

A composite image showing the Statue of Liberty in the foreground, holding a tablet, with the Big Ben clock tower and the Houses of Parliament in the background under a blue sky.

2008 Personal Internet Use Survey: *United States and United Kingdom*

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Survey Description

Every day, employees worldwide compromise data and productivity, often unintentionally, by using company computers for personal Internet use. At 8e6 Technologies, our mission is to protect these organizations and their employees from costly Internet-based threats resulting from unauthorized online activities.

That's why we administered an Internet use survey of 1,000 employees— 500 in the United States and 500 in the United Kingdom—to pinpoint the mode and prevalence of personal Internet use at work.

The employees, ranging in age from 18 to 70, responded to a variety of questions about the frequency of work- and non work-related Internet use, as well as the nature of the content they viewed. Special emphasis was placed on social networking sites, peer-to-peer services and event-driven information such as breaking news or sports.

This survey indicates that significant percentages of U.S. and U.K. employees regularly visit social networking sites, view news and events online and engage in file sharing activities – sometimes work-related, but often not.

Survey Highlights and Key Findings

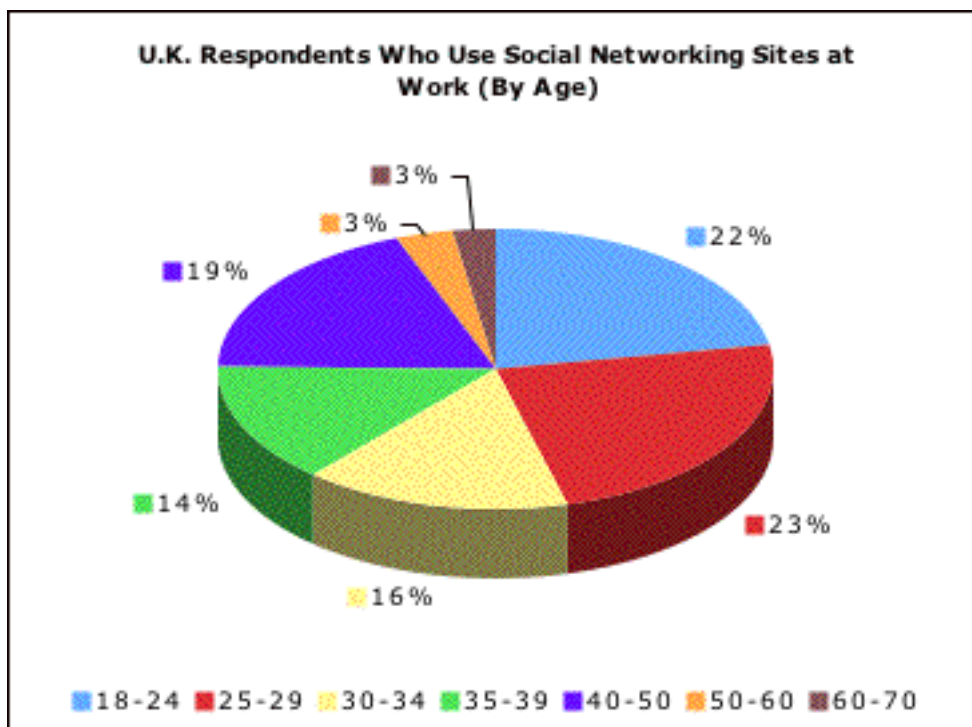
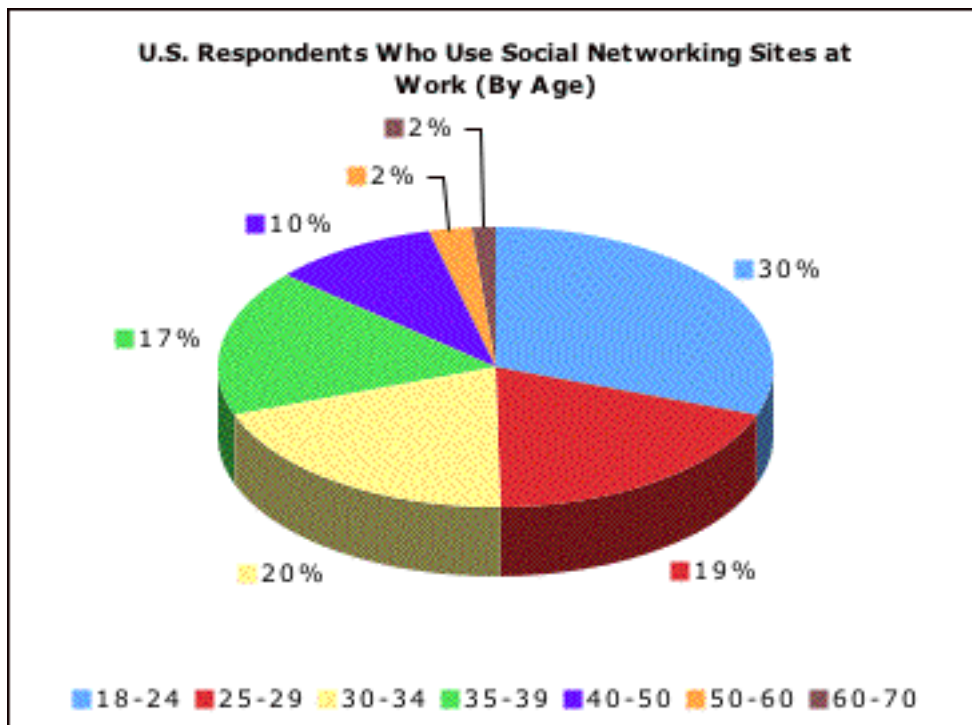
- The most popular sites viewed at work in both countries include Web 2.0 destinations that are heavy on video and third party applications, especially social networking and news sites.
- A majority of employees (55 percent in the U.S. and 52 percent in the U.K.) use various social networks for work purposes, but an even higher percentage (72 percent in the U.S. and 80 percent in the U.K.) believe they should have full access to social networking sites for personal reasons. This belief cuts across all age groups, from Millennials to the Baby Boomers.
- Although 85 percent in the U.S. and 89 percent in the U.K. believe their level of personal Internet use at work is acceptable, 34 percent of respondents in the U.S. and 35 percent in the U.K. spend at least an hour or more each workday on personal Internet use.
- Organizations have long been aware of productivity issues related to employee Web surfing at work, as well as potential security concerns. Internet usage, including social networking sites, opens up the network to Web-based threats including spyware, malicious code and other malware. The other significant danger in unfiltered Web access is the risk of employees visiting inappropriate sites, which can lead to potential liability issues.
- While more than half of those surveyed said their companies have an Internet Use Policy dictating their use of the Internet at the workplace, most said they have never received any formal training on it, and only 5 percent in the U.S. and 3 percent in the U.K. have been disciplined for personal Internet use. Organizations should hold regular training on the company's Policy so that workers are well aware of the guidelines.
- More U.S. users have used peer-to-peer services to share video or music at work than their U.K. counterparts.
- The majority of those who use social networking to communicate with colleagues, prospects and clients are in the 18-24 age group.
- Users age 40-50 are aware of anonymous proxies used to get around Web filters at the same rate as the 18-24 group, yet about double the number of 18-24 users have used them to access blocked sites.
- A low percentage of users (3 percent in U.K., 5 percent in U.S.) have been disciplined for Internet Use Policy violations.

