



HOUSEHOLD USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AUSTRALIA

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C O N T E N T S

	<i>page</i>
Notes	2
Main features	3
 LIST OF TABLES	
1 Households frequently using a computer	10
2 Main reason for households not having computer.	10
3 Use of Peripheral IT equipment	11
4 Households with modems	11
5 Households owning/paying for selected technologies.	12
6 Households accessing the Internet from home	12
7 Main reason why households with computers do not have home Internet access	13
8 Households intending to purchase/upgrade a computer	13
9 Households intending to connect to the Internet.	14
10 Persons aged 5 years and over frequently using a home computer by State	14
11 Persons aged 5 years and over frequently using a home computer by age	14
12 Home computer activities of persons aged 5 years and over	15
13 Home computer activities of children frequently using a home computer	15
14 Adults accessing a computer or Internet	16
15 Main reason why adults do not use existing household computer.	16
 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
Explanatory notes	17

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NOTES

INTRODUCTION

This publication contains a selection of results based on the February and May Household Use of Information Technology Surveys conducted in 1996 and 1998. The surveys have been combined to increase the effective sample size to a total of approximately 6,600 households. Analysis based on the 6,600 observations has produced much more reliable results than any of the individual surveys especially where analysis is focused on small target groups. In particular, this publication contains statistics classified by State and presents some statistics about children's use of computers and the Internet.

A consequence of combining surveys in the way it has been done is that the time period relating to the statistics becomes less precise; results represent an average of the results which would have been obtained from the individual surveys. For example, the proportion of households with computers shown in this publication relates to an average of February and May 1998 results i.e. at a point in time broadly equivalent to about the end of March 1998.

SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics
* estimates have a relative standard error of 25% or more
– nil or rounded to zero

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

MAIN FEATURES

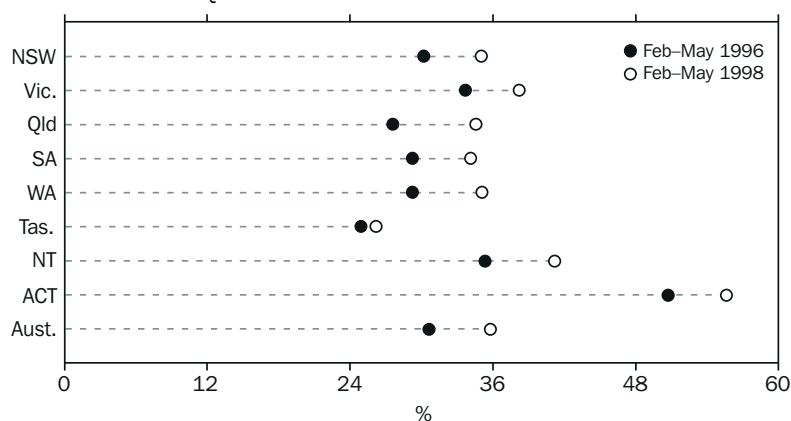
The results presented in this publication are based on a combined set of observations collected in the February and May 1998 surveys of Household Use of Information Technology. The surveys have been combined to improve the reliability of state estimates in particular, which would not otherwise be released on the basis of a single survey of this size.

A consequence of combining surveys in this way is that the time period relating to the statistics becomes less precise; results represent an average of the results which would have been obtained from the individual surveys. For example, the proportion of households with computers shown in this publication relates to an average of February and May 1998 results i.e. at a point in time broadly equivalent to about the end of March 1998.

Change in the number of households frequently using a computer

The proportion of households in Australia frequently using a computer increased from 30% for the same period in 1996 to 36% (2.4 million) in 1998. In most cases the States followed the national pattern.

HOUSEHOLDS FREQUENTLY USING A COMPUTER



Number of households with a computer

In addition to households frequently using a computer in 1998, there were an additional 6% of households which had a home computer which was not frequently used. Therefore, there were 2.8 million households in Australia with a home computer.

Barriers to household uptake of computers

In 1998, 55% of households without computers gave 'lack of interest in computers/no use for a computer' as the main reason for not having computing facilities, while 28% reported 'costs are too high'.

