P3P Dashboard Report

ERNST & YOUNG

Quality In Everything We Do

P3P Dashboard Report: April 2003

Web site privacy has long been measured according to the contents of posted privacy statements. Standards for those statements have been codified by both industry groups and by privacy programs. It is now common practice for commercial web sites to have posted privacy statements that discuss the information collection, use, and disclosure practices of the web site operators.

Approval of the Platform for Privacy Preferences Project (P3P) specification as a formal recommendation by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), and the growing availability of P3P-enabled browsers, have led to the emergence of P3P-enabled web sites.

Ernst & Young developed a project to chart the adoption of P3P by the most trafficked web site domains[1] over several months. Our first monthly report was issued for August 2002. Using information provided by comScore Media Metrix, Ernst & Young's professional staff for Privacy Assurance and Advisory Services has created a dashboard report of P3P adoption[2]. The P3P Dashboard illustrates the current adoption rates of the top 100 and top 500 domains visited by U.S. Internet users. In addition, the P3P Dashboard uses comScore's domain segmentation to report on adoption rates by the major categories of web sites represented. The dashboard indicates the level of adoption by domain category, and whether there was an increase in that category in the latest month.

This report will be presented at the Federal Trade Commission's Workshop on Technologies for Protecting Personal Information on 14 May 2003. See www.ftc.gov/bcp/workshops/technology/index.html for more information.

Observations

- Our April 2003 results reflect the largest period increase for both the Top 500 domains and the Top 100 domains. In the Entertainment category, at the time of our survey, 2 domains no longer posted P3P reference files or policies. However, newly P3P-enabled domains still resulted in a net increase for that category.

- With the P3P-enabling of one of the Career domains, only the Auction, Education, and Government categories remain with no P3P-enabled domains.

- Although some domains had P3P reference files, some of those reference files pointed to P3P policies that were not accessible, and therefore were not counted.

- According to the P3P Validator (see www.w3.org/p3p/validator.html), many of the P3P policies posted had syntax and other related errors reported. However, such policies were counted.

- According to the W3C P3P Validator, not all the domains that posted P3P policies have posted P3P headers for cookies. However, some domains were found to post only the cookie headers and were therefore not counted in this report.
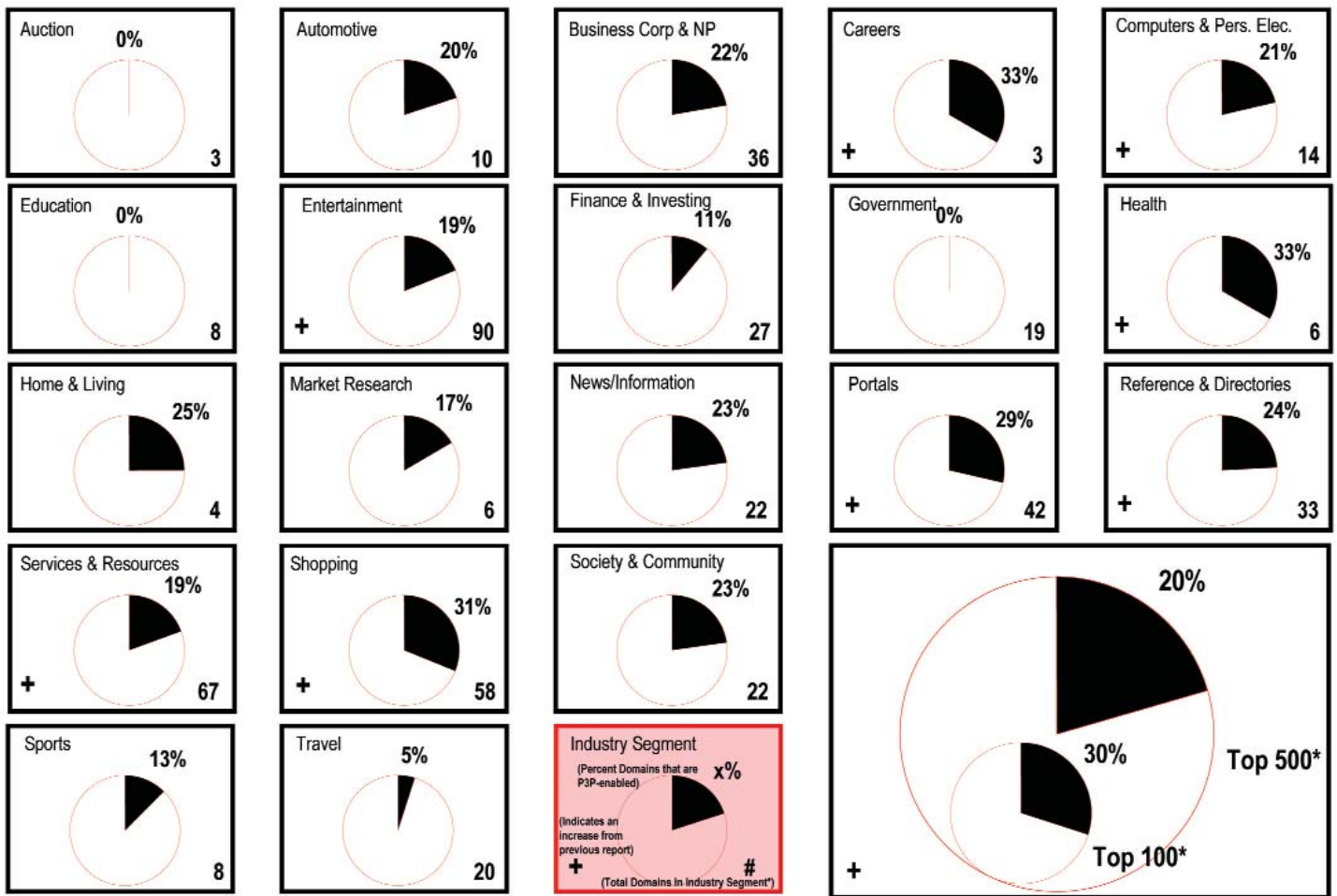
For more information about Ernst & Young's Privacy Assurance and Advisory Services, please browse to www.ey.com/privacy.

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[1] Based on the comScore Media Metrix "netScore" top 500 most trafficked web sites list for July 2002.

[2] A domain is considered to have adopted P3P if the primary web site has either (1) a P3P reference file in the designated well know location (i.e., www.domainname.com/w3c/p3p.xml) or (2) a P3P element in the web server's HTTP header, and the reference file or HTTP header contains a URI for the applicable P3P policy, which also must be accessible at the designated location.

P3P Dashboard

April 2003

Auction 0% — 3

Automotive 20% — 10

Business Corp & NP 22% — 36

Careers 33% + — 3

Computers & Pers. Elec. 21% + — 14

Education 0% — 8

Entertainment 19% + — 90

Finance & Investing 11% — 27

Government 0% — 19

Health 33% + — 6

Home & Living 25% — 4

Market Research 17% — 6

News/Information 23% — 22

Portals 29% + — 42

Reference & Directories 24% + — 33

Services & Resources 19% + — 67

Shopping 31% + — 58

Society & Community 23% — 22

Sports 13% — 8

Travel 5% — 20

Legend

Industry Segment
(Percent Domains that are P3P-enabled) x%
(Indicates an increase from previous report) +
(Total Domains in Industry Segment*) #

20% Top 500*
30% Top 100*
+

* According to the ComScore Media Metrix netScore™ report for July 2002.

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