

**DRAFT ONLY NOT FOR PUBLICATION**

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## Blogs and podcasts fail to make an impact

The latest internet-based communication techniques have yet to make much of an impact on UK business, according to monthly internet surveys by The University of Nottingham Institute for Enterprise and Innovation (UNIEI).

The surveys found that blogs and podcasts – both of which have seen exponential growth in recent years – are still rarely used for business purposes by people running small and medium-sized firms, and by those who advise them.

Among those responding to the latest UK Business Barometer (UKBB), 60 per cent said they ‘never’ accessed blogs or podcasts for business purposes and a further 21 per cent said they only did so ‘very rarely’. The same question was asked of the panel of business advisers in its sister survey the UK Business Adviser Barometer (UKBAB), with similar results: 77 per cent of respondents accessed them ‘very rarely’ or ‘never’ as a business aid.

However, the surveys did find that the internet is being exploited in other ways by businesspeople. The most popular way of monitoring competitors’ prices is now via websites – stated by 44 per cent of respondents as their preferred option. This was almost twice as many as the next most popular option, using trade journals and specialist magazines.

The latest pair of surveys also quizzed business owners with some questions that looked at the effect of the changing seasons and the weather. Many respondents to the survey agreed that worker productivity was affected by SAD – Seasonal Affective Disorder, a mood disorder associated with episodes of depression and related to the reduction in daylight during the winter months.

Some 42 per cent of the businesspeople responding to the survey agreed that SAD affected productivity and could lead to ‘presenteeism’ – where affected employees do not take sick leave but work at lower levels of concentration and productivity.

When questioned on the merits of daylight saving, opinion was divided with half the respondents advocating a permanent change to the British clock. In all, 26 per cent said the country should move to British Summer Time and stay with it all year round, while 24 per cent advocated adopting Central European Time. Only 16 per cent were content with the status quo, while the remaining 34 per cent had no strong preference.

The UKBB and UKBAB are run by The University of Nottingham and operate over the web to generate very rapid results. The surveys have unique software that enables results to be processed and posted on their respective websites immediately they arrive.

The survey results are published monthly and more information, including a press pack, can be found on the web at [www.ukbb.ac](http://www.ukbb.ac) and [www.ukbab.ac](http://www.ukbab.ac) Businesses and advisers wishing to contribute as panellists on the project should visit the appropriate Business Barometer website to register.

— Ends —

Notes to editors: The University of Nottingham is Britain's University of the Year (The Times Higher Awards 2006). It undertakes world-changing research, provides innovative teaching and a student experience of the highest quality. Ranked by Newsweek in the world's Top 75 universities, its academics have won two Nobel Prizes since 2003. The University is an international institution with campuses in the United Kingdom, Malaysia and China.

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