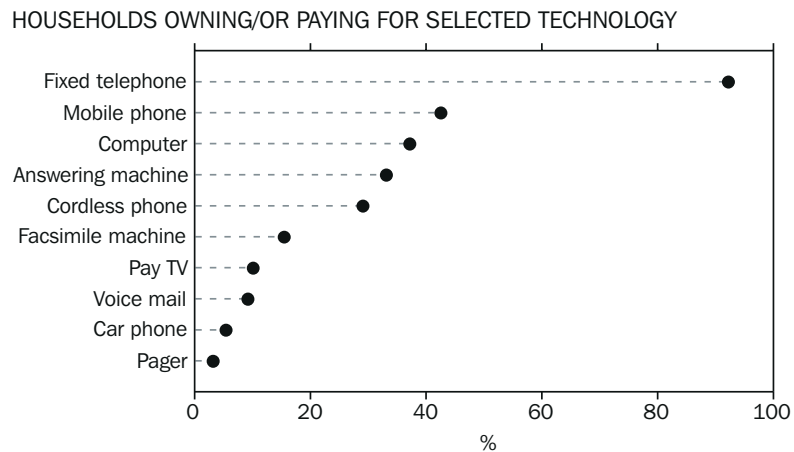
Victoria had the highest proportion of households reporting 'lack of interest in computers/no use for a computer' (58%) and the lowest proportion reporting 'costs are too high' (24%) as the main reason for not having a computer.

Peripheral usage by households frequently using a computer

There was a high level of peripheral technology usage by households who frequently used a computer. Across all States nearly 90% of these households had a printer. The next most popular peripheral technology was the CD-Rom drive, which in most States was very close to the national average of 74%. Modems were present in 48% of households frequently using a computer. The Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales had the highest modem penetration rates with 58% and 54% respectively.

Households owning/paying for selected technology

The following chart shows the proportion of Australian households owning or paying for selected technologies.



Of the technologies identified, fixed telephones (92%), mobile phones (43%), computers (37%) and answering machines (33%) had the highest level of home ownership (or households paying for the technology).

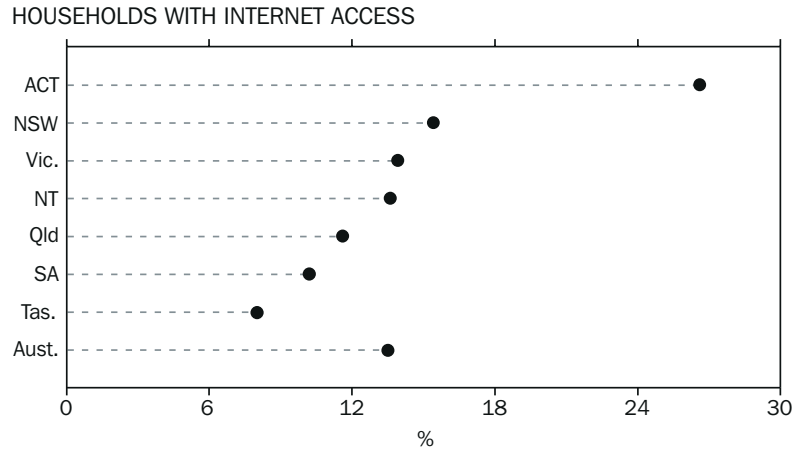
There was some variation in the proportion of households owning or paying for these four technologies across the States.

Victoria had the highest proportion of households owning or paying for fixed telephones (94%) while the Northern Territory had the lowest (84%).

The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of households owning or paying for mobile phones (47%), computers (58%) and answering machines (46%). Tasmania had the lowest; mobile phones (31%), computers (30%) and answering machines (23%).

Households online

In 1998 about 913,000 households (13.5% of all Australian households) had home Internet access. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of online households (27%) followed by New South Wales (15%), Victoria (14%) and Northern Territory (14%).



Nearly 32% of all households with a computer had home Internet access. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion (41%) followed by New South Wales (37%).

Although 1.2 million households who frequently used a computer had a modem, nearly one in four (287,000) of these households did not have access to the Internet from home.

Barriers to households with computers going online

'Costs are too high' (31%) and 'lack of interest' (27%) were the most frequently reported main reasons for not having home Internet access.

South Australia had the highest proportion of computer households reporting 'costs are too high' (36%) while New South Wales had the lowest (29%). Victoria had the highest proportion reporting 'lack of interest' (30%) while Western Australia had the lowest (22%).

Household intentions

... to purchase or upgrade a home computer

Approximately 17% of households (1.1 million) reported an intention to purchase or upgrade a computer in the next 12 months. Nearly 37% of these households did not already have computer facilities.

A greater proportion of households in the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory reported an intention to purchase or upgrade a computer than in any of the States (25% and 23% respectively). South Australia and Tasmania were the lowest with 13% and 14% respectively.

