

### NetObserver® ranking of UK internet users favourite sites

*Spring 2011: UK Internet users have voted for their favourite sites in eight different categories*

**PARIS, 1st September, 2011** – NetObserver®, the largest study of European internet users of its kind, conducted by Harris Interactive, revealed the nation's favourite websites across 8 categories, as voted by UK internet users.

The NetObserver® study began in 1998, and is conducted online twice a year. It provides over 1,000 partner websites with a better understanding of user's online behaviours and attitudes, offline behaviour and visitor satisfaction and engagement. This was the first time the study questioned internet users on their favourite sites, and the first time the awards have been presented, covering the following categories: general news/information; cooking/food; employment/careers; video games; sport; buyer guides, price comparison, consumer review; guides to going out; classifieds and consumer-to-consumer marketplaces.



**NetObserver® Awards : a recognition of appreciation by internet users**

#### Preference for a site: a complementary concept to audience measurement

In today's market, businesses are increasingly aware of the importance of judging the value of their website, in terms of satisfaction and engagement of their audience. In order to further explore this, for the first time, the NetObserver study questioned internet users on their favourite sites from the categories they regularly visit.

The top ten sites for each category have been presented with the NetObserver award which indicates their rank in that category. As the award is voted for by those who matter most – their audience – the award allows the winning sites to thank current users for their trust in the site and also enables future visitors to be confident as to the relevance of their choice. The rankings of favourite sites obtained in the eight pre-selected categories aim to highlight a basic qualitative concept to complement the information on the site's audience. However, measuring preference is only a first step towards a deeper understanding of the mechanisms of one's attachment to a site.

This is why the NetObserver study offers to help all websites, free of charge, to gain a better understanding of the reasons behind their visitor's satisfaction and loyalty. In addition to the Favourite Website Award, NetObserver awards a **Seal of Excellence** to its best performing partner sites, indicating to future visitors the assurance of approval and quality. The achievement of this seal is based on three of the key aspects measured within the study: the level of overall satisfaction of the site's visitors, their intention to return to the site and intention to recommend it to their family and friends.

Moreover, NetObserver allows sites to measure their level of advertising effectiveness through impact and branding indicators, again free of charge.

## THE RESULTS:

### UK Internet Users Favourite websites: Top 10 by category in the first wave of this study 2011

#### Top 10 favourite websites for « General news/information »:

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>bbc.co.uk/news</b>	<b>60,9%</b>
2	guardian.co.uk	6,1%
3	sky news (news.sky.com)	5,8%
3	dailymail.co.uk	5,8%
5	telegraph.co.uk	2,9%
6	itv.com/news	1,9%
6	thesun.co.uk	1,9%
8	thetimes.co.uk	1,2%
9	independent.co.uk	0,8%
10	channel4.com/news	0,7%

Base: 6 965 regular visitors to general news/information websites

In the category 'General news/information', **bbc.co.uk** leads by a long way with 61% of the votes cast by nearly 7000 internet users who regularly visit news sites. Other television channels to also appear in the Top 10 are **Sky News**, and **ITV**. **Guardian.co.uk** taking 2<sup>nd</sup> place appears as the favourite amongst the six newspaper websites, both broadsheet and tabloid, to make the ranking.

#### Top 10 favourite websites for « Cooking/Food »:

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>bbc.co.uk/food</b>	<b>29,9%</b>
2	bbcgoodfood.com	17,1%
3	jamieoliver.com	6,8%
4	allrecipes.co.uk	4,7%
5	channel4.com/4food	4,2%
6	waitrose.com	3,7%
7	deliaonline.com	3,5%
8	sainsbury's recipes (sainsburys.co.uk)	3,0%
9	uktv.co.uk/goodfood	2,9%
10	goodtoknow.co.uk/recipes	2,3%

Base: 3 119 regular visitors to cooking/food websites

In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> place, the **BBC** leads once again with 47% of the votes in total. Other television channels to also appear in the 'Cooking/Food' category are **Channel 4** and **UKTV** whilst the only celebrity chef sites to make the

list are **jamieoliver.com** and **deliaonline.com**. Also proving popular are the supermarket sites **waitrose.com** and **sainsburys.co.uk**.

