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Canadians are not only logging on to the Internet in growing numbers, they are using it in more diverse ways, particularly for conducting commerce.

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MAJOR RELEASES

Plugging in: Household Internet use 1999

Canadians are not only logging on to the Internet in growing numbers, they are using it in more diverse ways, particularly for conducting commerce.

In 1999, about 42% of all households, an estimated 4.9 million, had at least one family member who used the Internet regularly from home, work, school or other locations, up from 29% two years earlier.

An estimated 3.4 million households had a member who used the Internet from home, accounting for 29% of all households. This proportion, which has almost doubled from 16% in 1997, surpassed the share of households with someone who used the Internet from work for the first time.

Canadians were putting their Internet connection to much more than just recreational use. Of the households with someone who used the Internet from home, 19% used it to buy goods and services, more than double the 9% reported two years earlier. The Internet has clearly become a viable transaction medium for commerce.

Fifty-four percent used the Internet from home to seek medical and health information, and 28% used it for electronic banking, up from 20% in 1997.

The connected households that do not use e-mail from home have become a rarity. More than nine-tenths of home-use households used e-mail last year.

One in five households used their home Internet connection for self-employment purposes in 1999, while one in four did so for employer-related reasons.

Growth in Internet use fastest among seniors

Internet use has increased for all age groups. But the growth in Internet use and home connections has been fastest in households headed by seniors 65 and over, followed by those headed by individuals aged 55 to 64.

Nonetheless, only one-tenth of households headed by seniors and one-third of those headed by someone aged 55 to 64 used the Internet regularly, compared with more than half of younger households.

Fifty-nine percent of single-family households with unmarried children under 18 were wired to the Internet in 1999, the highest proportion of all family groups. This was much higher than the rate for single-family households without such children (39%). Not surprisingly, this is because households with

Note to readers

This release is based on an analytical article titled "Plugging in: The increase of household Internet use continues in 1999", available today. It is the first report to be published in a new Connectedness Series by Statistics Canada's Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division. This series, which will appear on an occasional basis, will provide in-depth analysis on a variety of topics ranging from e-commerce to telecommunications.

Data for this report comes from the Household Internet Use Survey, administered to a subsample of households included in the Labour Force Survey. In 1999, 43,034 households were eligible for the Household Internet Use Survey. Interviews were completed for 36,241 of these households, for a response rate of 84%. Results were weighted to the entire count of households.

children have a much higher rate of Internet use from school.

Four of every 10 households with children were connected from home, nearly twice the proportion only two years before.

Better educated, wealthier households used Internet more

Internet use increases directly with education and income levels in the household. Households in which the head had a university degree were almost twice as likely to use the Internet than those headed by high school graduates, and four times as likely as those in which the head did not complete high school.

The proportion of households using the Internet increased for all education categories in 1999. However, these gains were strongest in households in the lowest education category.

Similarly, the highest income groups were five times as likely to be Internet users as were the lowest income groups. While Internet use has been rising for all income groups, the growth in the penetration rate has been greater in lower-income households than in higher-income households.

Seventy-one percent of households in the top income quartile (the 25% of households with the highest incomes) used the Internet, compared with 19% in the bottom quartile.

Fifty-four percent of households in the top quartile were hooked up at home, compared with 11% of those in the bottom quartile. However, the proportion in the bottom quartile was almost twice the level of 6% two years earlier.

Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia most wired provinces

The three provinces with the highest average incomes — Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia — had the highest rate of household Internet use, and were the only provinces above the national average of 42%.

Overall penetration rates increased in every province in 1999. Quebec improved its position considerably relative to the other provinces. Thirty-three percent of all Quebec households used the Internet in 1999, compared with little more than 26% the year before.

Newfoundland's home and work penetration rates remain the lowest of any province.

Among Census Metropolitan Areas, 61% of households in Ottawa were connected to the Internet

from any location, highest among the 15 largest CMAs, followed by 60% in Calgary. The lowest rates were in Windsor and Québec, both at 34%.