... to connect to the Internet

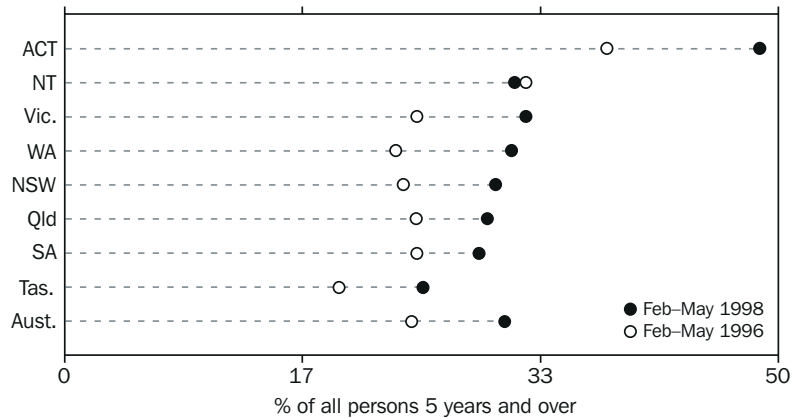
Approximately 26% of households with computers and no Internet access indicated an intention to connect to the Internet in the next 12 months. The Northern Territory had the highest reported intention with 33%, followed by Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory each with 28%.

Persons frequently using a home computer by State

The surveys showed that nearly 5.2 million Australians aged five years and over frequently used a home computer (once a week or more). This was nearly 31% of Australia's total population aged five years and over. The comparable figure for 1996 was 24%.

The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of frequent home computer users (49%).

PERSONS FREQUENTLY USING A HOME COMPUTER



Persons frequently using a home computer by age

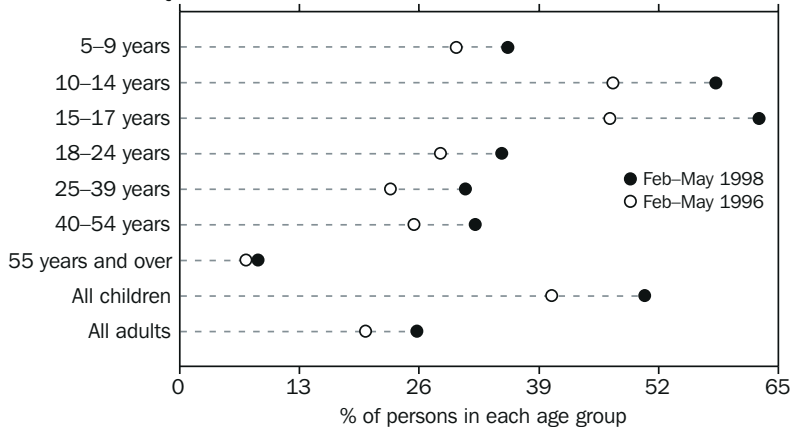
The majority of persons frequently using a home computer were adults (persons aged 18 years and over), accounting for 67% of the 5.2 million frequent home computer users.

There were 1.7 million children aged 5 to 17 years who frequently used a home computer (33% of frequent home computer users).

Children frequently using a home computer accounted for nearly 51% of all persons in their age group. As children get older they are more likely to frequently use a home computer. Adults who frequently used a home computer only accounted for 26% of all adults.

For the same period in 1996, children aged 5–17 who frequently used a home computer accounted for nearly 40% of all persons in their age group. The corresponding figure for adults was just over 20%.

PERSONS FREQUENTLY USING A HOME COMPUTER



Home computer activities

There were significant differences in the home computer activities of adults and children. The most significant difference between adults and children was in the area of entertainment and education. Almost twice the proportion of children used the home computer for games and study purposes compared to adults.

For adults frequently using a home computer:

- 44% reported using the home computer to play games;
- 42% reported learning/study activities;
- 58% for work related activities;
- 47% for personal/correspondence; and
- 29% for Internet based activities.

For children frequently using a home computer:

- 85% reported using the home computer to play games;
- 84% for learning/study activities;
- 8% for personal/correspondence; and
- 15% for Internet based activities.

Home computer activities of children by age

While computer games, study and Internet related activities were the three most frequently reported home computer activities for children, the proportion of children who undertook these activities differed significantly with age. Games activities appear to diminish as age increases and educational activities increase.

For the 468,000 children in age group 5–9 years who frequently used a home computer:

- 93% reported using the home computer for playing games;
- 66% reported learning/study activities; and
- 4% reported Internet based activities.

For the 763,000 children in the age group 10–14 years who frequently used a home computer:

- 87% reported using the home computer for playing games;
- 88% reported learning/study activities; and
- 19% Internet based activities.

For the 482,000 children in the age group 15–17 years who frequently used a home computer:

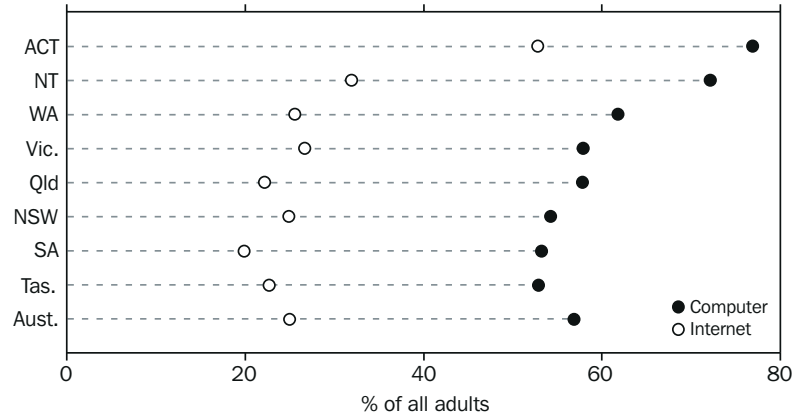
- 73% reported using the home computer for playing games;
- 93% reported learning/study activities; and
- just over 20% reported Internet based activities.

