



The Nielsen Company  
770 Broadway, New York, NY 10003  
www.nielsen.com

## News Release

### Contacts:

Suzy Bausch: (415) 617-0181 [suzy.bausch@nielsen.com](mailto:suzy.bausch@nielsen.com)

Michelle McGiboney: (408) 941-2930 [pr.us@nielsen.com](mailto:pr.us@nielsen.com)

### **SOCIAL NETWORKS & BLOGS NOW 4<sup>TH</sup> MOST POPULAR ONLINE ACTIVITY, AHEAD OF PERSONAL EMAIL, NIELSEN REPORTS**

#### **“Time Spent” on These Sites Growing Three Times Faster than Overall Internet Rate, Now Accounting for Almost 10 Percent of all Internet Time**

**New York, NY – March 9, 2009** – Now visited by over two-thirds (67 percent) of the global\* online population, “Member Communities,” which includes both social networks and blogs, has become the fourth most popular online category – ahead of personal email. It is growing twice as fast as any of the other four largest sectors (search, portals, PC software and email), according to The Nielsen Company's “**Global Faces and Networked Places**,” a comprehensive report published today revealing the new global footprint of social networking.

“Social networking has become a fundamental part of the global online experience,” says John Burbank, CEO of Nielsen Online. “While two-thirds of the global online population already accesses member community sites, their vigorous adoption and the migration of time show no signs of slowing. Social networking will continue to alter not just the global online landscape, but the consumer experience at large. This study explains why.”

According to the Nielsen report, Facebook - the world's most popular social network - is visited monthly by three in every 10 people online across the nine markets in which Nielsen tracks social networking use. Orkut in Brazil has the largest domestic online reach (70 percent) of any social network in these markets.

The report, available today, provides insights into the changing size and audience composition of the global social networking audience and the increasing share of Internet time for which it accounts. The report also analyzes how the major players are faring and what advertisers and publishers can do to take advantage of the social network phenomenon.

Other key findings include:

- One in every 11 minutes online globally is accounted for by social network and blogging sites.
- The social network and blogging audience is becoming more diverse in terms of age: the biggest increase in visitors during 2008 to “Member Community” Web sites globally came from the 35-49 year old age group (+11.3 million).
- Mobile is playing an increasingly important role in social networking. Nielsen found UK mobile Web users have the greatest propensity to visit a social network through their handset, with 23 percent (2 million people) doing so, compared to 19 percent in the US (10.6 million people). These numbers are a big increase over last year – up 249 percent in the UK and 156 percent in the US.

“Social networking isn't just growing rapidly, it's evolving - both in terms of a broader audience and compelling new functionality,” says Alex Burmaster, author of the study and Communications Director across EMEA for Nielsen Online. “We felt compelled to analyze the state of the social networking market globally and consider what implications this has for our publisher and advertiser clients.”

*\*“Global” and “World” encompass the following countries in which Nielsen Online has a NetView panel – Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA.*



Among the markets Nielsen measured, penetration of visits to social networks and blogs was highest in Brazil, where 80 percent of the online audience visits such sites (see Chart 1). The share of overall Internet time for which social networks and blogs account is also highest in Brazil, where nearly one in four (23 percent) of minutes spent online is spent on these sites (see Chart 2).

Germany saw the greatest increase in penetration of social networks and blogs across 2008, from 39 percent of the online audience in December 2007 to 51 percent in December 2008 – a relative growth of 39 percent (see Chart 2).

Find more insights from the study and download the full paper for free on Nielsen’s blog at <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/nielsen-news/social-networking-new-global-footprint/>.

**Chart 1: The increasing reach of “Member Community” Web sites across 2008**

Country	Dec 07	Dec 08	% Increase Dec 07 to Dec 08
Global	61%	67%	5.4%
Brazil*	78%	80%	1.4%
Spain	65%	75%	9.9%
Italy	63%	73%	9.9%
Japan	67%	70%	2.7%
UK	59%	69%	10.3%
USA	64%	67%	2.6%
France	64%	67%	2.9%
Australia	55%	59%	4.9%
Germany*	39%	51%	12.5%
Switzerland*	41%	51%	9.6%

In Dec. '08 the Member Community sector reached 67 percent of the global online population compared to 61 percent in Dec. '07.

**Chart 2: Changing share of time accounted for by “Member Community” Web sites across 2008**

Country	Relative Change in % Share	Share of Time Dec 07	Share of Time Dec 08
Global	38%	6.7%	9.3%
Switzerland**	207%	3.0%	9.3%
Germany**	140%	3.1%	7.5%
UK	118%	8.0%	17.4%
Italy	113%	7.2%	15.4%
Spain	87%	6.7%	12.5%
France	59%	4.0%	6.3%
Australia	58%	6.9%	10.9%
USA	11%	5.8%	6.4%
Brazil**	-6%	24.4%	23.1%

From Dec. '07 to Dec. '08 the global share of time accounted for by “Member Communities” increased by 38 percent - from 6.7 percent to 9.3 percent.

Source: Nielsen Online, NetView, Home and Work Data, December 2007 – December 2008 (\*\*Home only)  
 “Global” refers to AU, BR, CH, DE, ES, FR, IT, UK & USA only. (Japan figures are shown but not included in global average.)

**EDITOR’S NOTES - Please source all information to [Nielsen Online](#)**

\*\*“Global” and “World” encompass the following countries in which Nielsen Online has a NetView panel – Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the USA.



**About Nielsen Online**

Nielsen Online, a service of The Nielsen Company, delivers comprehensive, independent measurement and analysis of online audiences, advertising, video, consumer-generated media, word of mouth, commerce and consumer behavior. With high quality, technology-driven products and services, Nielsen Online enables clients to make informed business decisions regarding their Internet, digital and marketing strategies. For more information, please visit [www.nielsen-online.com](http://www.nielsen-online.com). Also, visit our blog at [www.nielsen-online.com/blog](http://www.nielsen-online.com/blog).

**About The Nielsen Company**

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence, mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. For more information, please visit, [www.nielsen.com](http://www.nielsen.com).