Available on CANSIM: matrices 7944-7948.

The report *Plugging in: The increase in household Internet use continues in 1999* (56F0004MIE) is now available free on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). From the *Products and services* page, choose *Free publications*.

For data or general information, contact Marc Nadeau (951-2183, marc.nadeau@statcan.ca). For more information, or to enquire about concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Greg Peterson (613-951-3592, greg.peterson@statcan.ca), Science, Innovation and Electronic Information Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Perceptions of the criminal justice system 1999

The 1999 General Social Survey (GSS) found that, on the whole, Canadians favoured alternatives to prison, such as probation, fines, and community work, for first-time offenders convicted of either breaking and entering or minor assault. Fewer survey respondents favoured a jail sentence for young offenders than they did for adults. But for repeat offences, they favoured jail terms for adults, while almost half still opted for alternatives to jail for young people.

Respondents appeared to prefer harsher sentences for breaking and entering rather than minor assault when the offender was an adult. For example, 37% chose jail for a first-time adult offender convicted of breaking and entering, compared with 28% for a first-time minor assault. The type of offence had very little influence on respondents' views for sentencing young offenders.

Court data show that judges more often impose a prison term for breaking and entering than for minor assault. This finding, based on data from Statistics Canada's Adult Criminal Court Survey and Youth Court Survey, was true for both first-time and repeat offenders in adult and youth courts during 1998/99.

GSS survey results on sentencing offenders convicted of breaking and entering differed little from sentences imposed by judges in both youth and adult courts.

Juristat: Public attitudes toward the criminal justice system (85-002-XIE, \$8/\$70; 85-002-XPE, \$10/\$93) is now available. See *How to order products*.

The public-use microdata file for the *General Social Survey on Victimization, 1999, cycle 13* was released November 2 on CD-ROM (12M0013XCB, \$1,600), and is supported by the *User's guide for the general social survey cycle 13: Victimization, 1999* (12M0013GPE, \$75). To order these products, contact Judy Cotterill (613-951-7651; judy.cotterill@statcan.ca), Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this

Note to readers

This release is based on a Juristat report published today by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, which examines perceptions toward sentencing adult and young offenders. It presents results on four sectors of the justice system—the police, the criminal courts, the prison and parole systems.

Data came from the 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization. A total of 25,876 people aged 15 and older were asked questions about the level of crime in their neighbourhood, their fear of crime and their views concerning the performance of the justice system.

Questions on sentencing offenders were investigated using scenario-type questions. Respondents were randomly presented with one of four hypothetical situations for which they were asked to choose "prison" or "non-prison." For each scenario, respondents were asked about sentencing both an adult and a young offender. Respondents who selected prison sentences were given a follow-up question that asked them whether a sentence of one year of probation and 200 hours of community work was an acceptable alternative to the prison sentence.

An overview of survey results was presented in the Juristat Criminal Victimization in Canada, 1999, released in November. Survey results on spousal violence were examined in the report Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, released in July.

release, contact Information and Client Services, (1-800-387-2231; 613-951-9023), Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. ■

Labour Force Survey — erratum

November 2000

Incorrect figures for November 1999 and percentage changes between November 1999 and November 2000 were published in the table titled "Labour force characteristics for both sexes, aged 15 and over," unadjusted data, in the December 1, 2000 *Daily* release. The table with corrected figures appears below.