Adults using the Internet and computers

The surveys showed that more than 7.6 million adults (57% of the total adult population) accessed a computer from some place in the 12 month period prior to the surveys. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest level of computer access (77%).

The surveys also showed that an average of 3.3 million adult Australians (25% of the total adult population) had accessed the Internet in the previous 12 months. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of adults which accessed the Internet (53%).

ADULTS ACCESSING A COMPUTER OR INTERNET

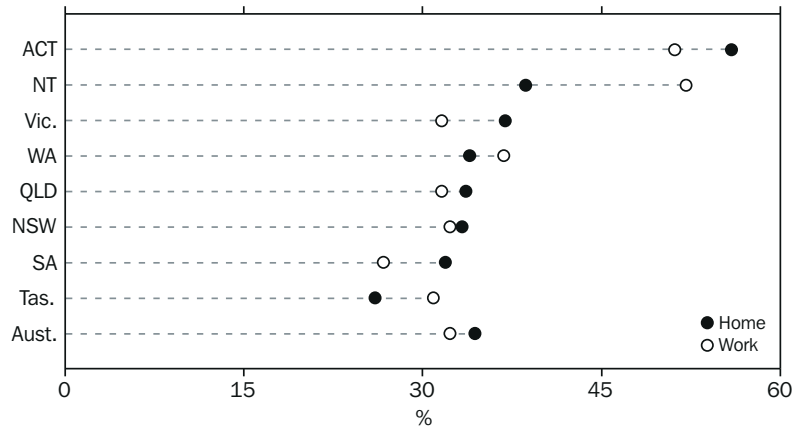


Place of access

...for computer access

Home (4.6 million adults) and work (4.3 million adults) were the two most frequently reported places of computer access. The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of adults accessing a computer from home (56%). The Northern Territory had the highest proportion of adults accessing a computer from work (52%).

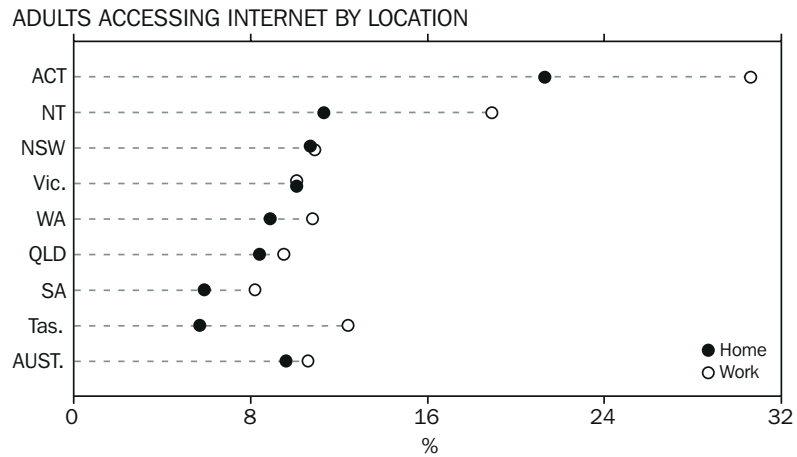
ADULTS ACCESSING COMPUTERS BY LOCATION



...for Internet access

Work was the most frequently reported place of Internet access (1.4 million adults) followed by home (1.3 million adults). Other places of Internet access collectively accounted for 1.7 million adults.

The Australian Capital Territory had the highest proportion of its adults accessing the Internet from home and work, (21% and 31% respectively). The ranking of the other States and Territories is shown in the following chart.



Barriers to adults using existing home computing facilities

Just over 1.6 million adults did not use the computing facilities already in their households; 56% were female (896,000 persons).

'Not interested' and 'lack of confidence' were the two most frequently reported main reasons (39% and 24% respectively). The reason 'no time' was also important, with 18% of these adults reporting this as the main reason.

Both males and females identified 'not interested', 'lack of confidence' and 'no time', as the main reasons for not using existing household computing facilities.

1

HOUSEHOLDS FREQUENTLY USING A COMPUTER(a)

State/Territory	Feb-May 1998		Feb-May 1996
	'000	%	%
New South Wales	792	35.0	30.8
Victoria	642	38.2	31.5
Queensland	440	34.6	29.0
South Australia	194	34.1	30.0
Western Australia	229	35.1	27.7
Tasmania	49	26.2	23.3
Northern Territory	*19	*41.2	*37.4
Australian Capital Territory	62	55.6	48.5
Australia	2 425	35.8	30.4

(a) Frequently using a computer defined as once a week or more.