**Top 10 favourite websites for « Employment, Careers »:**

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>jobseekers.direct.gov.uk</b>	<b>13,2%</b>
2	totaljobs.com	8,1%
3	reed.co.uk	7,6%
4	monster.co.uk	6,4%
5	jobsite.co.uk	5,4%
6	job-centre-vacancies.co.uk	5,3%
7	jobs.guardian.co.uk	5,2%
8	linkedin.com	4,0%
9	fish4.co.uk	2,9%
9	gumtree.com/jobs	2,9%

*Base: 4 041 regular visitors to employment/careers websites*

In the category ‘Employment, Careers’ the government site **jobseekers.direct.gov.uk** is in first place, ahead of other commercially advertised sites. Recently floated professional social networking site **linkedin.com** takes 8<sup>th</sup> place, proving its value in the job search market.

**Top 10 favourite websites for « Video games »:**

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>ign.com</b>	<b>11,9%</b>
2	xbox.com	11,3%
3	playstation.com	10,0%
4	gamespot .com	6,8%
5	bigfishgames.com	6,2%
6	nintendo.co.uk	4,2%
7	gamefaqs.com	3,1%
8	ea.com	2,9%
8	gameplay.co.uk	2,9%
8	easports.com	2,9%

*Base: 2 177 regular visitors to video game websites*

In the category ‘Video games’ the multiplatform Ign.com takes a marginal lead with 12% whilst closely following are the branded **Xbox** and **Playstation**, and further behind, **Nintendo**. Both sites **ea.com** and **easports.com** again offering multiplatform and also sales come away with around 6% of the total results when aggregated.

#### Top 10 favourite websites for « Sport »:

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>bbc.co.uk/sport</b>	<b>43,9%</b>
2	skysports.com	18,7%
3	formula1.com	2,6%
4	yahoo! sport (eurosport.com)	1,8%
5	football365.com	1,7%
6	guardian.co.uk/sport	1,6%
6	talksport.co.uk	1,6%
8	sportinglife.com	1,2%
8	espncricinfo.com	1,2%
10	itv sport (itv.com/sport)	1,1%

Base: 4 647 regular visitors to sports websites

Once more **BBC** is in 1<sup>st</sup> place with its sports page, a substantial lead above **skysports.com** in 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Within this category which is largely dominated by more general sports coverage sites, the presence of the two specialists' **formula1.com** and **espncricinfo.com** is noticeable.

#### Top 10 favourite websites for « Buyer guides, price comparison sites, consumer review sites »:

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>moneysavingexpert.com</b>	<b>18,7%</b>
2	moneysupermarket.com	18,2%
3	which.co.uk	8,7%
4	confused.com	6,8%
5	kelkoo.co.uk	6,0%
6	moneyexpert.com	4,3%
7	pricerunner.co.uk	3,8%
8	gocompare.com	3,7%
9	comparethemarket.com	3,3%
10	mysupermarket.com	2,6%

Base: 6 491 regular visitors to buyer guides websites

Both **moneysavingexpert.com** and **moneysupermarket.com** take a significant lead with around 19% and 18% of the votes respectively. **Which.co.uk** stands out in third place despite being the only subscription based site in the top 10 offering independent reviews.

