

Americans Kick Off the Year Online with Taxes, Diets and Vacations on Their Minds

comScore Media Metrix Releases January Web Rankings and Analysis

RESTON, Va., Feb. 21, 2005 - comScore Media Metrix today released its monthly analysis of consumer activity at top online properties and categories. With 2005 upon them, Americans turned to tax, diet, careers and travel sites to begin planning the year ahead.

"January's annual rituals, including the kickoff of tax season, spring break vacation planning and the search for the perfect diet, translated to substantial gains for category leaders," said Peter Daboll, president and CEO of comScore Media Metrix. "The beginning of the president's second term provided the material for another JibJab film, which landed the site in the top gaining properties ranking for the third time in the past 12 months."

W-2 Forms Hit Mailboxes and Americans Hit the Web

With W-2 forms landing in mailboxes across the country, Americans turned to the Web to prepare and file their tax returns. The Taxes category drew the top spot on this month's ranking of the top gaining properties, with an increase of 235 percent compared to December (see table 2). Nearly 21 million Internet users visited tax sites last month, an increase of 12 percent compared to January 2004.

The top gaining property in January was HRBlock.com, which drew 4.1 million visitors, an increase of 636 percent compared to December (see table 1). IRS.gov also saw a triple digit increase (238 percent), attracting 11 million visitors in January. An 840-percent increase in traffic to TurboTax.com drove Intuit up 68 percent, making it January's ninth largest gaining property.

Diet and Careers Sites Help Americans Make Good on New Year's Resolutions

With December's indulgences behind them and warmer weather approaching, millions of Americans turned to diet sites to help them shed unwanted pounds. Traffic to eDiets more than doubled between December and January. Nearly 7.9 million people visited the site in January, an increase of 126 percent. Weight Watchers International was the resource of choice for 4.3 million Americans, an increase of 77 percent from December.

While some Americans fulfilled their New Year's resolutions by starting a diet, for others, a career move was in order. Three Career Services subcategories made this month's ranking of the top gaining categories. The Job Search subcategory grew 32 percent in January to 16.2 million visitors. Monster.com Job Search, CareerBuilder.com Job Search and Yahoo! HotJobs Job Search all posted double-digit increases in January.

CareerBuilder traffic increased by 78 percent through seasonality and promotional activity, landing it in the number 6 spot on this month's top gaining properties ranking and contributing to a 29-percent increase in visitors to the Career Resources subcategory. Double-digit traffic increases at Fastweb, a scholarship search site owned by Monster.com, and EducationDirect, a distance learning site owned by the Thomson Corporation, joined forces to boost the Training and Education subcategory up by 20 percent - enough to secure the last spot on this month's top gaining category ranking.

Millions Turn to the Web to Plan and Book Spring and Summer Travel

A wide range of travel merchants and resources saw seasonal increases in January as consumers began the process of planning spring and summer vacations. Four of January's top ten gaining categories were Travel subcategories. The Ground/Cruise subcategory led the way, posting a 48 percent increase between December and January. VacationsToGo.com, a discount cruise merchant and the category's largest site, jumped 99 percent to finish at 3.5 million visitors in January. Carnival.com, RoyalCaribbean.com and Princess.com posted increases of 105, 79 and 67 percent respectively.

The top 20 sites in the Hotels/Resorts category all posted double-digit increases between December and January, boosting category traffic by 22 percent. Even more impressive, the category is up 32 percent compared to last January, a result of hotel suppliers' continued efforts to become direct booking destinations for consumers. The Airlines category also saw an impressive pickup in traffic in January, jumping 22 percent. Traffic at Delta Airlines soared 80 percent, driven by the launch of its new SimpliFares fare structure. United Airlines posted a 53-percent jump in site traffic, as it faced a blizzard of activity among travelers seeking information and assistance in the face of harsh winter weather. Both Delta and United qualified for the month's top gaining properties ranking as a result of these sharp increases.

