



Young Chatters or Big Cheaters?

Results analysis of a survey about
"Teenagers and the Internet"



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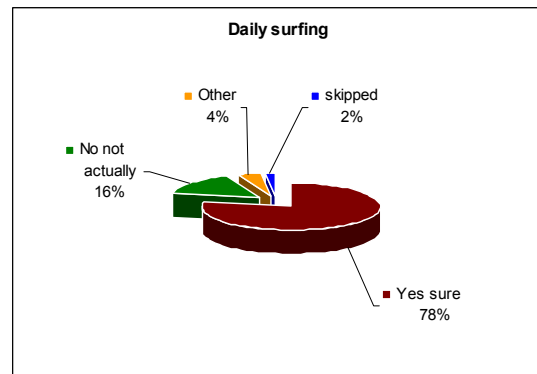
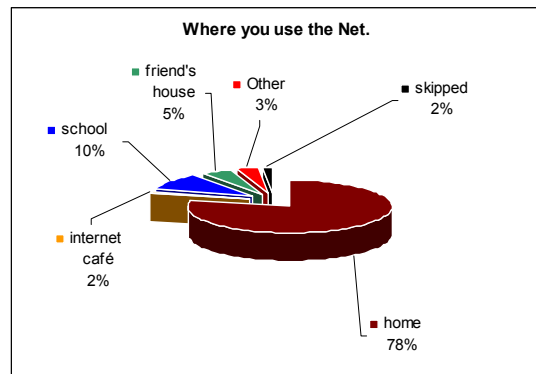
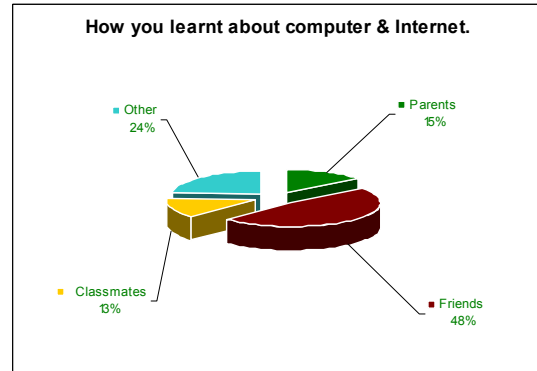
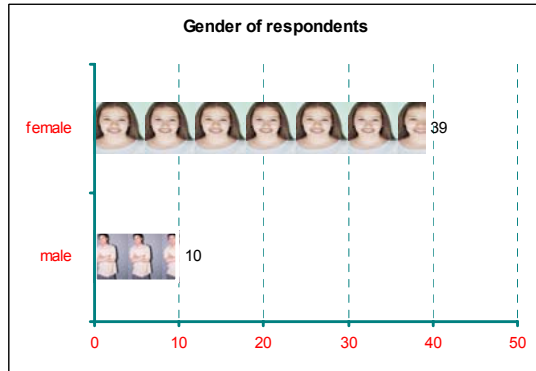


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Part [1]: General Information:



Friends and classmates would probably be the most common form of introduction to the Internet if our respondent numbers were higher – the Internet is still a rough concept in our country, people are bound to go “WOWZA! >:O” when they see the Internet for the first time and thus, it makes an excellent talk subject! :P.

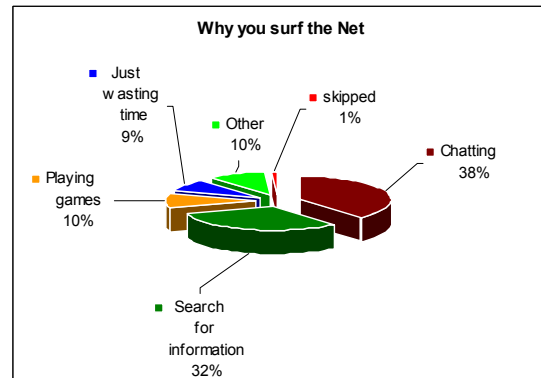
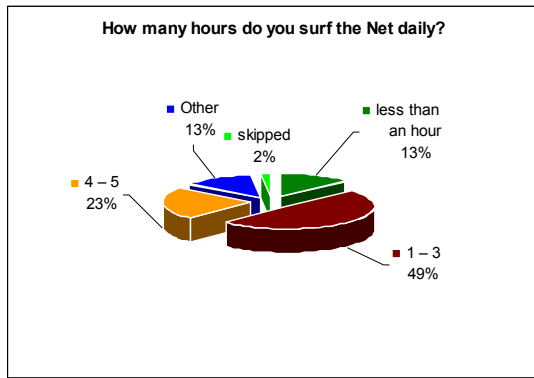
The parents way is probably an indirect one, a lot of parents currently don't even touch the computer, let alone the Internet. However, for the ones that DO touch the computer, their children will see them and be curious to what their parents are doing and would either ask their parents or “try it out themselves”.... trial and error if you want a fancier term (oh how many times I screwed up the computer in my younger days).

