

# Canada Presents Opportunity for Search Engine Marketing

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Canadians are more active users of search engines than their US counterparts, with a [comScore](#) poll finding that 85% of the population has conducted one or more searches online, compared to 73% of people in the US.

comScore collected the data through its qSearch information service, which tracks the usage of search engines by analyzing search queries for various search engines and portals. It found that Canadians performed 575 million searches in the month of April 2004, much less than the 3.6 billion searches conducted by people in the US during the previous month. However, taking into account differences in population, the average Canadian performed more searches per month than the average person in the US.

## Search Engine Usage in North America, by Country, March & April 2004

	Total searches per month (in millions)	Searches per searcher per month	Search penetration
Canada (April 2004)	575	40	85%
US (March 2004)	3,600	35	73%

Source: comScore qSearch, May 2004

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Aside from conducting more searches, Canadians also prefer using Google to other search engines by a large margin, with 62% of searches by users in Canada taking place through the site, and 15% or less through Yahoo! or MSN. The US is more balanced, with Google (36%) still leading but by only 6 percentage points over Yahoo! (30%), and MSN at around one-half the share of Yahoo!. In terms of searcher penetration, a measure of how many people visit each site at least once, Google still leads in Canada while the split is more even in the US.

## Usage of Select Search Engines in North America, by Country, March & April 2004

	Canada (April 2004)		US (March 2004)	
	Share of searches	Searcher penetration	Share of searches	Searcher penetration
Google sites	62%	65%	36%	46%
Yahoo! sites	15%	41%	30%	51%
MSN-Microsoft sites	12%	46%	16%	41%
All other	12%	–	18%	–

Source: comScore qSearch, May 2004

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comScore notes that 60% of Canadians have broadband access, and from the numbers above, they use search engines more often than people in the US. Search engine marketing has become a crucial segment of online advertising revenue in the US in the past two years, but it seems it would flourish even more in Canada. Google, which recently unveiled a new set of online marketing tools for advertisers (see our recent News Brief "[Google Gets Images](#)"), could use its commanding position in the market to attract advertisers to a demographic ripe for commercialization. But based on the competitive "searcher penetration" figures, all three major search engines and their clients could do well by focusing on Canadian Web searchers.

