

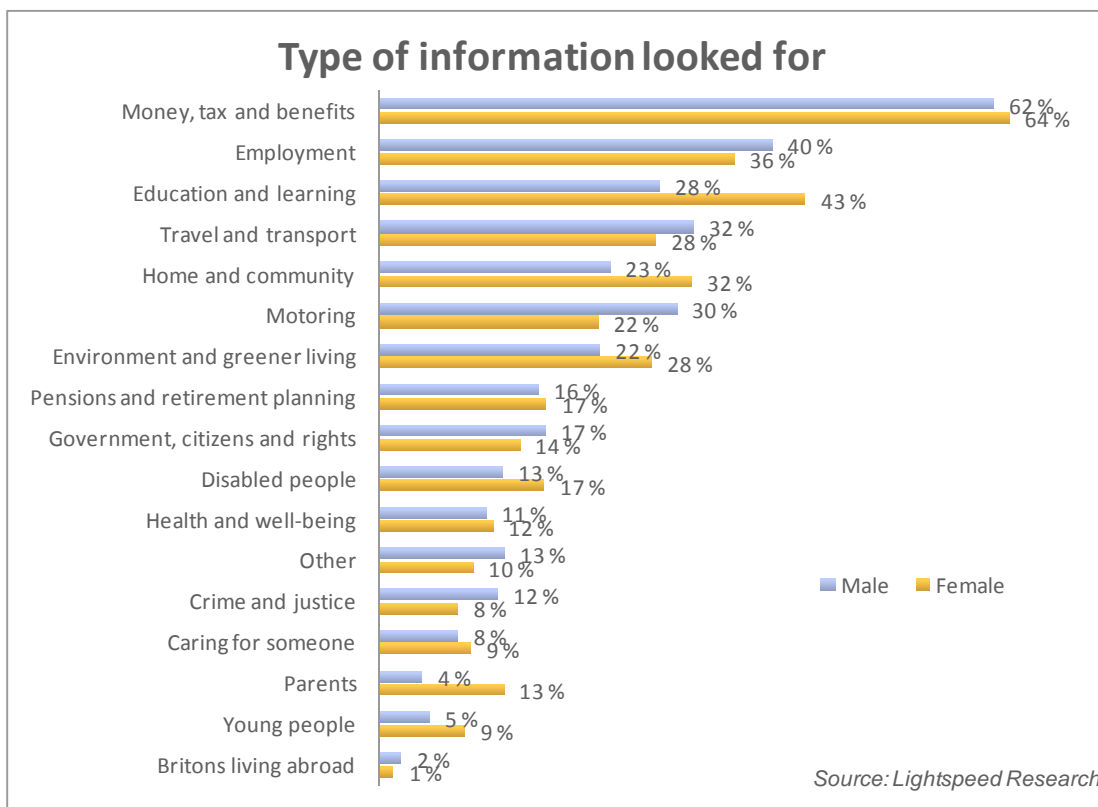
New research reveals online government information is a hit with UK consumers

London (February 25th, 2010) -- A survey by Lightspeed Research, a leading online global research provider, shows that the government's push to transfer local and central government information online is finding favour with the UK's consumers. 86% of respondents questioned in an online survey have used the internet to access local council or government information and 89% of those who used the web succeeded in finding the information they were searching for.

