
September 2005 Daily Tracking Survey/Online Dating Extension

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EXCERPT

Data for September 14 – December 8, 2005

Princeton Survey Research Associates International
for the Pew Internet & American Life Project

Sample: $n = 3,215$ adults 18 and older

Interviewing dates: 09.14.05 – 12.08.05

Margin of error is plus or minus 2 percentage points for results based on the full sample [$n=3,215$]

Margin of error is plus or minus 2 percentage points for results based on total internet users [$n=2,252$]

Margin of error is plus or minus 8 percentage points for results based on online daters [$n=204$]

NOTE: Telephone interviewing for the September 2005 Daily Tracking Survey was conducted from September 14 – October 13, 2005. The field period was extended through December 8th to increase the number of online daters in the final sample. Because the methodology changed slightly during the extended field period, all internet and general population trend questions unrelated to online dating have been reported based on the original tracking survey data and are not included in this excerpt. Question wording for these items can be obtained by emailing webmaster@pewinternet.org.

ONLDAT Have you ever gone to an online dating website or other site where you can meet people online?¹

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th [N=2,252]

	CURRENT	
%	11	Yes
	89	No
	*	Don't know/Refused

¹ From September 14 to September 29, question wording was "Do you ever use an online dating website?" Wording was slightly altered during the field period to ensure that all online daters were being captured by the survey, not just those who were currently using online dating websites. Results reported here combine responses to both forms of the question.

MAR Are you currently married, living as married, divorced, separated, widowed, or have you never been married?

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Based on total sample from September 14th to December 8th [N=3,215]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	53	Married
	3	Living as married
	11	Divorced
	2	Separated
	9	Widowed
	21	Never been married
	1	Don't know/Refused

MAR2 Are you in a committed romantic relationship, or are you not currently in a relationship?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who are not married or living as married [N=1,359]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	26	In a committed romantic relationship
	70	Not in a relationship
	4	Don't know/Refused

MAR3 How long have you been (married/in your current relationship)?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who are married or in a committed relationship [N=2,157]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	31	Five years or less
	68	More than five years
	1	Don't know/Refused

MAR4 Would you say you are currently looking for a romantic partner, or that you are not currently looking for a partner?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who are not married or in a committed relationship [N=1,058]

	CURRENT	
%	21	Currently looking
	74	Not currently looking
	5	Don't know/Refused

MARSUM Marital/Romantic Status Summary Table

Based on total sample from September 14th to December 8th [N=3,215]

	CURRENT	
%	21	Married or in a committed relationship 5 years or less
	47	Married or in a committed relationship for more than 5 years
	7	Not married or committed but looking
	26	Not married or committed and not looking

DATE01 (Aside from yourself,) Do you know anyone who has...?

Based on total sample from September 14th to December 8th [N=3,215]

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/ REFUSED
a Used an online dating website	31	69	1
b Gone on a date with someone they met through a dating website	26	73	1
c Been in a long-term relationship with or married someone they met through a dating website	15	85	1

DATE02 Earlier you said you have used an online dating website. Which dating websites have you used?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who have used an online dating website [N=204]

	CURRENT	
%	29	Match.com
	21	Yahoo Personals
	11	eHarmony.com
	7	MySpace.com
	4	American Singles
	4	AdultFriendFinder.com
	3	BlackPlanet.com
	2	True.com
	2	Jdate
	2	AOL Profiles Page
	1	Salon Personals
	1	Christian Mingle
	26	Other
	19	Don't know/Refused

***NOTE: Table exceeds 100% due to multiple response**

DATE03 Overall, would you say that using dating websites has been a mostly positive experience or a mostly negative experience?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who have used an online dating website [N=204]

	CURRENT	
%	52	Mostly positive
	29	Mostly negative
	7	(VOL) Both equally
	12	Don't know/Refused

DATE04 Have you ever...?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who have used an online dating website [N=204]

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/ REFUSED
a Gone on a date with someone you met through a dating website	43	56	1
b Been in a long-term relationship with or married someone you met through a dating website	17	82	1

DATE05 Please tell me if you AGREE or DISAGREE with the following statements about online dating.