2

MAIN REASON FOR HOUSEHOLDS NOT HAVING A COMPUTER, FEB-MAY 1998

Main reason for not having a computer	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Costs are too high	363	227	209	97	120	37	*10	*11	1 073
Lack of interest in computers/no use for a computer	742	542	402	182	197	69	*10	*20	2 162
Other	219	169	115	65	61	*18	*5	*8	659
Don't know	*2	-	*6	*1	*2	-	-	-	*11
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Costs are too high	27.4	24.2	28.6	28.2	31.6	29.8	*38.7	*29.1	27.5
Lack of interest in computers/no use for a computer	55.9	57.8	54.9	52.8	52.0	55.5	*39.1	*50.3	55.4
Other	16.5	18.1	15.7	18.8	16.0	*14.5	*21.4	*20.6	16.9
Don't know	*0.2	-	*0.8	*0.2	*0.4	*0.2	*0.8	-	*0.3

3

USE OF PERIPHERAL IT EQUIPMENT, FEB-MAY 1998(a)

State/Territory	Printers	Character or image reader	CD-ROM	Modems	Digitally versatile discs
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
New South Wales	710	175	592	430	60
Victoria	574	106	473	291	64
Queensland	384	62	327	192	26
South Australia	174	25	137	83	*8
Western Australia	205	41	171	107	*16
Tasmania	42	*6	35	*20	*2
Northern Territory	*17	*3	*14	*9	*1
Australian Capital Territory	52	*8	45	36	*5
Australia	2 157	426	1 793	1 168	180
	%	%	%	%	%
New South Wales	89.6	22.0	74.7	54.3	7.5
Victoria	89.4	16.6	73.6	45.3	9.9
Queensland	87.5	14.1	74.3	43.6	5.9
South Australia	89.5	12.9	70.7	42.9	*3.9
Western Australia	89.5	17.9	75.0	46.8	*6.9
Tasmania	86.4	*12.4	72.4	*42.6	*4.4
Northern Territory	*89.6	*14.0	*73.5	*46.3	*4.3
Australian Capital Territory	84.3	*13.7	72.2	57.9	*7.5
Australia	89.0	17.6	73.9	48.2	7.4

(a) Relates only to households frequently using a home computer.

4

HOUSEHOLDS WITH MODEMS(a)

State/Territory	Feb-May 1998		Feb-May 1996
	'000	%	%
New South Wales	430	54.3	26.7
Victoria	291	45.3	22.0
Queensland	192	43.6	23.6
South Australia	83	42.9	22.2
Western Australia	107	46.8	26.2
Tasmania	*20	*42.6	*11.8
Northern Territory	*9	*46.3	*24.6
Australian Capital Territory	36	57.9	31.1
Australia	1 168	48.2	24.3

(a) Relates only to households frequently using a computer.

5

HOUSEHOLDS OWNING/PAYING FOR SELECTED COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES, FEB-MAY 1998

<i>Selected technologies</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>Aust.</i>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Computer	829	664	448	200	245	55	*18	65	2 524
Fixed telephone connected	2 078	1 574	1 183	516	592	169	38	99	6 249
Facsimile machine	380	231	207	72	110	*15	*7	*24	1 048
Mobile phone	984	746	551	198	269	57	*20	52	2 877
Car phone	128	95	84	*20	*25	*4	*1	*7	365
Cordless phone	676	486	335	183	198	47	*10	36	1 972
Answering machine	728	624	384	176	234	41	*12	51	2 251
Pager	71	55	46	*18	*21	*7	*2	*5	224
Voice mail	207	171	118	44	58	*9	*5	*15	626
Pay TV(a)	202	206	180	61	35	*2	*6	*4	694
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Computer	36.6	39.4	35.3	35.1	37.6	30.1	*40.4	58.2	37.2
Fixed telephone connection	91.8	93.5	93.2	90.8	90.9	92.0	83.8	88.6	92.2
Facsimile machine	16.8	13.7	16.3	12.7	16.9	*8.41	*15.7	*21.7	15.5
Mobile phone	43.5	44.3	43.4	34.9	41.2	30.8	*44.5	46.8	42.5
Car phone	5.7	5.7	6.6	*3.5	*3.9	*2.3	*2.8	*6.3	5.4
Cordless phone	29.9	28.8	26.4	32.2	30.4	25.7	*22.3	32.8	29.1
Answering machine	32.2	37.1	30.2	31.0	36.0	22.6	*26.9	46.3	33.2
Pager	3.1	3.3	3.6	*3.1	*3.2	*3.6	*4.7	*4.9	3.3
Voice mail	9.1	10.1	9.3	7.8	8.9	*4.8	*10.1	*13.1	9.2
Pay TV(a)	8.9	12.2	14.2	10.7	5.3	*1.1	*12.9	*3.2	10.2

(a) Pay TV services are not widely available in all areas of Australia.