The “other” means of introduction are probably other family members, Internet cafes and magazines. Had we made this survey 5 or 6 years ago, the results would probably be in the opposite direction – home being very low, school non-existent while net cafes would be highest.

But that doesn't matter since we're in 2007, no?

As it's evident, Internet penetration in Bahrain is very high. The Internet turned from a luxury into a necessity during the last few years. While Internet penetration is extremely high in Bahrain, Internet services on the other hand are extremely poor and overpriced when compared to most of the world's countries – even neighboring countries such as the UAE have better Internet than we do!

The point of all this, Internet penetration is high – this translates to large amounts of home users, as the years go by, the numbers will grow further in the home user department.



See what I said about the Internet no longer being a luxury?

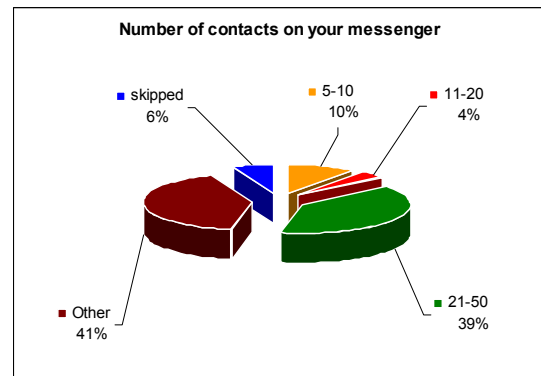
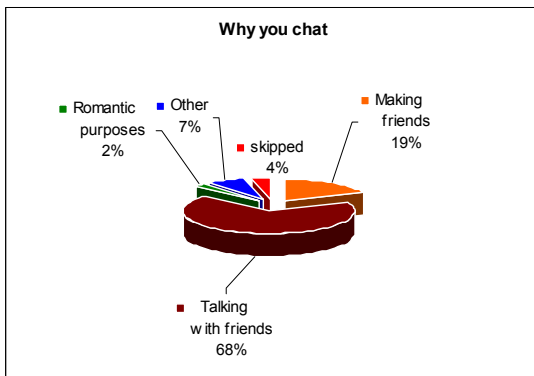
A grand total percentage of 78 use the Internet on a daily basis!

Obviously, everybody loves the Internet! How they utilize however, is a different story, one that is waiting to be told!

Again, nothing out of the ordinary – proves the point that most Bahrainis use the Internet for chatting but at the same time it is not a case of “my word is law, my judgment is final” since while they chat, they will also do other activities – like “searching for information” (read : Copy-pasting to satisfy school reports/projects) and playing games.

Of course, there are a few aimless users who just surf the Internet, do whatever they feel like doing just to waste long, boring free hours – Hey, you could learn to code or something productive while surfing the Internet – wasting time and learning something cool – two birds with one stone yo.

Part [2]: Surfing the Net Habits.



A good amount of people are in the 21 to 50 group – not surprising, considering that most of the chat/net surfing crowd in Bahrain (read : 85% or so, who only know two things : Internet explorer and MSN Messenger!) tend to exchange contact addresses at just about everywhere – SMS messages to old friends, friends at school, family members even. That leaves us with a remaining percentage of 47%, almost half of the people who answered.

My thoughts? Completely expected – a great majority of users in Bahrain have a large contact list – some even have multiple contact addresses with completely different contacts in each (you can run multiple instances of MSN Messenger using a patch – more on this later, maybe).

The “Other” group consists of people who have more than 50 contacts – I'm guessing 90 contacts and above (I personally have a grand total of *drum roll* 130 contacts! Although if I was to remove people who I don't speak to anymore I'd end up in the 21-50 group – doesn't really matter however since I don't even log into my MSN account enough – almost never!).

The “skipped” group most likely consists of people who have either found this question a bit too much on the privacy breach side or are embarrassed to tell =P.

What kind of sites do you visit?

