

Topic:
CAD & The
Internet & MCAD

Web Searchers

What proportion of managers of design functions at mechanical engineering sites are using the Web to search for product information?

iCT is produced by Business Advantage, a B2B research, business development and marketing consulting practice operating in the global IT, Digital and Telecommunication sectors.

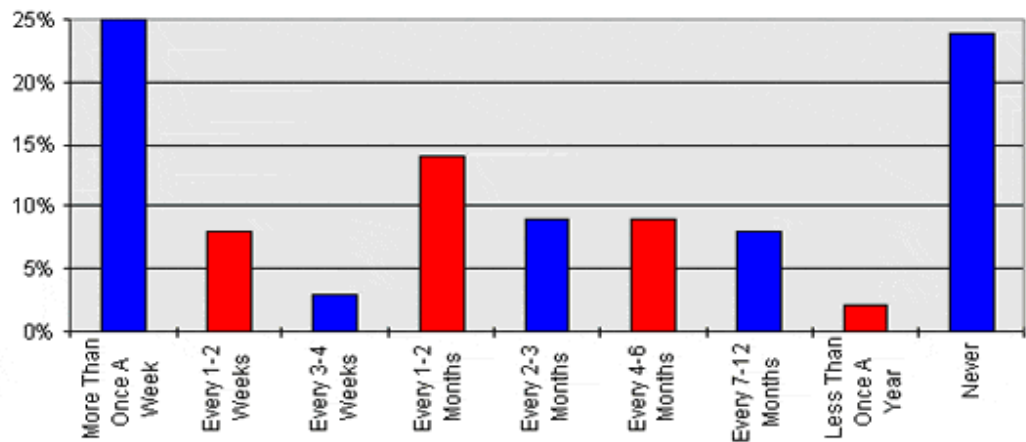
Only the most devoted readers of the computer aided technology media could possibly keep abreast of the range of new products that hit the market. For managers of CAD/CAM related functions the Internet offers a rich source of information on the availability/suitability of products - if they know where to look. So what proportion of CAD/CAM managers are using the Internet for this purpose? To find out, we interviewed managers of CAD/CAM functions at 252 mechanical engineering sites.

Tale Of Two Quarters

A quarter of our sample use the Internet to research CAD/CAM related hardware or software product information more than once a week. A further quarter, however, said they never use the Internet for this purpose. The chart below shows how the searching habits of the remaining 50% range from every week to once a year or less.

Overall, three quarters of our sample turn to the Internet at some point for information on CAD/CAM related software or hardware.

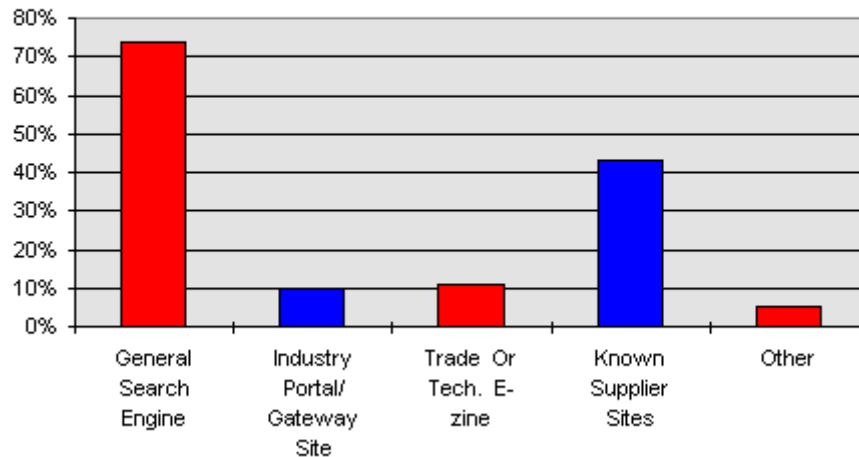
How Often Do You Use The Internet To Research CAD/CAM Related Software/Hardware?



We asked the 190 managers who research product information on the Internet what methods they use to find the information they are after. Three quarters use a general search engine, and one in ten use an industry or technology 'portal' or gateway site. Just over two in five visit the site of a known supplier.

Search Me

How Do You Find CAD/CAM Related Product Information On The Internet?



Of the 75% of managers using a general search engine, 51% said they use Google (27% of the overall sample), 20% said Yahoo, and 7% said Altavista.

End Product

Eight per cent of those who use the Internet for product research purposes have actually ordered CAD/CAM related software or hardware on-line (6% of the overall sample) in the last 12 months. This group is too small for reliable analysis, but 12 managers said they had ordered software, five said hardware and one had ordered peripherals.



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Conclusion

Half of managers of CAD/CAM related functions in the mechanical engineering sector are looking on the Internet for product information at least once every two months.

Confirmation, if any were needed, of the importance for all suppliers of having websites that point people quickly to the information they need (the May issue of *iCT* revealed that 11% of UK CAD/CAM resellers do not have websites - see '[Visitor Attractions](#)').

Over a quarter of the managers we interviewed said they use Google to find product information. With the art of search engine optimisation being something of a hit and miss affair, it would be interesting to know what proportion of suppliers actively attempt to improve their rankings, and the benefits they accrue from doing so.

Business Advantage has conducted [market research](#) projects in over 100 countries, spanning five continents. If you'd like to discuss how best to meet your market intelligence needs for domestic or international markets, call us on +44 (0)1689 873636, or e-mail us at info@business-advantage.com.

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