6

HOUSEHOLDS ACCESSING THE INTERNET FROM HOME, FEB-MAY 1998

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
New South Wales	347	15.4
Victoria	233	13.9
Queensland	147	11.6
South Australia	58	10.2
Western Australia	77	11.8
Tasmania	*15	*8.0
Northern Territory	*6	*13.6
Australian Capital Territory	30	26.6
Australia	913	13.5

7

MAIN REASON FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH COMPUTERS NOT HAVING HOME INTERNET ACCESS(a)

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>Costs are too high</i>	<i>Lack of interest in Internet</i>	<i>Insufficient capacity/need to upgrade computer</i>	<i>Adequate access outside home</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Total</i>
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
New South Wales	168	167	70	34	144	*4	587
Victoria	157	152	38	37	119	*11	513
Queensland	117	107	38	30	82	*14	388
South Australia	60	41	*15	*10	36	*4	165
Western Australia	65	43	26	*11	47	*3	196
Tasmania	*14	*11	*5	*6	*9	*1	45
Northern Territory	*5	*4	*2	*2	*2	–	*14
Australian Capital Territory	*12	*11	*5	*7	*8	–	43
Australia	597	536	199	137	447	38	1 952
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
New South Wales	28.7	28.4	11.9	5.8	24.5	*0.8	100.0
Victoria	30.5	29.7	7.4	7.2	23.1	*2.1	100.0
Queensland	30.1	27.5	9.7	7.8	21.2	*3.7	100.0
South Australia	36.2	24.6	*9.0	*6.3	21.8	*2.2	100.0
Western Australia	33.1	22.1	13.5	*5.8	23.9	*1.6	100.0
Tasmania	*29.9	*23.1	*11.8	*12.8	*19.9	*2.6	100.0
Northern Territory	*32.1	*25.4	*14.1	*11.9	*15.8	*0.9	100.0
Australian Capital Territory	*28.9	*26.2	*10.9	*15.3	*18.2	*0.7	100.0
Australia	30.6	27.4	10.2	7.0	22.9	2.0	100.0

(a) Feb–May 1998.

8

HOUSEHOLDS INTENDING TO PURCHASE/UPGRADE A COMPUTER(a)(b)

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
New South Wales	381	16.8
Victoria	314	18.6
Queensland	191	15.0
South Australia	75	13.2
Western Australia	109	16.8
Tasmania	*25	*13.8
Northern Territory	*11	*23.3
Australian Capital Territory	28	25.0
Australia	1 133	16.7

(a) Relates to all households.

(b) By Feb–May 1999

9

HOUSEHOLDS INTENDING TO CONNECT TO THE INTERNET(a)(b)

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
New South Wales	148	25.2
Victoria	143	27.9
Queensland	95	24.5
South Australia	36	21.6
Western Australia	51	26.2
Tasmania	*9	*20.7
Northern Territory	*5	*32.7
Australia Capital Territory	*12	*28.1
Australia	499	25.6

(a) Relates only to households with a computer.

(b) By Feb–May 1999.

10

PERSONS FREQUENTLY USING A COMPUTER AT HOME(a)

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>Feb–May 1998</i>		<i>Feb–May 1996</i>	
	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
New South Wales	1 723	30.2	1 356	23.7
Victoria	1 356	32.3	919	24.7
Queensland	919	29.6	392	24.6
South Australia	392	29.0	506	24.7
Western Australia	506	31.3	108	23.2
Tasmania	108	25.1	*40	19.2
Northern Territory	*40	*31.5	134	*32.3
Australian Capital Territory	134	48.7	5 178	38.0
Australia	5 178	30.8	3 464	24.3

(a) Percentages are of all persons aged 5 years and over.

11

PERSONS FREQUENTLY USING A HOME COMPUTER(a)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Feb–May 1998</i>		<i>Feb–May 1996</i>	
	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>%</i>
5–9 years	468	35.6	763	30.0
10–14 years	763	58.2	482	47.0
15–17 years	482	62.9	1 714	46.7
All children 5–17 years	1 714	50.5	40.3	
18–24 years	634	35.0	1 307	28.3
25–39 years	1 307	31.0	1 220	22.9
40–54 years	1 220	32.1	303	25.4
55 years and over	303	8.5	3 464	7.2
All adults	3 464	25.8	20.2	

(a) Percentages are of all persons in each age group.