All users :

1. Search engines (read : google) – This is natural really, most people's voyage into the deep waters of the Internet begins at the harbor of google! A very small minority use yahoo or MSN search I think.
2. Forums – Self explanatory, humans are social by nature – forums are what is essentially a casual “meeting” (you know, the kind where you and your buddies blab about lots and lots of completely random topics) on the Internet.
3. Music downloading sites – Completely expected as well, the average Bahraini teen probably has well over 150 songs in his/her library of MP3s and .RAs
4. "Social Networking” Sites – Stuff like tagged, facebook, myspace, hi5 blah blah blah – I personally dispise them all, they're all silly wastes of time that can be summed in the following sentence : “HAY GUISE DIS IS MAI EXHIBITION ON TEH INTERNETZ!” =P.
5. Email Sites – Hey, everyone gotta check their email every now and then, right?
6. Games / Entertainment sites – I can't give an example for games, there's like a billion “flash games” sites out there, a popular one is miniclip.com for example... (okay, so I lied about the example thing), entertainment would be other non-game sites – such as youtube.com and metacafe.com – video sites.
7. Newspaper / local / world news / news sites – Probably not a whole lot of visitors in this section but hey – the ones that do visit sure do care to know what's going on.
8. "Educational” - Example : wikipedia.com (incredibly useful) Personally, I'd brand this as a blatant lie – but perhaps some people really “do” use the Internet for more than just fun – I'm one of them ;).
9. Essentials – Such as *cough* our beloved iEarn!

Part [3]: Cons and Pros of surfing the Net.

Advantages of using the Internet

Most people misinterpreted this question or outright missed the point of it. Some however, did catch on to what the question is and the general consensus seems to be :

1. It improves your English language – I can't stress how true this point is, if you think I learned English (both spoken and written) thanks to one of the many private schools or institutes in Bahrain – you're horribly wrong! I learned a LOT of written English off video games, the Internet improved upon that base and added spoken English on top of that (Voice communication for the win!).
2. It opens you up to other cultures – The Internet combines the entire world into a tiny village, It's great to explore other cultures (maybe even compare them to ours =P)!
3. You learn a lot – That is if you stop using the Internet exclusively for chatting!
4. It improves your typing skills tremendously - This is a big advantage if you plan to work on something that involves computers in the future! (It took me 1 hour to type all of this in fact).
5. You eventually learn to deal with the more technical things in computers - this is a personal thought of mine, The Internet is full of “evil” as much as it's filled with “good”, the longer you linger in the Internet, the better you get at combating any threats ;).

I'm going to sum point 5 in one picture :



Disadvantages of the Internet

The general agreement seems to be on the following :

1. It has negative effects on your eyesight, hearing (possibly) and fitness – It's worth noting that these aren't really disadvantages of the Internet but rather disadvantages of computers in general, the fitness and hearing impacts can be countered with exercise / proper volume levels!
2. Addiction to the Internet – This is true to an extent, there are people who can't live for 30 minutes without their beloved Internet!
3. It can possibly screw your computer over – Viruses, spyware and the like (This comment is from my viewpoint).
4. You could run into “disturbing” popups (read : pornography) or porn directly.

Semi-points / Noteworthy / “What the?”

Title explains :

1. A person noted that the Internet has no disadvantages other than the standard disadvantages of using computers if you use the Internet correctly – this is completely, 100% true (the 100% part reflects my opinion).
2. It wastes your time – Technically, this isn't a valid point from a logical standpoint – everything you do loses you or wastes valuable time.
3. IF YOU ARE READING IN A SCHOOL OR YOU ARE IN A LEARNING AGE.SOME TIMES YOU USE OR OPEN WEBSITE WHICH ARE NOT GOOD FOR YOUR MIND AND MAKE YOUR MIND ALWAYS THINK WRONG ABOUT MANY THINGS HAPPEN IN LIFE. - Yeah, ok.... what the hell are you talking about? Fix your capslock too!
A person said : Problems with my friends. - This is more of a side-effect of Internet addiction, if you're glued to your computer seat you won't have time for friends, right.

Part [4]: You can Help.

Suggestions for curing net addiction

You know, if I had my way I'd shoot every person who doesn't read the question correctly or give a silly answer instead of a proper answer.

Anyway, here's the oh so usual method, the list!

As usual, anything after a dash (this : -) is my comment.