Survey Results

More Than Half of U.S. Workers Visit Social Networking Sites at Least Once a Day

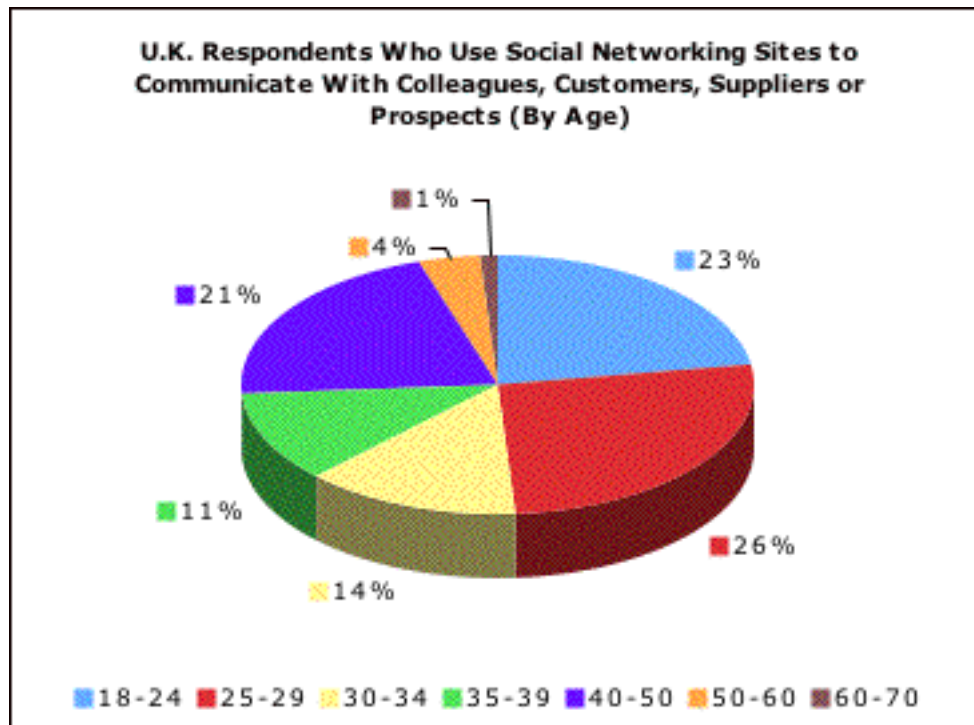
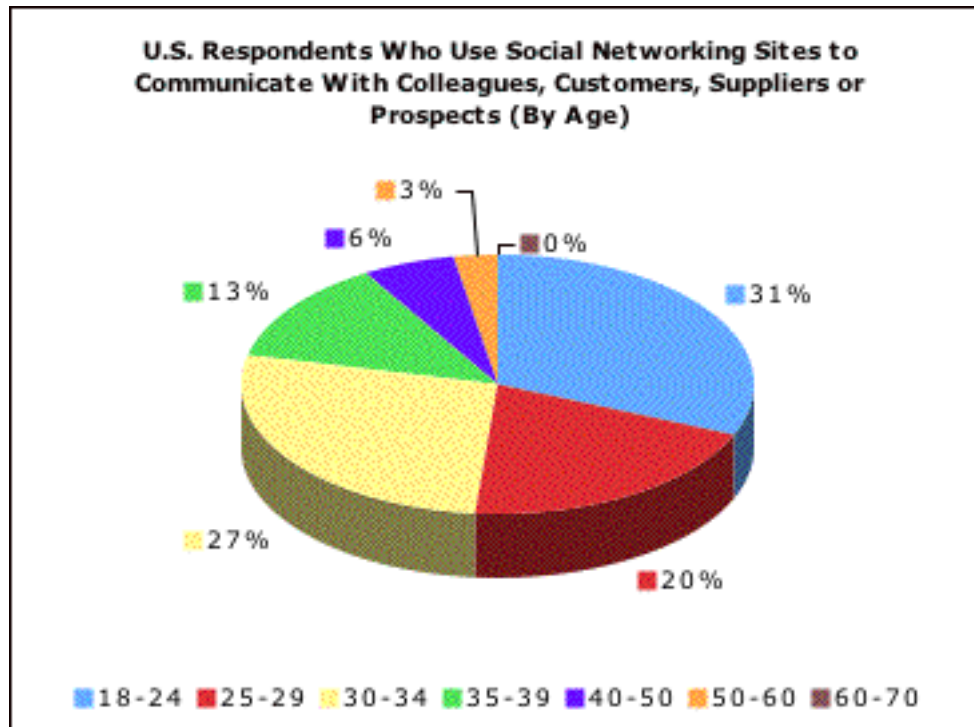
Social networking and news sites received the most visits from respondents in both countries. Overall, we found that personal Internet use in the workplace is prevalent and popular among a wide range of employees aged 18-50.

From a regional perspective, slightly more U.K. respondents reported using social networking sites at work than their U. S. counterparts:



