

Google search on Mobile Phones

Google Inc has seen an acceleration of Internet activity among mobile phone users in recent months since the company has introduced faster Web services on selected phone models, fueling confidence that the mobile Internet era is at hand.

Early evidence showing sharp increases in Internet usage on phones, not just computers, has emerged from services Google has begun offering in recent months on Blackberry e-mail phones, Nokia devices and the Apple iPhone.

"We have very much hit a watershed moment in terms of mobile Internet usage," Matt Waddell, product manager for Google Mobile, said in an interview. "We are seeing that mobile Internet use is in fact accelerating".

The growing availability of flat-rate data plans from phone carriers instead of per-minute charges that previously discouraged Internet use, along with improved Web browsers on mobile phones as well as better-designed services from companies like Google are fueling the growth, Waddell argued.



Google has introduced a new software download for mobile phones **that conveniently positions a Google Web search window on the home screen of such phones.**

Google had introduced similar software for Blackberry users in December 2007 and certain Nokia phones in February 2008.

The software reduces the time it takes for people to perform Web searches on Google by eliminating initial search steps of finding a Web browser on the phone, opening the browser, waiting for network access, and getting to Google.com. **By making a Google search box more convenient, mobile phone users have begun using the Internet more, the company said.**

"We are actually seeing a 20 percent increase in the number of searches by people," Waddell said.

Google's mobile plug-in software lets users customize their phones to feature Google mobile services instead of relying solely on software features network carriers have pre-installed on the devices.

Waddell said that "Not only are we seeing increased user satisfaction but also greater usage."

Microsoft expects to have sold 20 million Windows Mobile devices by the end of its fiscal year in June 2008, which together with Blackberry and Symbian-based phones represent upward of 85 percent of the Internet-ready smartphones sold in the world.

Users of phones based on software from Research in Motion, Nokia's Symbian-based phones and now Microsoft Windows Mobile can download the software at mobile.google.com/.

Google officials said that they had seen a similar surge in usage of Google.com via mobile devices following the launch of the Apple iPhone last year. The iPhone offers a full-featured Internet browser unlike many phones.

Waddell said Google had seen iPhone users perform as many as 50 times more Web searches on these computer-phone devices as users of standard mobile feature phones typically do.

Source: Financial Express