10. Move attention towards other hobbies / activities.
11. Go out and other miscellaneous outdoor activities.
12. Study – Pffffffft, like studying ever cured an addiction.
13. Put a proper “schedule” for when to go online.
14. Do relaxation exercises – What? Yoga? O_O.
15. Have the addicted person become more aware of the health dangers associated with long net sessions – Hey, not a bad idea. Tis' the first step however!
16. Have someone “watch” over them and disallow them to stay online for long.

The amusing / silly / extreme suggestions list

Hey look, I'm doing you a favor by listing these! Actually, I love to poke fun.

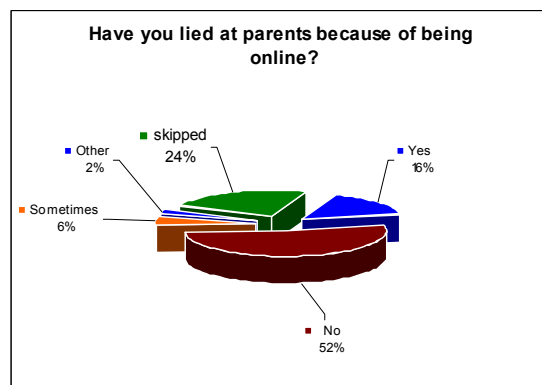
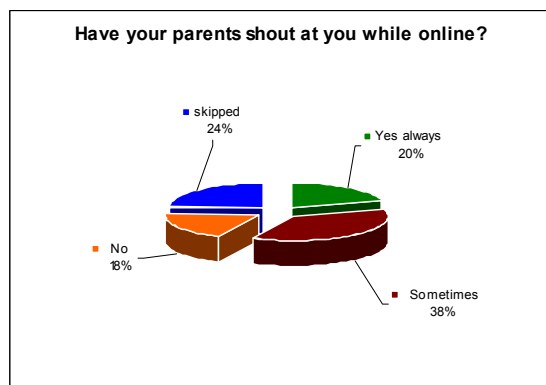
1. Get a life – Ha ha ha, Oh how SO amusing..... NOT. It's worth noting that this is a typical insult in the vast world o' Internet!
2. I don't know, I guess I need help too! - Hey, at least you're honest ;).
3. Remove the computer and the net service – A bit extreme, don't you think? Habits aren't weeds that you can pluck at any time.
4. Break the PC – Yes yes, I doubt you'd say that if YOU paid for the PC.
5. Don't talk to friends and use the Internet for information search purposes only – We're trying to cure Internet addiction NOT the “I spend too much time to talking to friends online” syndrome... at least that's what I think this question is trying to do o.O.

The non-net-surfing hobby list!

1. Reading
2. Watching TV
3. Talking on the phone – I can't resist the urge of making a joke about girls talking too much on the phone but for iEARN's sake, I won't.
4. Video games – Remember what I said before about video games being oxygen for us? =P
5. Sports – Whether it's basketball or football.
6. Listening to music – This is normal, music is a universal language after all ;).
7. Writing – Whether they're poems or stories.
8. Drawing.
9. Shopping – See entry #3 for comment.
10. Cooking – Surprise, no?

Part [5]: Parents V Teenagers.

Have your parents ever shouted at you while you were online?



This is where it gets a little bit more fun. There's no vast majority in any category – the results are all pretty close. The yes, no and sometimes crowd don't need any commenting. But... the “skipped” crowd? Why did they skip? Was it too embarrassing to specify? I mean, this is an anonymous survey, they shouldn't be afraid of spilling the beans =P.

When presented with the big fat WHY? You get what is summed up in this list :

The Yes / Sometimes Crowd :

6. They fear for my health.
7. They have nothing better to do – Oh, how rude! No respect for parents?
8. They want me to focus on studying.
9. They want me to do other things... such as cleaning my room.
10. Because I spend too much time on the computer.
11. My bad marks

Amusing Answers / The No Crowd :

5. Because I don't spend a lot of time online – you're either in denial or you're dumb because if you answered no, you don't have to answer why your parents shout at you -.-.
6. They want to annoy me. - What a silly thought but I guess there are some parents who just love to annoy? I highly doubt that however.

Do you lie buddy?

As above, why did a whopping 24% skip? People who answered yes are probably the ones who spend too much time on the computer / have parents that don't approve of what their kids are doing or have no idea what's going on. The No crowd should be applauded for their honesty ;).

Why did you lie?

I'll skip the formalities :

4. I want to stay online longer.
5. My parents have no idea what I'm doing so I lied.
6. I don't have the time to explain to them, easier to lie.
7. Because my parents always want to know everything in absolute detail.
8. Because it's none of their business – A bit rude I say!