When It's Work Related

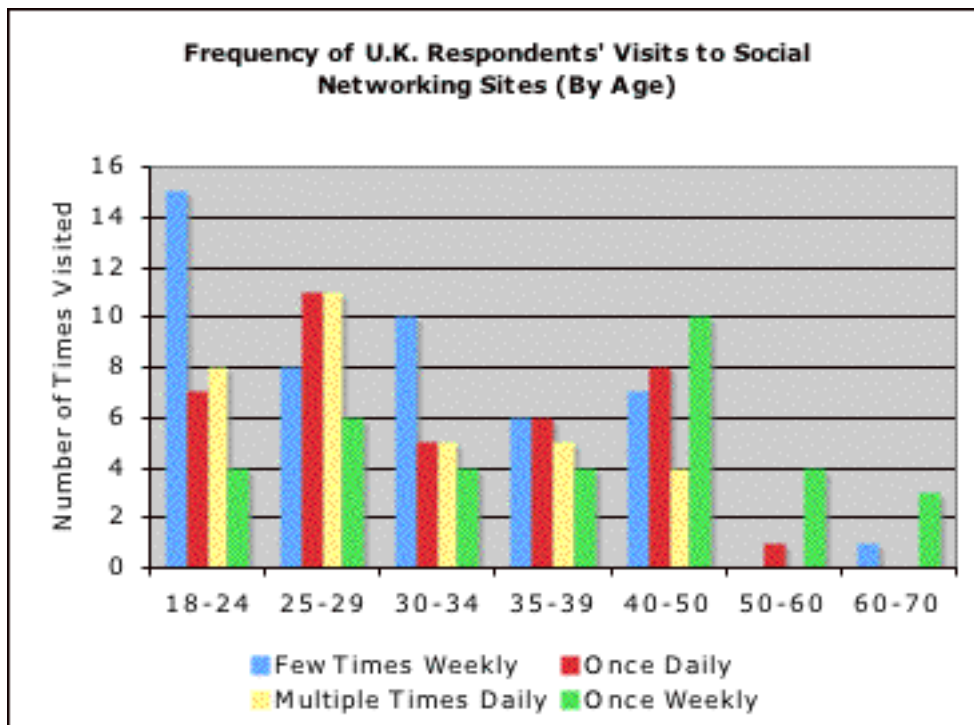
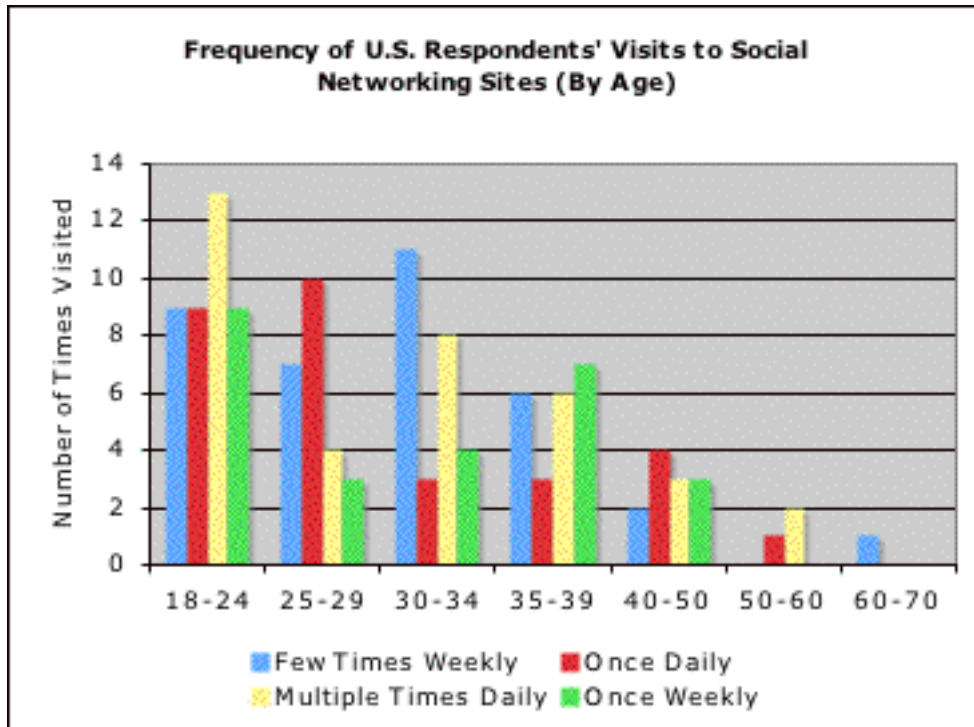
Twice as many U.K. respondents used social networking sites for work-related communications than U.S. respondents. In both countries, the majority of employees who networked online for work purposes were ages 18-24.



How Often Do Employees Visit Social Networking Sites?