**Top 10 favourite websites for « Guides to going out »:**

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>lastminute.com</b>	<b>17,9%</b>
2	timeout.com	11,2%
3	ticketmaster.co.uk	9,9%
4	cineworld.co.uk	4,7%
5	odeon.co.uk	4,1%
6	visitbritain.com	3,4%
7	topable.com	3,3%
7	myvue.com	3,3%
9	thisislondon.co.uk	3,2%
10	restaurant-guide.com	2,7%

*Base: 3 910 regular visitors to guides to going out websites*

With almost 18% of the votes, **Lastminute.com** comes in as the favourite, ahead of **timeout.com** and **ticketmaster.co.uk**, in the category 'Guides to going out' despite it being best known as a travel site. The cinema chain websites **cineworld.com**, **odeon.co.uk** and **myvue.com** demonstrate a "middle of the road" showing, whilst **topable.com** and **restaurant-guide.com** prove a popular choice for those looking for advice on where to eat out.

**Top 10 favourite websites for « Classifieds and consumer-to-consumer marketplaces »:**

Rank	Website	Votes (%)
1	<b>ebay.co.uk</b>	<b>48,0%</b>
2	amazon.co.uk	21,6%
3	gumtree.com	12,5%
4	rightmove.co.uk	2,7%
5	autotrader.co.uk	2,5%
6	preloved.co.uk	1,6%
7	freeads.co.uk	1,5%
8	friday-ad.co.uk	0,8%
9	adtrader.co.uk	0,7%
10	vivastreet.co.uk	0,6%

*Base: 3 079 regular visitors to classifieds and consumer-to-consumer marketplace websites*

Unsurprisingly and in line with audience data, **ebay.co.uk** appears as the favourite website in the category 'Classifieds and consumer-to-consumer marketplaces' with 48% in front of **amazon.co.uk** with a still large percentage of almost 22% out of more than 3000 votes. **Gumtree.com** takes third place with a 12.5% share and a significant distance from the remaining sites, would they be generalists or specialized (properties, cars...)

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## Notes to Editors:

### Methodology

These rankings were established from the votes cast by regular visitors to each of the 8 categories selected by Harris Interactive for this first wave of the UK internet user's favourite sites. There were thus between 2,000 and 7,000 users depending on the category concerned, who chose their favourite site in an area which is familiar to them. They were recruited online, intercepted on sites and via newsletters, through the NetObserver study which ran from 14<sup>th</sup> March to 12<sup>th</sup> June 2011. During this wave of Spring 2011, NetObserver used the responses of a sample of over 21 500 individuals, representative of the population of internet users aged 15 and over, residing in the UK. To avoid bias towards the partner sites of the NetObserver study, no respondents, from a partner site or newsletter belonging to one of 8 categories studied, were solicited to elect their preferred site in that category.

***Please note that any communication of these results should be accompanied by technical elements such as: the methodology of the study, the dates, the name of the institute, the sample size.***

### About NetObserver

With more than 1,000 partner sites and over 300,000 respondents per year, NetObserver is the largest observatory of internet users through which Harris Interactive offers, for free, invaluable information to all online players (publishers, e-commerce sites, and advertising sales houses). Conducted every 6 months (spring and autumn), since 1998 in France and 2000 in Europe, NetObserver tracks the evolution of the profiles and the changes of internet users over the age of 15, wherever their place of connection (home, work and also schools, universities, public places...), in 5 markets, UK, France, Italy, Spain and Germany.

The information collected by NetObserver goes far beyond audience and performance data measured by web analytics solutions, ad servers or audience panels, thus allowing a better understanding of user's online behaviour and attitudes, offline behaviour and visitor's satisfaction/engagement.

A user's attachment to a site and the impact it has upon the advertising effectiveness has been demonstrated in the study "A Sense of Place: Why Environments Matter" conducted by Harris Interactive in the United States on behalf of the Online Publishers Association and published in June 2010.

### About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurants and consumer package goods. Serving clients in over 215 countries and territories through our European and North American offices and a network of independent market research firms, Harris specialises in delivering research solutions that help us – and our clients – stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit [www.harrisinteractive.co.uk](http://www.harrisinteractive.co.uk)

### Media Contact Harris Interactive UK

Ian Smith - Tel: +44 (0) 20 8263 5353

[ismith@harrisinteractive.com](mailto:ismith@harrisinteractive.com)