

A new car or a new love – more and more Germans gather information in branch-specific online marketplaces

A study initiated by Scout24 confirms: when it comes to the most important decisions in life, online marketing places play an increasingly significant role as sources of information. 39 percent of all German Internet users consider online marketing places a major decision-making aid.

Munich, 12 September 2005 – According to a current survey, 68% of all German households use the Internet. For this group, online marketing places are an important source of information in more and more fields of life. Whether it's cars, refrigerators, insurance contracts, relationships, or a new job – Germans inform themselves extensively in online marketing places, comparing the relevant offers. This was the result of a study commissioned by the Scout24 Group and performed by the brand research company Icon Added Value which included surveying 10,000 Internet users about their information habits. In addition, the study confirms that the Scout24 Group offers a wide variety of commodities and services such as automobiles, financial services and products, real estate, dating, jobs, and travel services, and the group was able to prove its expertise and competence in these fields.

When it comes to important decisions, consumers turn to the online marketing place for orientation

According to the representative survey, job markets are an important source of information for 50% of all users. When it comes to apartments for rent, 34% of all users refer to the information offered by online marketing places, and, prior to the purchase of real estate, even 48% of all users are gathering online information about suitable offers. And on the subject of love and relationships, more and more Germans turn to the Internet for their search: 36% are using relevant portals so as to find new people or even the partner for life.

Usability and content are crucial factors for online marketing places

In another survey also commissioned by Scout24 pertaining to customer satisfaction, the online marketing places of the Scout24 Group scored excellent results with regard to usability, content, and layout, as in the years before. In addition, three quarters of all users value the wide range of choices at Scout24 which is the result of the diversified portfolio of the Scout24 Group. The high degree of customer satisfaction also reflects in the fact that 18.4 percent of all first-time visitors access the marketplaces of the Scout24 Group as the result of a recommendation by friends and relatives. The survey was performed by TNS-Infratest.

From June 2004 to June 2005, the number of Unique Users* of the Scout24 Group increased from 3.6 to 4.9 million. This corresponds to an increase by 35%.

Visitor frequency depends on specific needs

Another result of the customer satisfaction analysis was that the frequency of use differs widely: people looking for an apartment to rent, real estate, or new relationships visit the relevant portals several times a day. On the other hand, people interested in cars, journeys, financial products, or jobs are searching the Internet only once a week on an average.

“The results of the surveys confirm the success of our business model: to offer users special portals in fields like job, real estate, automobiles, financial services and products, travel, relationships, and friend finding,” Christoph Hölzlwimmer, Director Marketing and executive board member of Scout24 points out. “Given the wide variety of offers on the Internet, if an Internet service provider wants to be recognized as a marketplace it has to convince the users, time and again, of its outstanding services with regard to quality, timeliness, reliability, and diversity of offers,” Hölzlwimmer is certain.

* Nielsen Netratings

About the Scout24 Group

Scout24, the leading European network of online marketing places, offers branch-specific services in six fields and is present in ten countries. Scout24 is instrumental in facilitating its customers to find and offer products, services, and contacts, thus saving them time and money. In this way, Scout24 improves the transparency of markets. Every month, around 6 million people are using the offers of the Scout24 Group: **AutoScout24**, **FinanceScout24**, **FriendScout24**, **ImmobilienScout24**, **JobScout24**, and **TravelScout24**. Scout24 is part of the T-Online Group. Additional information about Scout24 is available at: www.scout24.com.

Press Contact:

Scout24
Cornelia Schreiber
Tel.: + 49 89 490 267 63
Fax: + 49 89 490 267 11
Cornelia.schreiber@scout24.com

Ketchum
Thomas Dreesen
+49 89 12445 222
+49 89 12445 114
Thomas.Dreesen@Ketchum.com