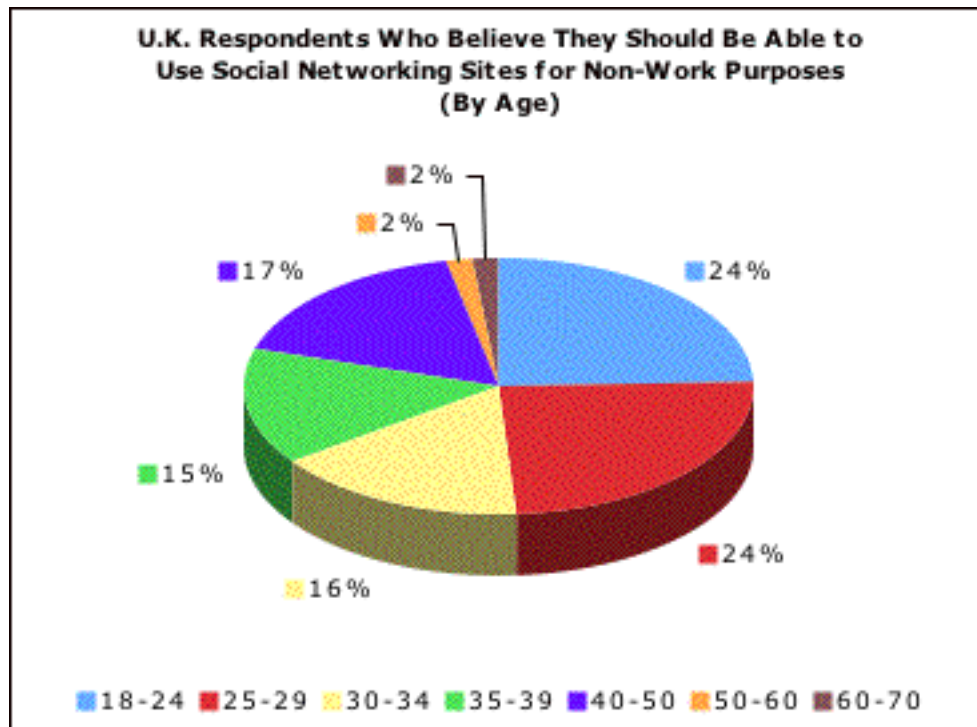
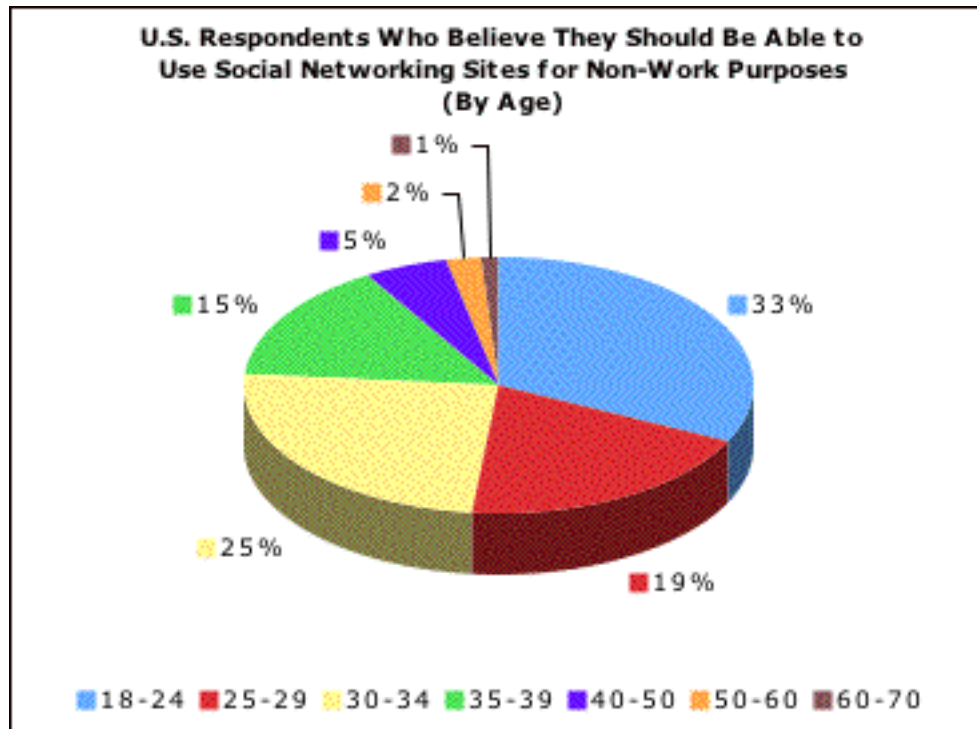
In addition to determining what sites employees visit, our survey details how frequently employees checked social networking sites within one week. What's notable is that most site visits occurred several times per day or a few times per week.

