

German Web 2.0 users prefer online reference works and review portals — U.S. dominates in sphere of Social Web applications

Munich, January 22, 2007 — New interactive Internet applications — summarized by the term “Social Web“ — are becoming a fixture in Internet usage all over the world. In Germany, online reference works are currently the most popular Social Web applications. To finance these offerings, enterprises are relying primarily on income from pay-for-performance ads. These are the key findings from the Special Report on the Social Web from the “Deutschland Online” series of surveys, presented at DLD 2007 (“Digital Lifestyle Design”), a conference organized by Hubert Burda Media.

Currently the Social Web in Europe exists mainly in the form of user-generated content. This includes applications like wikis, blogs and podcasts, in which users put their own content on the Web to share with other users. 53 percent of international experts consider these applications to be already established in Europe. Communities (33 percent), mash-ups combining several different applications (30 percent) and localized services (30 percent) are less well-established throughout Europe. At a global level, the United States is ahead in all four categories, followed by Asia and Europe.

In Germany the use of online reference works is the dominant application: 52 percent of all users surveyed reported taking advantage of this option. Review portals are also popular, with a usage rate of 30 percent. And the latest Social Web applications like communities, podcasts and blogs all have over a million users in Germany already. Over the next few years, the Internet users surveyed expect to see a noticeable increase.

The study also focused on the various financing models for Social Web offerings. Here, 67 percent of the experts saw the biggest potential in pay-

for-performance ads, with 57 percent naming commissions as a key source of revenue. While 48 percent cited traditional online advertising and 43 percent saw a plausible financing model in classified ads, only 10 percent believed that user fees could become a successful avenue for financing Social Web offerings.

The finding that new Social Web applications are changing the face of the Internet has been available since November. 84 percent of experts are convinced that the Internet will develop into a medium that is influenced by mutual user interaction to a high degree.

About “Deutschland Online”

The study “Deutschland Online 4 — The Future of Broadband Internet” examines the latest developments and prospects for broadband Internet. It contains detailed information from experts and consumers on current phenomena like sector convergence, VDSL, Internet TV and the Social Web. The combination of expert and consumer opinions leads to especially valid findings.

The study reveals which applications and business models will dominate the broadband market in the coming years and compares the German and pan-European development status with that of Asia and the United States.

The study project entitled “Deutschland Online 4 — The Future of Broadband Internet” was conceived jointly by Prof. Dr. Bernd W. Wirtz, Deutsche Telekom AG, T-Com and Hubert Burda Media. The survey was conducted by Prof. Wirtz, with patronage assumed by Roland Koch, Minister-President of the German State of Hesse. 115 experts were surveyed for the study, and 6,347 people participated in the consumer survey. This makes “Deutschland Online 4” one of the most comprehensive hybrid expert-and-consumer surveys on the topic of broadband Internet ever conducted in Germany.

The detailed findings are available in the report entitled “Deutschland Online 4 — The Future of Broadband Internet”. Both this report and the special report evaluating the Social Web findings can be called up at www.studie-deutschland-online.de.

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