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th [N=2,252]

	AGREE	DISAGREE	DON'T KNOW	REFUSED
a Online dating is a good way to meet people	44	44	11	1
b People who use online dating are desperate	29	61	9	1
c A lot of people who use online dating lie about whether they are married	57	18	25	*
d Online dating allows people to find a better match for themselves because they can get to know a lot more people	47	38	15	1
e Online dating is dangerous because it puts your personal information on the internet	66	25	9	*
f Online dating is easier and more efficient than other ways of meeting people	33	53	13	1

DATE06 Have you ever used the internet or email to do any of the following things?

NOTE: In the "Online Dating" report, items a-b are reported for online daters and single and looking internet users only. Items c-h are reported for single and looking internet users only. The data below includes all who were asked this question.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW/ REFUSED
Items a-b based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th [N=2,252]			
a Search for information about someone you dated in the past	11	89	*
b Flirt with someone	15	85	*
Items c-h based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who are married or in a committed relationship five years or less or who are single and looking [N=585]			
c Search for information about someone you were currently dating or were about to meet for a first date	13	87	*
d Participate in an online group where you hoped to meet people to date	9	91	*
e Break up with someone you were dating	5	95	*
f Ask someone out on a date	16	83	*
g Find a place or event OFFLINE, like a nightclub or singles event, where you might meet someone to date	18	82	1
h Maintain a long-distance romantic relationship with someone	19	81	*

DATE07 Has anyone ever used email or instant messaging to introduce you to someone they thought you would be interested in dating, or has this never happened to you?

NOTE: In the "Online Dating" report, responses are reported for single and looking internet users only.

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who are married/in a

committed relationship five years or less or who are single and looking [N=585]

	CURRENT	
%	14	Yes
	85	No
	*	Don't know/Refused

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DATE08 Have you ever gone out on a date with someone you were introduced to through email or instant messaging, or not?

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who are married/in a committed relationship five years or less or who are single and looking, and have been introduced to someone via email or IM [N=84]

	CURRENT	
%	49	Yes
	51	No
	1	Don't know/Refused

DATE09 Thinking about your (marriage/current relationship), would you say that the internet and email have had a major impact on your relationship, a minor impact, or no real impact at all?

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who are married or in a committed relationship [N=1,671]

	CURRENT	
%	6	Major impact
	10	Minor impact
	83	No real impact at all
	*	Don't know/Refused

DATE10 Would you say the impact of the internet and email on your relationship has been mostly positive or mostly negative?

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who say internet has an impact on marriage/relationship [N=254]

	CURRENT	
%	84	Mostly positive
	13	Mostly negative
	3	(VOL) Both equally
	1	Don't know/Refused

DATE11 Is your (spouse/current partner) someone you first met ONLINE or someone you first met OFFLINE?

Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who are married or in a committed relationship [N=1,671]

	CURRENT	
%	3	Met online
	97	Met offline
	*	Don't know/Refused

DATE12 Did you meet through a dating website or some other way?

Based on married/committed internet users from September 14th to December 8th who met spouse/partner online [N=44]

	CURRENT	
%	41	Through a dating website
	56	Some other way
	27	In a chat room/IM
	6	Through a friend
	24	Miscellaneous other
	3	Don't know/Refused

DATE13 How did you and your (spouse/current partner) first meet?

Based on married/committed internet users from September 14th to December 8th who met spouse/partner offline [N=1,619]

	CURRENT	
%	35	Through friends or family
	39	At work or school
	13	At a nightclub, bar or café, or other social gathering
	10	Some other way
	3	Church
	1	By chance/On street
	1	Live in same neighborhood
	1	At a recreational facility
	1	Blind date/Dating service
	*	Grew up together
	4	Miscellaneous other
	3	Don't know/Refused

DATE14 You said earlier that you have NOT used an online dating website. What is the MAIN reason you do not use these kinds of sites?