Frequent personal Internet use significantly decreases employee productivity and leaves organizations vulnerable to security threats and potential liability.



What Do Employees Think About Personal Internet Use?

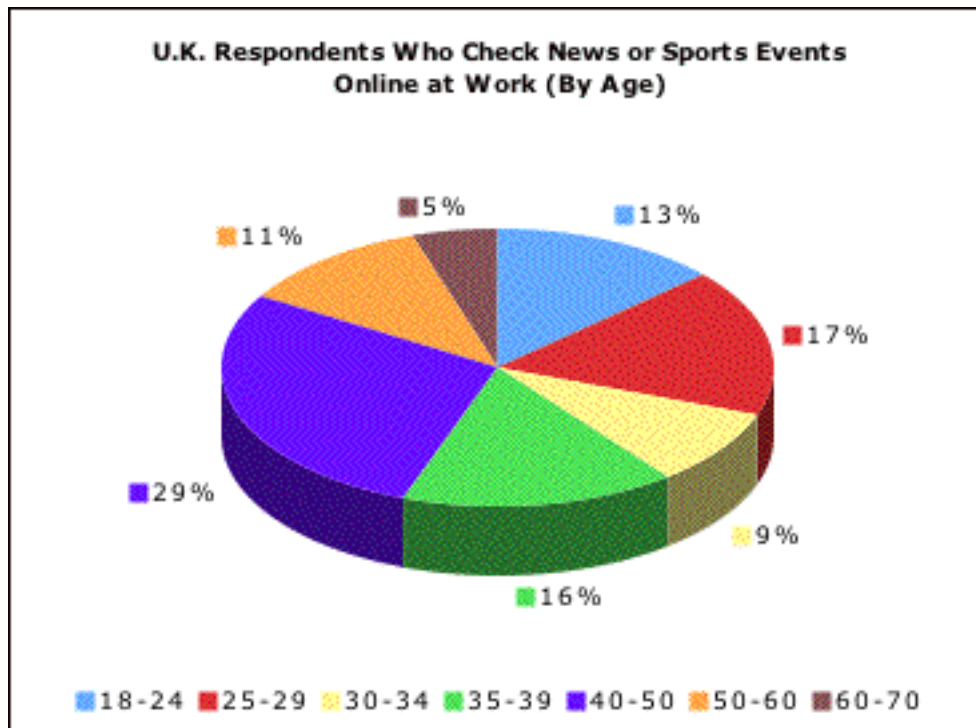
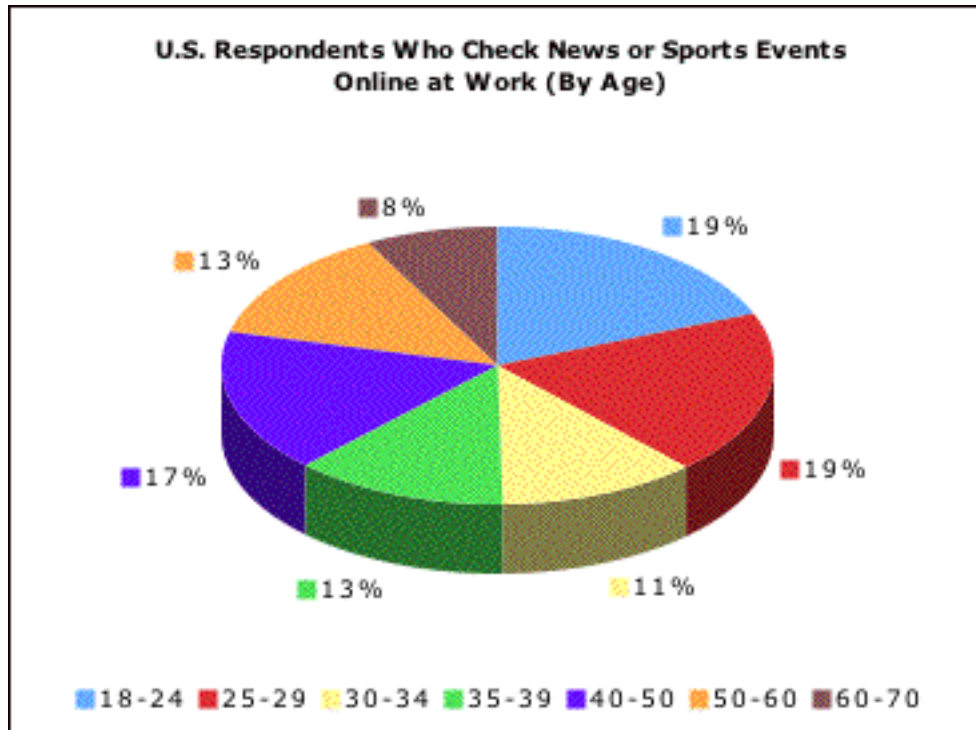
As previously indicated, social networking sites are often used for professional communications. However, the majority of employees surveyed believe they should be allowed to access these sites for personal reasons as well. This is true among workers in most age groups and in both countries.



Who's Watching the Big Game or the Breaking News?

Significantly more U.K. users age 40-50 reported checking news or events such as the Olympics or playoffs online while at work.

