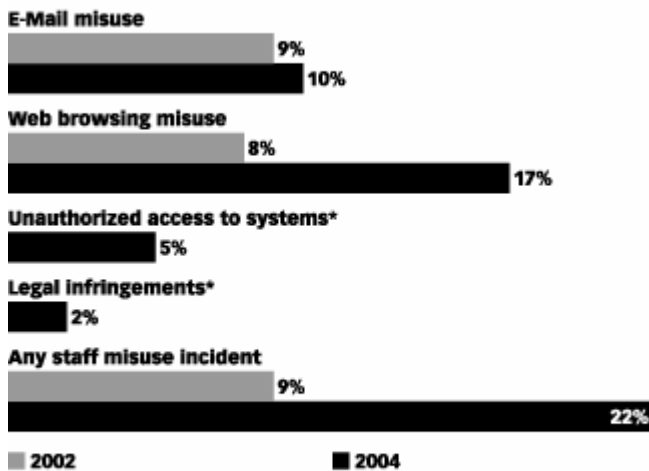
Source: Websense and Harris Interactive, April 2004

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In a similar study, Websense, along with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and the DTI, found that UK employees' usage of the Internet and personal e-mail during work has risen significantly from 2002 to this year. The result? The level of Web browsing misuse has risen from just 8% of companies surveyed in 2002 to 17% of companies surveyed in 2004. E-mail misuse among companies surveyed in the UK did not rise as dramatically as Web browsing misuse, but nonetheless grew over the past two years.

Employee Misuse of the Internet according to UK Businesses, 2002 & 2004 (as a % of respondents)



Note: n=1,000; *data not available for 2002

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers, Department of Trade and Industry and Websense, April 2004

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More companies now offer their employees access to the Internet than did two years ago. However, fewer companies have controls in place to regulate their employees' Net usage. Over 50% had acceptable usage policies for Web browsing and for e-mail usage in 2002, but currently less than 45% have such policies for each type of usage.

Controls Put in Place on E-Mail and Internet Usage according to UK Businesses, 2002 & 2004 (as a % of respondents)

E-Mail

Acceptable usage policy



Blocking or quarantining e-mail attachments



Restrictions on which staff use Internet e-mail



No controls



Web browsing

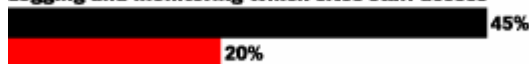
Acceptable usage policy



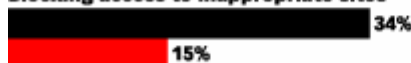
Restrictions on which staff browse the Web



Logging and monitoring which sites staff access



Blocking access to inappropriate sites



No controls



■ 2002

■ 2004

Note: n=1,000

Source: PricewaterhouseCoopers, Department of Trade and Industry

Websense, April 2004

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The PwC, DTI and Websense report warns companies not to wait until a serious breach occurs to put proper controls for Web and personal e-mail usage in place. Indeed companies need to stay on top of employee online activity. Get up-to-date statistics on the subject with eMarketer's [eStat Database](#). An advanced search on the "employment" presents you with 203 tables and charts.

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