Top 50 Properties

CareerBuilder LLC moved 37 spots up the ladder to 25th place in January's Top 50 Properties, through online marketing and promotion, as well as its relationships with AOL and MSN. A new version of its Adobe Reader product drove a 37-percent increase in visitors to Adobe Sites, which was number 61 in December and finished at number 36 in January. Among sites in both December and January's Top 50 Properties, Apple Computer Inc. had the largest jump, moving up 21 spots to number 27. The site benefited from hundreds of thousands of consumers installing the iTunes software packaged with the iPod they received in December as well as 5.5 million visitors to a widely circulated Mac homepage featuring before and after pictures of areas affected by the Asian tsunami. Finally, various promotions on HGTV.com drove a traffic increase of over 3 million visitors at E.W. Scripps, corresponding to a 12-spot gain to number 34.

Top 50 Ad Focus Ranking

Advertising.com and Yahoo! claimed the top 2 spots in the Ad Focus ranking, as they have in every month since May 2004 (see table 4). The rest of the top 10 Ad Focus entities stayed the same in January as in December, except for Tribal Fusion, which moved 1 spot to claim the number 10 ranking.

CareerBuilder Network gained 12 spots to move to January's number 28. Increased news coverage of volatile weather and the mudslides in California boosted MSNBC 3 spots to finish at number 24 in January's ad focus ranking. Finally, the sale of U2 concert and Major League Baseball tickets buoyed Ticketmaster.com 6 places to the final spot in the top 50.

TABLE 1

Top Ten Gaining Properties by Percentage Change in Unique Visitors*				
January 2005 vs. December 2004				
Total U.S. Home, Work and University Internet Users				
Source: comScore Media Metrix				
Property	Dec-04 (000)	Jan-05 (000)	Percentage Change	Rank by Unique Visitors

Source: comScore Media Metrix

Rank	Property	Unique Visitors (000)	Rank	Property	Unique Visitors (000)
	<i>Total Internet Users</i>	<i>162,201</i>			
1	Yahoo! Sites	118,194	26	iVillage.com: The Womens Network	18,955
2	Time Warner Network	115,011	27	Apple Computer, Inc.	18,231
3	MSN-Microsoft Sites	112,774	28	Gorilla Nation Media	17,828
4	Google Sites	74,817	29	Gannett Sites	17,111
5	eBay	62,427	30	ORBITZ.COM	16,991
6	Amazon Sites	41,557	31	Trip Network Inc.	15,939
7	Ask Jeeves	41,036	32	Bank of America	15,936
8	About/Primedia	37,886	33	Target Corporation	15,689
9	Viacom Online	35,111	34	E.W. Scripps	15,687
10	Weather Channel, The	33,658	35	Shopzilla.com Sites	15,179
11	Symantec	32,531	36	Adobe Sites	15,047
12	Walt Disney Internet Group (WDIG)	29,454	37	OVERSTOCK.COM	14,842
13	CNET Networks	28,466	38	JPMorgan Chase Property	14,505
14	Monster Worldwide	28,116	39	Dell	14,437
15	Lycos, Inc.	27,746	40	ESPN Network	14,194
16	Verizon Communications Corporation	27,507	41	News Corp. Online	14,059
17	Shopping.com Sites	22,622	42	Travelocity	13,917
18	Expedia Travel	22,054	43	Comcast Corporation	13,825
19	Intermix Media	21,553	44	SBC Communications	13,502
20	Real.com Network	20,966	45	Sony Online	13,063
21	Wal-Mart	20,915	46	COOLSAVINGS.COM	13,059
22	AT&T Properties	20,779	47	NFL Internet Group	13,023
23	Weatherbug.com Property	20,761	48	Classmates.com Sites	12,836
24	InfoSpace Network	20,426	49	Cox Enterprises Inc.	12,479
25	CareerBuilder LLC	19,273	50	AmericanGreetings Property	12,297