12

HOME COMPUTER ACTIVITIES OF PERSONS 5 YEARS AND OVER, FEB-MAY 1998(a)

Activity	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Playing computer games	1 000	796	528	219	293	64	*24	72	2 995
Learning/study activities	962	770	511	224	280	67	*22	70	2 908
Work related activities	664	529	338	150	189	*39	*17	61	1 987
Keeping personal or family records/ correspondence	500	461	306	137	164	*41	*16	55	1 680
Internet based activities	470	302	218	86	111	*21	*9	*47	1 264
Accessing other online services/databases/ bulletin boards (other than via Internet)	133	77	*40	*20	*27	*8	*2	*13	320
Other	*34	*28	*36	*11	*13	*3	*1	*6	132
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Playing computer games	58.1	58.7	57.4	55.7	57.9	59.5	*59.2	53.7	57.9
Learning/study activities	55.9	56.8	55.7	57.1	55.4	62.4	*55.4	52.2	56.2
Work related activities	38.6	39.0	36.8	38.4	37.3	*36.5	*41.5	45.4	38.0
Keeping personal or family records/ correspondence	29.0	34.0	33.3	34.9	32.3	*38.2	*39.7	41.3	32.5
Internet based activities	27.3	22.3	23.7	21.8	22.0	*19.5	*23.4	*35.4	24.4
Accessing other online services/databases/ bulletin boards	7.7	5.7	*4.3	*5.2	*5.3	*7.2	*5.6	*9.9	6.2
Other	*2.0	*2.1	*3.9	*2.8	*2.6	*2.6	*1.9	*4.8	*2.6

(a) Relates only to persons frequently using a home computer.

13

HOME COMPUTER ACTIVITIES OF CHILDREN FREQUENTLY USING A HOME COMPUTER(a)

Activity	5-9 years of age		10-14 years of age		15-17 years of age		All children age 5-17 years	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
	FEB-MAY 1998							
Playing computer games	433	92.6	666	87.3	353	73.1	1 452	84.7
Learning/study activities	306	65.5	674	88.3	449	93.2	1 430	83.5
Keeping personal or family records/ correspondence	*10	*2.2	60	7.9	58	12.0	129	7.5
Internet based activities	*17	*3.7	142	18.6	98	20.3	257	15.0
Accessing other online services/databases/ bulleting boards (other than via Interent)	*2	*0.3	*19	*2.4	*22	*4.6	*42	*2.5
Other	-	-	*1	*0.1	*8	*1.6	*9	*0.5
	FEB-MAY 1996							
Playing computer games	336	87.8	521	89.3	275	76.2	1 133	85.3
Learning/study activities	254	66.4	478	82.0	312	86.4	1 045	78.7
Keeping personal or family records/ correspondence	*4	*1.1	*15	*2.6	*23	*6.3	*42	*0.5
Internet based activities	-	*0.1	*14	*2.4	*21	*5.7	*35	*2.6
Accessing other online services/databases/ bulleting boards (other than via Interent)	*1	*0.2	-	*0.1	*9	*2.5	*10	*0.8
Other	*8	*2.0	*5	*0.8	*6	*1.5	*18	*1.3

(a) Percentages are of all children in age group frequently using a home computer.

14

ADULTS ACCESSING A COMPUTER OR INTERNET(a)(b)

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
ACCESSING A COMPUTER									
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Home	1 524	1 247	824	348	431	88	*35	121	4 618
Work	1 475	1 068	775	291	468	105	*47	111	4 339
Other	1 108	1 079	745	328	413	101	*34	103	3 912
Any site	2 478	1 957	1 420	580	784	179	65	167	7 630
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Home	33.3	36.9	33.6	31.9	33.9	26.0	*38.6	55.9	34.4
Work	32.3	31.6	31.6	26.7	36.8	30.9	*52.1	51.1	32.3
Other	24.2	31.9	30.3	30.0	32.6	29.9	*38.1	47.5	29.2
Any site	54.2	57.9	57.8	53.2	61.8	52.9	72.1	76.9	56.9
ACCESSING THE INTERNET									
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Home	490	343	206	65	113	*19	*10	*46	1 292
Work	501	341	234	89	137	*42	*17	66	1 427
Other	528	471	280	131	183	*43	*12	56	1 704
Any site	1 138	903	545	217	325	77	29	115	3 348
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Home	10.7	10.1	8.4	5.9	8.9	*5.7	*11.3	*21.3	9.6
Work	10.9	10.1	9.5	8.2	10.8	*12.4	*18.9	30.6	10.6
Other	11.6	13.9	11.4	12.0	14.4	*12.8	*13.6	25.6	12.7
Any site	24.9	26.7	22.2	19.9	25.6	22.7	31.9	52.8	25.0

(a) Period covers 12 months to Feb-May 1998.

(b) Proportions are of all persons 18 years and over.

