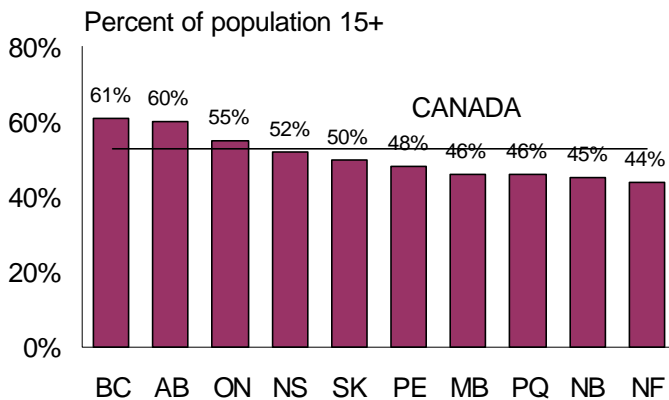


Earnings and Employment Trends ♦ August 2001

On the net

The Internet has become part of everyday life, a tool for work and school, a source of entertainment and information and a means of communication for many. Just over half of Canadians aged 15 years and over had used the Internet in a twelve month period ending in 2000, according to the 2000 General Social Survey (GSS) on *Access To and Use of Information Communication Technology*¹. BC had the highest proportion of users at 61% while the user rate was lowest in Newfoundland at 44%. Ontario's user rate was 55%, in third place after Alberta at 60%.

More than half of Canadian adults used the Internet



Users are accessing the Internet at many points - home, work, school, libraries, Internet cafes, as well as at the homes of friends and relatives. Just over 40% of Canadian households were

connected to the Internet; BC again ranked first at 50%.

In BC, the highest rates of Internet use were among youth with more than 90% of 15 to 24 year olds having used the Internet recently. Less than 30% of those 55 and older had been recently on the Net. Males were somewhat more likely than females to be users - 66% compared with 57%.

Not surprisingly, those with higher household incomes had higher user rates. About 46% of persons in households with income below \$30,000 had used the Internet recently, while, when household incomes were \$100,000 and greater, almost double that percentage were users. Again, the more highly educated a person was, the greater likelihood of being an Internet user: 82% of those with university degrees compared with 44% of those with less than grade 12.

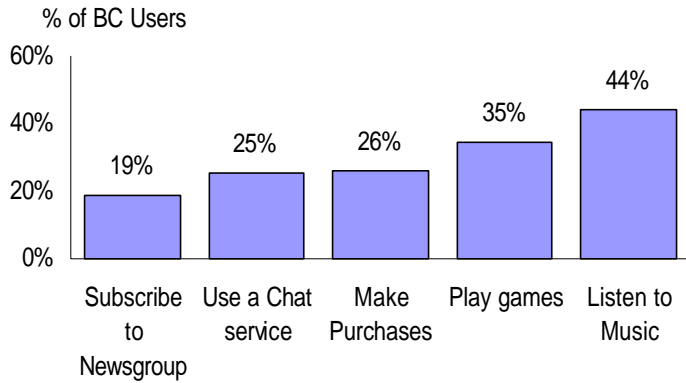
For those whose major activity was going to school, fully 95% were Internet users, while for those whose major activity was working at a paid job or business, the rate was 71%.

For many, the Internet has provided an opportunity to meet new people and broaden their choices. Fourteen percent of respondents who used the Internet said they had met and become friends with others on the Internet. Nine percent report having used the phone through the Internet. A quarter used the Internet

¹ The survey was staggered throughout 2000 and "use/recent use" was defined as having used the Internet/email in the 12 months prior to the month surveyed unless otherwise stated.

for electronic banking. Thirteen percent have put up their own web page.

The Internet provides new options for activities...



The Internet also brings a myriad of information to the screen – not always verifiable and not always wanted – but it has changed the way many do research. People’s Internet practices and interests also have implications for information providers and advertisers. Some of the types of information commonly sought are about products/services (77%), arts, entertainment & sports (54%), medicine or health (49%), travel (49%), business & economic news (30%), jobs (28%) and community services and activities (25%). As well, 66% of Internet users report having received unsolicited commercial email. Fifty-one percent report having come across pornographic sites and 15% accessed sites promoting hate or violence, either unexpectedly or deliberately.

E-mail has quickly become a popular communication tool with almost half of the population 15 years and older in Canada reporting having used it in the

last 12 months. Use rates range from a high of 56% in BC to a low of 37% in Newfoundland. Of BC’s e-mail users, more than a third (36%) use it every day and another 29% use it several times a week.

As with the Internet, youth are the most likely to have recent e-mail experience with 78% having used it in the previous 12 months. Use of e-mail declines with age but up to age 54, 60+% had recent experience. This includes people at work, school and home, regardless of their principal activity. By gender, there was only a three percent difference – 57% for men, 54% for women.

Of persons without recent Internet experience, 27% expressed an interest in using the Internet. Four-fifths of all adult British Columbians felt that it is important that everyone have access to the Internet.

Note: Totals exclude “Not Stated”.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, Cycle 14

TITLES OF PREVIOUS ISSUES	ISSUE NUMBER
Computers in our Lives	01-07
Computer Training in the Workplace	01-06
Employment Trends in the CMA’s	01-05
Having a Second Job	01-04
Summer Work	01-03
When Workers Retire	01-01/02
Year 2000 in Review	00-12
Turnover in the Workforce	00-11
BC Unions Low Wage Increases	00-10
Average Weekly Wage Rates	00-09
Income & Income Distribution	00-08
British Columbia Employment Equity Data	00-07