In both countries, the 40-50 year-olds checked sports and event updates as frequently as the 18-24 year-olds, and the older group reported watching a game or news event online more frequently than their younger counterparts.



Combined U.S. and U.K. Survey Results

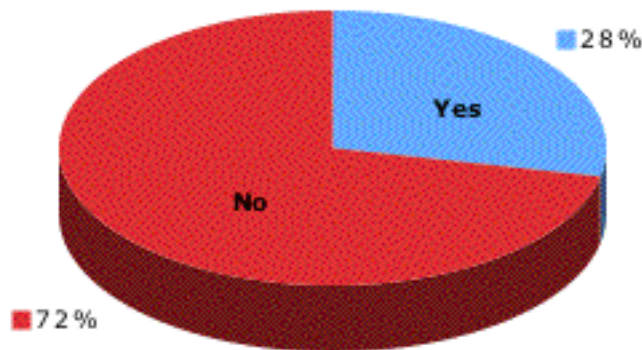
Workplace Distractions Can be Hazardous

Obviously, employees who view sports, news events game online are less productive than on-task workers. Add to this the bandwidth drain caused by streaming media and your whole business becomes less efficient.

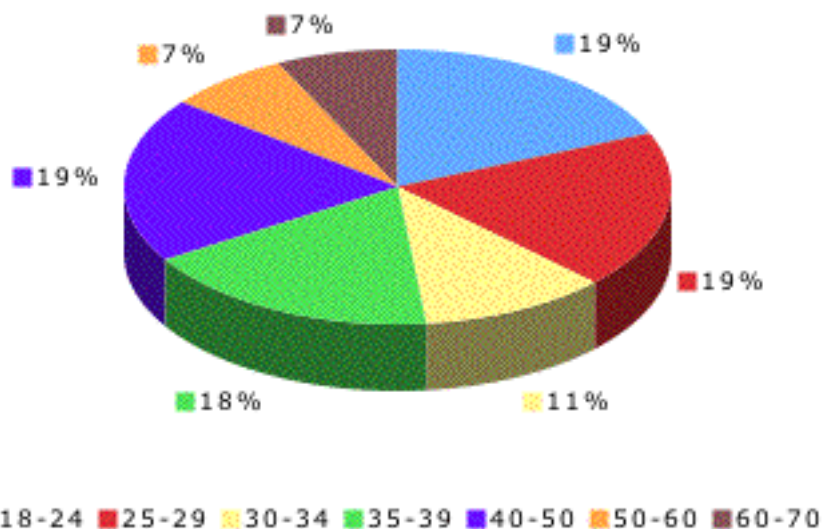
More than a quarter of combined U.S. and U.K. respondents reported watching some form of online video while at work.