15

MAIN REASON WHY ADULTS ARE NOT USING EXISTING HOUSEHOLD COMPUTER, FEB-MAY 1998

Main reason	Males		Females		Persons	
	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%
Not interested	269	38.0	352	39.3	621	38.7
No time	110	15.5	175	19.6	285	17.8
Not permitted	*2	*0.2	*6	*0.7	*8	*0.5
Have access elsewhere	60	8.4	77	8.6	137	8.6
Lack of confidence/skill	189	26.6	189	21.1	378	23.5
Other	69	9.7	84	9.4	153	9.5
Don't know	*11	*1.5	*12	*1.3	*23	*1.4
Total	709	100.0	896	100.0	1 604	100.0

EXPLANATORY NOTES

POPULATION SURVEY MONITOR

1 During 1996 and 1998, the Population Survey Monitor (PSM) carried questions on the household use of Information Technology in its February and May surveys. From the fully responding households, details on the home use of technology were obtained from each household. Statistics presented in this publication are estimates averaged over the February and May surveys for each year.

DATA COLLECTED

2 For the 1996 and 1998 surveys data was collected on a number of topics relating to the use and ownership of information technology in the home. For the 1998 surveys some data was also collected on use of selected IT (computers and the Internet) outside of the home for adults (persons 18 years and over).

IT data **3** In this publication data is presented on the following:

For households:

- presence of a computer in the home;
- frequency of use of the home computer;
- use of peripheral information technologies (modems, printers, etc);
- ownership of selected communication technologies, i.e. facsimile machines, mobile phones, car phones, cordless phones, answering machines, pagers, voice mail and pay TV;
- home Internet access;
- barriers to computer use and Internet use (1998 only for Internet);
- intentions to purchase computers;
- intentions to acquire Internet access (1998 only);

For persons:

- frequent use of computers in the home;
- home computer activities;
- use of computers outside the home (for adults in 1998 only);
- use of the Internet outside the home (for adults in 1998 only), and
- barriers to the use of the existing home computer (for adults in 1998 only).

Household data **4** In addition to gathering data on the use of IT, the surveys collected data on the characteristics of the household. These characteristics are:

- number of persons aged 18 years and over in household;
- household income;
- household family classification;
- dwelling structure;
- nature of occupancy;
- region; and
- State

Persons data **5** The surveys also provide population statistics classified by:

- age;
- sex;
- marital status;
- birthplace;
- highest educational qualification;
- income;
- labour force status;
- occupation; and
- major activity of those people not in the labour force.

HOUSEHOLD

6 A household is defined as a group of one or more persons in a private dwelling who consider themselves to be separate from other persons in the dwelling, and who make regular provision to take meals separately from other persons. Lodgers who receive accommodation and meals are not treated as separate households. A household may consist of any number of family and non-family members.

ACCURACY OF DATA

7

As the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample drawn from households in the surveyed population, the estimates are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all households in Australia had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely differences is given by the standard error, which indicates the extent to which an estimate might have varied by chance because only a sample of households was included. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all households had been included in the survey, and about 19 chances in 20 that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

ACCURACY OF DATA

8 The standard errors for some statistics are relatively high and users are advised to exercise caution in interpreting these statistics. Estimates with relative standard errors of 25% or more had been footnoted. The following table of standard errors is for data on the number of households and persons using selected information technology.

<i>Size of estimate</i>	<i>Standard error for persons 18+ Feb & May 1998</i>	<i>Standard error for households Feb & May 1998</i>
<i>'000</i>	<i>'000</i>	<i>'000</i>
100	13.9	9.4
200	18.7	12.6
500	27.2	17.8
800	32.6	20.9
1 000	35.6	22.8
1 500	40.3	26.2
2 000	45.6	29.6

Example using the standard error table

9 Consider an estimate from the data of 1,952,481 households which had a home computer but no Internet access. An estimate of 2,000,000 households has a standard error of 29,600. This means there are about two chances in three that the true value (i.e. the value that would have been obtained from a complete census) is within the range 1,922,881 to 1,982,081 households. There are about 19 chances in 20 that the true value is in the range 1,893,281 to 2,011,681 households.

Acknowledgment

10 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated: without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

11 Other ABS publications on the production and use of information technology and telecommunication goods and services in Australia are:

Business Use of Information Technology, 1993–94 (Cat. no. 8129.0)

Household Use of Information Technology, February 1998
(Cat. no. 8128.0)

Household Use of Information Technology, Australia 1996
(Cat. no. 8146.0)

Information Technology in Australia, 1995–96 (Cat. no. 8126.0)

Information Technology, Australia, Preliminary, 1995–96
(Cat. no. 8143.0)

Telecommunications Services, Australia, Preliminary, 1996–97
(Cat. no. 8148.0)

Use of the Internet by Householders, February & May 1998
(Cat. no. 8147.0)

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