



# Internet to Reach 2 Billion Users This Year (and Other Stats)

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In celebration of the [first World Statistics Day](#) as designated by the U.N., here's a snapshot of the most prevalent technologies used worldwide and how Americans compare with their global neighbors.

Internet users will surpass 2 billion this year, that's around 30 percent of the world's population. In the U.S., 55 percent of Americans are online, compared with 65 percent of Europeans, representing the highest regional rate in the world, but China with its 420 million Internet users, ranks first in number of users online, International Telecommunication Union revealed in a study released today.

## Broadband

Demand for higher-speed [broadband](#) connections is growing due to the appeal of big-gigabyte files for online entertainment.

For instance, [downloading](#) an HD movie can take a day and a half at minimum broadband speed of 256 kilobytes per second, but only five minutes with a connection speed of 100 megabytes per second, the targeted speed specified in the U.S. national broadband plan.

Today, 65 percent of Americans have access to broadband compared with more than 80 percent in South Korea, the Netherlands and Sweden.

"Broadband is the next tipping point, the next truly transformational technology," ITU Secretary-General Hamadoun Touré said in a statement.

## Browsers

Microsoft Internet Explorer is the browser of choice around the world by a margin of nearly 20 percent over second ranked Mozilla Firefox. In the U.S., 25 percent use Firefox, while 40 percent of European users choose Firefox, reports NetShare. And while third ranked Google Chrome numbers are small — capturing just 11 percent of online Americans — its popularity has skyrocketed 210 percent over the past year.

During the same period, Internet Explorer fell to just under 50 percent for the first time in a decade, according to Comscore.

On American [college](#) campuses, Apple and Dell computers [account](#) for more than 50 percent of laptops used by students, a recent report by New Jersey research firm Student Monitor said.

Surprisingly, the highest percentage of online social gamers is found in the 50 to 59 age group, reported Comscore. Facebook with its 500 million active users was the most popular platform for games, cited by 83 percent of respondents in an Information Solutions Group study. Zynga's Farmville and Mafia Wars are the most popular, engaging 200 million players each month with revenues estimated as between \$500 million and \$800 million for 2010, according to the company.

### **Look who's calling**

Mobile phones are now used by 77 percent of the world's population. In the [U.S.](#), Europe and other developed countries, mobile phone subscriptions have outpaced the population: 116 subscriptions for every 100 residents. Subscriptions to 3G services have increased more than 1,200 percent over the past five years.

Worldwide, Nokia claims to sell 260,000 smartphones a day, Google claims 200,000 a day for phones running on [Android](#), and Apple reports 80,000 [iPhones](#) are bought each day.

### **Text over talk**

Texting dominates communications. Text messages have tripled over the past three years to stand at 6.1 trillion — that's 200,000 text messages every second, according to ITU.

No one texts more than the American female teenager, who sends and receives an average of 4,050 texts per month, reports Nielsen.