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Based on internet users from September 14th to December 8th who are single and looking but have never used an online dating website [N=85]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	19	Don't trust dating websites
	9	Haven't really been looking for someone to date
	5	Think people who use the sites aren't honest
	5	Don't currently have computer access
	5	Prefer to meet people offline
	4	Don't think I'd meet a quality person
	4	Wouldn't be able to find dates in local area
	3	Don't want to be disappointed
	2	Sites don't provide enough information about the other person
	39	Some other reason
	6	Don't know/Refused

DATE15 How would you describe the city or town where you live? Would you say...

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who are single and looking [N=188]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	41	There are lots of single people you'd be interested in dating
	47	There are very few single people you'd be interested in dating
	10	Don't know
	2	Refused

DATE16 Overall, would you say it is EASY or DIFFICULT to meet people in the city or town where you live?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who are single and looking [N=188]

	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	43	Easy to meet people
	55	Difficult to meet people
	2	Don't know
	0	Refused

DATE17 Can you tell me approximately how many dates you have been on in the past three months?

Based on those from September 14th to December 8th who are single and looking [N=188]

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	<u>CURRENT</u>	
%	36	None
	13	One
	22	Two to four
	25	Five or more
	3	Refused

Methodology

This report is based on the findings of a daily tracking survey on Americans' use of the Internet, which included an extended field period in order to increase the number of online daters in the final sample. The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International between September 14 and December 8, 2005, among a sample of 3,215 adults, 18 and older. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 1.9 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys may introduce some error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed numbers). The design of the sample achieves this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

During the original daily tracking field period (September 14 through October 13) new sample was released daily and was kept in the field for at least five days. The sample was released in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger population. This ensures that complete call procedures were followed for the entire sample. At least 10 attempts were made to complete an interview at sampled households. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. Each household received at least one daytime call in an attempt to find someone at home. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the youngest male currently at home. If no male was available, interviewers asked to speak with the oldest female at home. This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender. All interviews completed on any given day were considered to be the final sample for that day.

During the extended field period (October 14 through December 8) the same procedures were used, except rather than releasing sample on a daily basis everyday of the field period, it was released on a daily basis but only on days of the week when interview time was available at the calling house. While this does not influence the overall reliability and validity of the final data, and does not directly influence findings regarding online dating, it cannot compare precisely to daily tracking survey results which control for day of the week effects in certain trend questions regarding daily internet use and behaviors.

Non-response in telephone interviews produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis. The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Annual Social and Economic Supplement (March 2004). This analysis produces population parameters for the demographic characteristics of adults age 18 or older, living in households that contain a telephone. These parameters are then compared with the

sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distribution of all weighting parameters.

Following is the full disposition of all sampled telephone numbers:

Table 1: Sample Disposition

	<u>Final</u>
Total Numbers dialed	22,642
Business	1,892
Computer/Fax	1,500
Cell phone	38
Other Not-Working	4,152
Additional projected NW	1,806
Working numbers	13,254
Working Rate	58.5%
No Answer	381
Busy	101
Answering Machine	2,375
Callbacks	508
Other Non-Contacts	292
Contacted numbers	9,598
Contact Rate	72.4%
Initial Refusals	4,378
Second Refusals	1,013
Cooperating numbers	4,207
Cooperation Rate	43.8%
No Adult in HH	3
Language Barrier	616
Eligible numbers	3,588
Eligibility Rate	85.3%
Interrupted	373
Completes	3,215
Completion Rate	89.6%
Response Rate	28.4%

Table 1 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from the complete telephone number sample. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible

respondents in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRAI it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:²

- Contact rate – the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made – of 72 percent³
- Cooperation rate – the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused – of 44 percent
- Completion rate – the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews that were completed – of 90 percent

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Thus the response rate for this survey was 28 percent.

² PSRAI's disposition codes and reporting are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.

³ PSRAI assumes that 75 percent of cases that result in a constant disposition of "No answer" or "Busy" are actually not working numbers.