TABLE 4

Ad Focus Ranking							
Unique Visitors (000)							
Total U.S. - Home, Work and University Locations							
January 2005							
Source: comScore Media Metrix							
Rank	Property	Unique Visitors (000)	Reach %	Rank	Property	Unique Visitors (000)	Reach %
	<i>Total Internet Users</i>	<i>162,201</i>	<i>100%</i>				
1	Advertising.com**	127,948	79%	26	Expedia Travel	22,054	14%
2	Yahoo!	116,787	72%	27	CNN	21,913	14%
3	Fastclick**	115,474	71%	28	CareerBuilder Network	21,267	13%
4	MSN	97,973	60%	29	WeatherBug	20,340	13%

5	TrafficMarketplace**	91,211	56%	30	GATOR (App)	20,257	12%
6	AOL	87,061	54%	31	MaxOnline**	19,909	12%
7	Casale Media Network**	82,316	51%	32	iVillage.com: The Womens Network	18,955	12%
8	YAHOO.COM Home Page	75,007	46%	33	Travelocity All	17,517	11%
9	GOOGLE.COM	72,074	44%	34	Netscape	17,513	11%
10	Tribal Fusion**	66,491	41%	35	Disney Online	17,276	11%
11	EBAY.COM	59,394	37%	36	REAL.COM	17,270	11%
12	ValueClick Media**	52,845	33%	37	ORBITZ.COM	16,991	10%
13	MSN.COM Home Page	52,488	32%	38	MONSTER.COM	16,052	10%
14	BURST! Media**	45,908	28%	39	SuperPages Network	14,369	9%
15	24/7 Real Media**	42,913	26%	40	ESPN Network	14,194	9%
16	Ask Jeeves	41,036	25%	41	EA Online Syndicated Games	13,581	8%
17	Vendare Group Search-New.Net Sites	40,820	25%	42	WebMD Health Network	13,093	8%
18	MAPQUEST.COM	35,480	22%	43	CLASSMATES.COM	12,836	8%
19	EBAY.COM Home Page	34,804	21%	44	BIZRATE.COM	12,577	8%
20	WEATHER.COM	32,365	20%	45	CHEAPTICKETS.COM	12,369	8%
21	Lycos Network	27,650	17%	46	IMDB.COM	12,028	7%
22	ClickAgents Network**	24,794	15%	47	EA Online Games	10,885	7%
23	ABOUT.COM	23,380	14%	48	GO.COM	10,766	7%
24	MSNBC	22,338	14%	49	INFOSPACE.COM	10,484	6%
25	CNET	22,275	14%	50	TICKETMASTER.COM	9,987	6%

**Indicates that the entity is an advertising network.

About comScore Media Metrix

comScore Media Metrix, a division of comScore Networks, provides industry-leading Internet audience measurement services that report - with unmatched accuracy - details of online media usage, visitor demographics and online buying power for the home, work and university audiences across local U.S. markets and across the globe. comScore Media Metrix continues the tradition of quality and innovation established by its Media Metrix syndicated Internet ratings - long recognized as the currency in online media measurement among financial analysts, advertising agencies, publishers and marketers - while drawing upon comScore's advanced technologies to address important new industry requirements. All comScore Media Metrix syndicated ratings are based on industry-sanctioned sampling methodologies.

About comScore Networks

comScore Networks provides unparalleled insight into consumer behavior and attitudes. This capability is based on a massive, global cross-section of more than 2 million consumers who have given comScore explicit permission to confidentially capture their browsing and transaction behavior, including online and offline purchasing. comScore panelists also participate in survey research that captures and integrates their attitudes and intentions. Through its patent-pending technology, comScore measures what matters across a broad spectrum of behavior and attitudes. comScore consultants apply this deep knowledge of customers and competitors to help clients design powerful marketing strategies and tactics that deliver superior ROI. comScore services are used by global leaders such as AOL, Yahoo!, Verizon, Best Buy, The Newspaper Association of America, Tribune Interactive, ESPN, Nestlé, Bank of America, Universal McCann, the United States Postal Service, GlaxoSmithKline and Orbitz. For more information, please visit www.comscore.com.

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