For more information, contact Vincent Ferrao (613-951-4750) or Jacques Ouellet (613-951-4168), Labour Statistics Division. □

Labour force characteristics for both sexes, aged 15 and over

	Nov. 1999	Nov. 2000	Nov. 1999 to Nov. 2000	Nov. 1999	Nov. 2000	Nov. 1999 to Nov. 2000
unadjusted						
Labour force			Participation rate			
	'000		% change	%		change
Canada	15,680.4	16,044.6	2.3	65.1	65.7	0.6
Newfoundland	247.2	246.9	-0.1	56.3	56.1	-0.2
Prince Edward Island	70.5	71.4	1.3	64.9	64.9	0.0
Nova Scotia	450.5	459.4	2.0	60.6	61.2	0.6
New Brunswick	361.7	374.6	3.6	60.2	61.9	1.7
Quebec	3,702.5	3,724.7	0.6	62.7	62.6	-0.1
Ontario	6,057.4	6,307.0	4.1	66.0	67.5	1.5
Manitoba	574.3	579.5	0.9	67.2	67.4	0.2
Saskatchewan	503.7	504.0	0.1	66.0	66.0	0.0
Alberta	1,642.9	1,681.8	2.4	71.8	72.1	0.3
British Columbia	2,069.6	2,095.3	1.2	64.5	64.4	-0.1
Employment			Employment rate			
	'000		% change	%		change
Canada	14,649.7	15,004.8	2.4	60.8	61.5	0.7
Newfoundland	211.7	207.9	-1.8	48.2	47.3	-0.9
Prince Edward Island	60.7	61.0	0.5	55.9	55.5	-0.4
Nova Scotia	409.5	417.1	1.9	55.1	55.6	0.5
New Brunswick	328.8	337.5	2.6	54.7	55.8	1.1
Quebec	3,398.1	3,423.7	0.8	57.5	57.5	0.0
Ontario	5,747.2	5,966.5	3.8	62.7	63.9	1.2
Manitoba	545.6	552.5	1.3	63.9	64.2	0.3
Saskatchewan	479.7	481.1	0.3	62.9	63.0	0.1
Alberta	1,559.3	1,601.8	2.7	68.2	68.6	0.4
British Columbia	1,909.2	1,955.6	2.4	59.5	60.1	0.6
Unemployment			Unemployment rate			
	'000		% change	%		change
Canada	1,030.7	1,039.9	0.9	6.6	6.5	-0.1
Newfoundland	35.5	39.0	9.9	14.4	15.8	1.4
Prince Edward Island	9.8	10.4	6.1	13.9	14.6	0.7
Nova Scotia	41.0	42.3	3.2	9.1	9.2	0.1
New Brunswick	32.9	37.1	12.8	9.1	9.9	0.8
Quebec	304.5	301.0	-1.1	8.2	8.1	-0.1
Ontario	310.3	340.5	9.7	5.1	5.4	0.3
Manitoba	28.8	27.0	-6.3	5.0	4.7	-0.3
Saskatchewan	24.0	22.9	-4.6	4.8	4.5	-0.3
Alberta	83.6	80.0	-4.3	5.1	4.8	-0.3
British Columbia	160.4	139.7	-12.9	7.8	6.7	-1.1

Monthly Survey of Large Retailers

September 2000 (preliminary)

unchanged from September 1999. (All data in this release are unadjusted for seasonality.)

September sales by the group of large retailers totalled \$6.4 billion, up 6.2% from September 1999. All major product categories registered positive year-over-year sales increases except hardware and lawn and garden products, which remained basically

Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

	Aug. 1999	Aug. 2000 ^r	Aug. 1999 to Aug. 2000 unadjusted	Sept. 1999	Sept. 2000 ^p	Sept. 1999 to Sept. 2000
	\$ millions		% change	\$ millions		% change
Commodities						
Food and beverages	1,964	2,127	8.3	2,031	2,169	6.8
Clothing, footwear and accessories	1,294	1,239	-4.3	1,320	1,339	1.4
Home furnishings and electronics	831	894	7.6	852	929	8.9
Health and personal care products	437	494	13.1	454	506	11.4
Housewares	287	307	7.1	300	304	1.4
Sporting and leisure goods	243	283	16.7	234	251	7.1
Hardware and lawn and garden products	199	228	14.5	195	195	0.3
All other goods and services	636	723	13.7	612	677	10.6
Total	5,891	6,295	6.9	5,999	6,369	6.2

^r Revised figures.