Our survey results also show a fairly even distribution among the number and age of users who participate in online gaming while at work.

Combined U.S. and U.K. Respondents Who Watch a Portion of a Game or News Online at Work



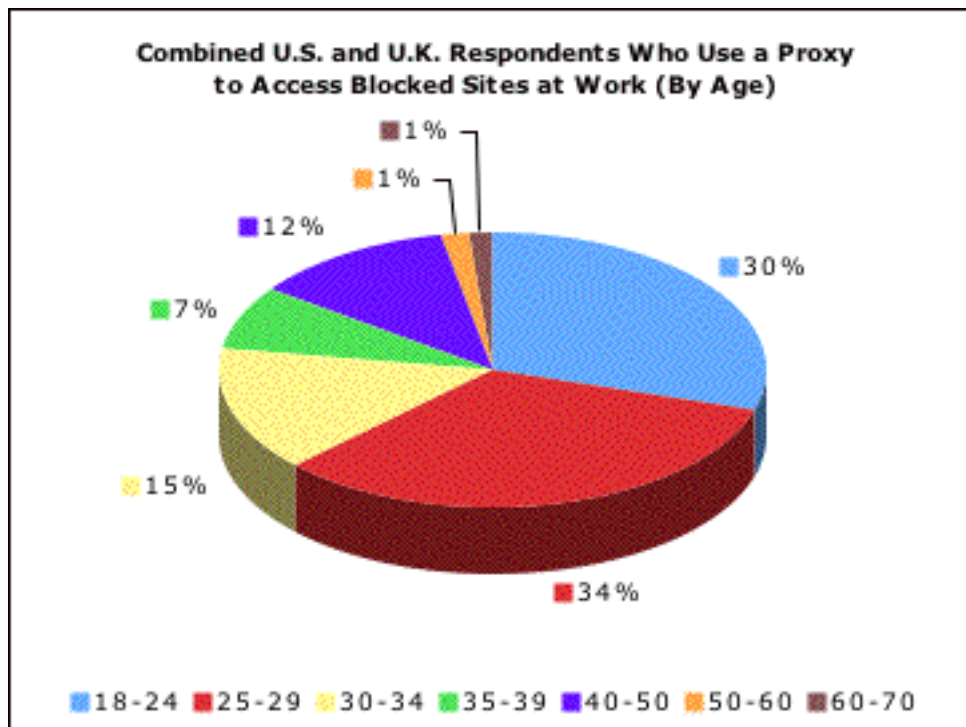
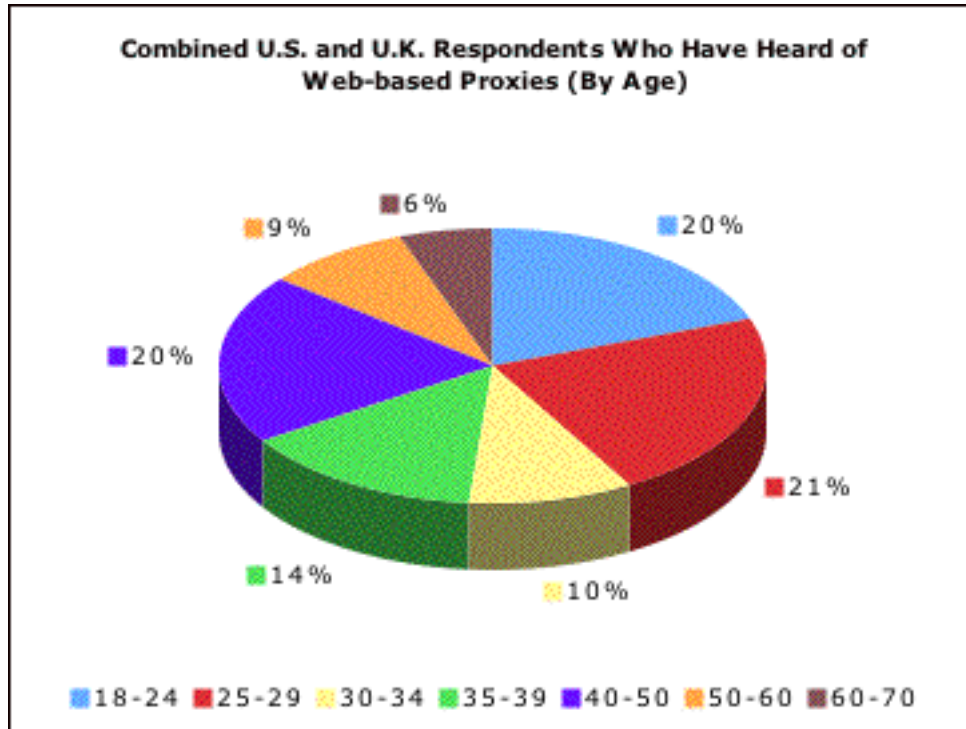
Combined U.S. and U.K. Respondents Who Play Internet Games or Use Virtual Worlds at Work (By Age)



Outsmarting Web Filters

Respondents aged 40-50 reported an awareness of anonymous proxies at the same rate as the 18-24 group; yet close to double the number of 18-24 year-olds have used proxies to access blocked sites. This was consistent in respondents from both countries.