Direct.gov.uk most used website

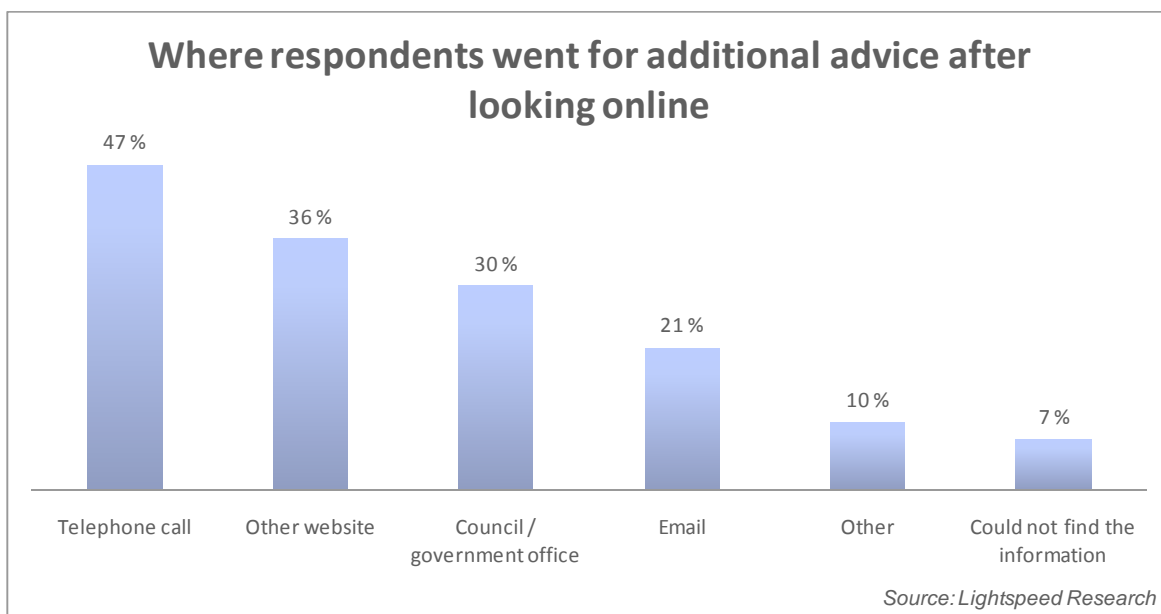
Direct.gov.uk is the most-used service with 82% of respondents who have looked online for information having used the service compared with 77% who have used their local council's website. The Government Gateway fails to live up to its name with just under a quarter (23%) of respondents accessing the service.

Money, tax and benefits top the list as the most searched for topics, not surprising given the recent publicity around the January 31st deadline for online tax returns. Overall, there were very few differences in usage between men and women, although men were more likely to look for motoring information than women (30% compared with 22%). By contrast, women were more likely to look for information on education, home and community.



After the internet, we turn to the telephone

Although scores of Britons are logging online to find government information, the survey shows that the traditional telephone is still seen as the next best thing. Four in 10 (41%) would resort to the phone if they failed to find information online while just under a quarter (24%) would seek the information out at a council or government office. Although respondents typically find online government sources to be helpful, 38% said that they needed additional information after consulting government information on the web. Once again, the phone is seen as being the most useful resource – nearly half (47%) of respondents used the phone compared to just over a third (36%) who sought out further information on the web.



The research shows that overall consumers are satisfied with the service that local councils and the government provide online. One in two respondents were “very satisfied” with the information provided on motoring, but this fell to one in four who felt the same about information about crime and justice and just one in five about information for young people. In spite of these differences, consumers generally believe that investment in online services was to be encouraged. 91% of those surveyed thought that expanding the information and services available online was a good use of public funds. Although the large majority of consumers want online services to be expanded and appear to be embracing the age of digital information, respondents are split about how they would like to contact their local council or government. Just one percent separated email, the telephone and websites at 29%, 28% and 27% respectively. Face-to-face dialogues however appear to be a thing of the past with just 12% of respondents preferring this option and only 2% favouring snail mail.

Ralph Risk, Lightspeed Research’s EMEA Marketing Director, said “These results show that people are becoming comfortable with accessing information online. While this research has been done online and may show slightly higher adoption rates, it does show that there are high levels of usage and suggests that the Government’s strategy of ensuring information is available on the web is well accepted by the public. However, the results do show that when people can’t find what they want on the web, it is the telephone that they are most likely to turn to for the personal touch. It is still important therefore for the Government to ensure that they have in place a provision for people who do not have online access, or want to communicate offline.”

When asked about the results*, Mike Hoban, Director of Communications and Engagement at Directgov said: “It’s great to see that Directgov is increasing in popularity since the recent television adverts. The research by Lightspeed Research mirrors our own experience: since

the campaign was launched, visits to our website have increased from 20million a month to 27million a month”

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*** Note to editors**

This research project was carried out independently of Directgov.

About Lightspeed Research

Through proprietary global panels and research products and services, Lightspeed Research delivers valuable research to help businesses make informed decisions. From recruitment, to activity level, to ongoing profiling, Lightspeed Research’s panels are actively managed to provide engaged survey respondents and support studies that range in scope and complexity across industry sectors. Deeply profiled specialty panels including automotive, B2B, beverage, family and household, finance, health and wellness, media consumption, mobile phone, beauty and personal care, sports and hobbies, and travel and leisure, provide quick access to target audiences. As a leader in quality, Lightspeed Research has implemented extensive measures to prevent fraudulent panel registrations and poor survey data.

Lightspeed Research is part of Kantar, the information, insight and consultancy division of WPP (NASDAQ: WPPGY), one of the world’s leading communications services companies. For more information, please visit www.lightspeedresearch.com.