^p Preliminary figures.

The largest year-over-year increase in September was for sales of health and personal care products (+11.4%). Much of this increase resulted from higher sales of prescription and over-the-counter drugs — up 16.1% from September 1999. Sales of health and personal care products by the group of large retailers have posted significant year-over-year increases each month since the survey was begun in January 1997, reflecting a movement by retailers within the group into markets traditionally dominated by drug stores.

The category called all other goods and services posted the second largest year-over-year sales increase in September, up 10.6% compared with September 1999. Within this category, higher revenues from sales of services (excluding automotive repairs), gasoline, pet food and supplies, and stationery and office supplies were the biggest contributors to the increase.

Sales of home furnishings and electronics by the group advanced 8.9% in September. Reflecting continued strong consumer demand, sales of home electronics rose 15.6% from September 1999. Furniture sales were also up significantly (+11.4%), and sales of household appliances increased 6.2%. Sales of home furnishings fell 1.5% compared with September 1999.

Healthy sales of food and beverages, up 6.8% from September 1999, was also a contributing factor to the strong year-over-year increase posted by the group of large retailers. The biggest increases in the food category were recorded for: fresh fish and seafood; fresh fruits and vegetables; candy, confectionery and

snack foods; and deli and prepared foods — all saw double-digit year-over-year sales increases.

Sales of clothing, footwear and accessories recorded a small year-over-year sales increase (+1.4%) for the group of large retailers in September. Higher sales of clothing and accessories for women (+4.7%) and children (+7.2%) were offset by declines in sales of jewellery (-23.1%), footwear (-3.3%) and men's clothing and accessories (-3.1%).

Canada's largest clothing retailers have seen weaker sales of clothing and accessories throughout the second and third quarters of 2000. Although sales of children's clothing have fared relatively well, sales of women's and men's clothing and accessories have suffered.

For the first nine months of 2000, sales of clothing and accessories for the group of Canada's largest clothing retailers were down \$16.9 million, or 0.2%, compared with the same period in 1999. Sales of women's clothing and accessories slumped \$41.7 million (-0.9%); sales of men's clothing and accessories dropped \$24.1 million (-1.0%). In contrast, sales of children's clothing and accessories were up \$48.1 million (+3.8%).

Sales by commodity for the group of large retailers

	Jan. to Sept. 1999	Jan. to Sept. 2000	Jan.-Sept. 1999 to Jan.-Sept. 2000
	unadjusted		
	\$ millions		% change
Commodities			
Food and beverages	18,376	18,792	2.3
Clothing, footwear and accessories	9,841	9,797	-0.4
Home furnishings and electronics	6,556	7,231	10.3
Health and personal care products	3,818	4,224	10.6
Housewares	2,373	2,486	4.8
Sporting and leisure goods	2,132	2,300	7.9
Hardware and lawn and garden products	2,199	2,350	6.9
All other goods and services	5,153	5,738	11.4
Total	50,447	52,918	4.9

Besides clothing, footwear and accessories, all other major product categories sold by the group of large retailers recorded sales gains in the first three quarters compared with the same period of 1999. Sales of all other goods and services (owing to higher gasoline prices), health and personal care products and home furnishings and electronics were the biggest winners, posting double-digit sales increases over this period.

As a result, for the first nine months of 2000, sales by the group of large retailers totalled \$52.9 billion, up 4.9% over the same period in 1999.

To order data, or for general information, contact the Client Services Unit (1-877-421-3067; 613-951-3549; retailinfo@statcan.ca). For analytical information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Catherine Draper (613-951-0669; drapcat@statcan.ca), Distributive Trades Division. ■

Environment industry: Business sector

1998 (final)

Businesses comprising Canada's environment industry derived \$14.3 billion from activities directly related to the environment in 1998. This total accounted for 58% of their total revenues; the remaining 42% came from revenues derived from activities not directly related to the environment.