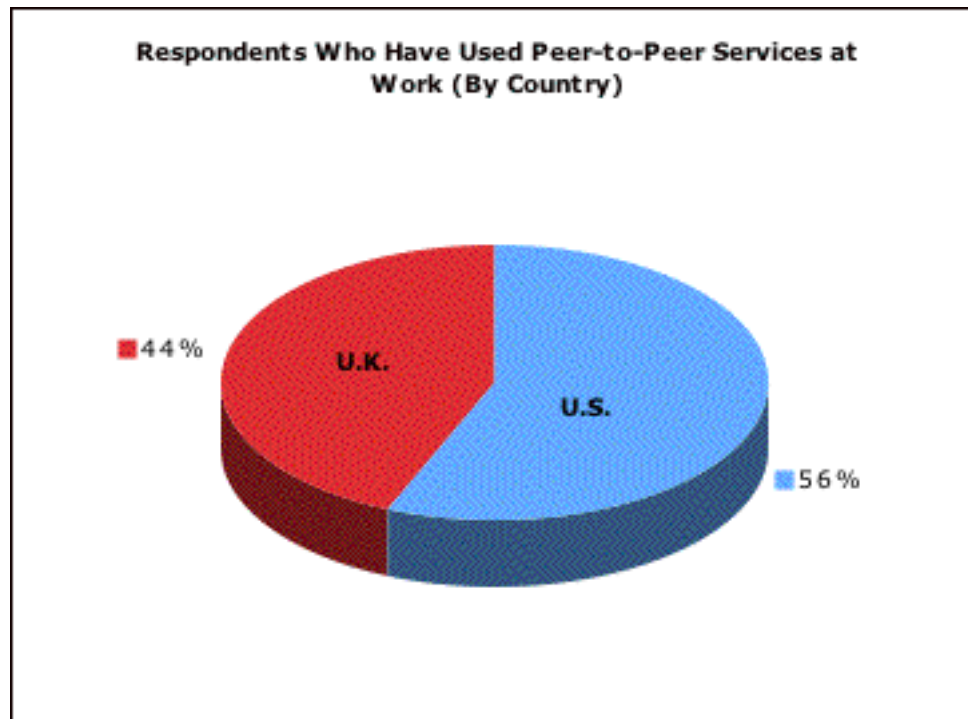
Using anonymous proxies to circumvent an organization's Web filter puts companies and their workers at risk. When employees view inappropriate content, their employers become liable. And by accessing unauthorized sites, workers expose company data to costly security vulnerabilities.



File Swapping Is Prevalent

Slightly more U. S. employees reported using peer-to-peer services to share music or video while at work, although close to half of all respondents have used this technology.

The danger in peer-to-peer services manifests as employees share files directly with other systems. These services pose a serious threat to an organization's security, because systems are left open and vulnerable to spyware, malicious code and other malware.



In Summary

The Internet and associated technologies provide workers with valuable tools to enhance their creativity and improve office productivity. However, regular personal Internet use in the workplace threatens the overall security and productivity of an organization.

While there are many strategic business reasons why employees are on social networking, news and streaming media sites, IT must be aware there are also security and regulatory risks associated with employee Internet use. Proper Internet Use Policy education and effective monitoring tools are critical to solving these issues and keeping employees safe, compliant and on-task.

About 8e6 Technologies

Founded in 1995, 8e6 Technologies is a leading Internet security company that proactively protects organizations against Internet-based threats.

8e6 is the only company that combines zero-latency filtering, real-time monitoring and forensic reporting on highly scalable appliances. The company's 8e6 Labs develops proprietary web application control patterns and maintains a comprehensive URL database to provide zero-day threat protection. The company is the provider of choice for large global organizations with an industry-leading average of 4,000 seats per customer deployment.

8e6 helps organizations to proactively address security threats, effectively manage risk, ensure policy compliance and improve network performance. The company's solutions are easy to manage and interoperable with any network environment. A two-time winner of SC Magazine's "Best Buy" (2007-2008), 8e6 delivers the best price/performance and reliability on the market. A Web filtering pioneer since inception, the company maintains headquarters in Orange, California, and has a network of channel partners worldwide. For more information, please call 888.786.7999 or visit www.8e6.com.