Three product categories accounted for this total. Environmental services accounted for 44%, surpassing the goods category, which accounted for 40%, and which had been the industry's top performer in previous years. Environment-related construction services comprised the remaining 16%.

A total of 6,294 establishments engaged, in whole or in part, in environment-related activities in 1998. (The total revenue of \$14.3 billion cannot be easily compared to the total for previous years because the group of establishments has grown, and because of a switch in industry classifications from the Standard Industrial Classification to the North American Industry Classification System.)

The environment industry is made up of businesses operating in a variety of industries that produce goods and services that are used or can be used to measure, prevent, limit or correct environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as problems related to waste, noise and ecosystems. The industry also produces "eco-efficient" technologies that decrease material inputs, recover valuable by-products and reduce energy consumption.

Four industry groups led Canada's environment industry, accounting for a combined share of nearly three-quarters of total environmental revenues in the business sector. Wholesale trade accounted for 22%, waste management and remediation services 21%, construction 16% and engineering services 15%.

At the provincial level, environmental firms in each province saw an increase in environmental revenues; most of the growth was fuelled by environmental services. As in the previous years, the biggest earners

of environmental revenues were businesses in Ontario, which earned \$6 billion, and Quebec (\$3.3 billion). Other top performers were businesses in Alberta (\$1.9 billion) and British Columbia (\$1.8 billion).

Export markets represented 8% of environmental revenues. Total environmental export revenues in 1998 reached \$1.2 billion, mostly in the form of environmental goods (\$973.4 million). The United States remained the biggest export market for Canada's environment industry, producing revenues of \$857.8 million, followed by Asia (\$139.2 million) and Europe (\$65.7 million).

The report *Environment industry: Business sector, 1998* (16F0008XIE, free) is now available on Statistics Canada's Web site (www.statcan.ca). On the *Products and services* page, choose *Free publications*. A paper version of this publication is also available for a fee.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact the Information Officer and ask for the person responsible for the Environment Industry Survey, 1998 (613-951-0297; fax: 613-951-0634), Environment Accounts and Statistics Division. ■

RRSP contribution limits

2000

Data for RRSP contribution limits (also called RRSP room) are now available. Based on 1999 tax returns filed in the spring of 2000, this databank provides information on the RRSP contribution limit available to individuals for the 2000 tax year.

This databank consists of two tables, which include the amount of room available to taxfilers (new room, unused room and total room) and characteristics of taxfilers with new room for the 2000 tax year. New room is the maximum amount of dollars taxfilers are eligible to contribute to RRSPs during the 2000 tax year, based on their earned income in 1999.

The data are available for Canada, the provinces and territories, cities, towns, Census Metropolitan Areas, Census Divisions, as well as areas as small as forward sortation areas (the first three characters of the urban postal code) and letter carrier routes.

To order *RRSP contribution limits* (17C0011, variable price), or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact Client Services (613-951-9720; fax: 613-951-4745; saadinfo@statcan.ca), Small Area and Administrative Data Division. ■

NEW PRODUCTS

Environment industry: Business sector, 1998
Catalogue number 16F0008XIE
(Free).

RRSP contribution limits,
Catalogue number 17C0011 (variable price).

Cereals and oilseeds review, September 2000
Catalogue number 22-007-XIB (\$11/\$112).

Cereals and oilseeds review, September 2000
Catalogue number 22-007-XPB (\$15/\$149).

Plugging in: The increase in household Internet use continues in 1999, 1999
Catalogue number 56F0004MIE
(Free).

Income in Canada, 1998
Catalogue number 75-202-RPE (\$45).

Juristat: Public attitudes toward the criminal justice system, Vol. 20, no. 12
Catalogue number 85-002-XIE (\$8/\$70).

Juristat: Public attitudes toward the criminal justice system, Vol. 20, no. 12
Catalogue number 85-002-XPE (\$10/\$93).

All prices are in Canadian dollars and exclude sales tax. Additional shipping charges apply for delivery outside Canada.

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MAJOR RELEASES	
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