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Coverage
United Kingdom
Theme
The Economy

Value of Internet sales doubles in 2003

The value of businesses' Internet sales rose to £39.5 billion in 2003, more than double the 2002 figure of £19 billion. This is according to experimental statistics from the annual e-commerce survey, published today by the Office for National Statistics (see background note 1).

The results of the 2003 survey reflect an increase in the value of trade over all kinds of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) across all sectors of the economy, and by businesses of all sizes.

Other key findings of the survey include:

- Sales over non-Internet ICTs, such as Electronic Data Interchange, e-mail, PC based fax and automated telephone entry, also rose, but more modestly, from £170.8 billion to £195.6 billion (15 per cent). This represented £83 of every £100 sold over all kinds of ICTs.
- Internet sales as a proportion of all ICT sales rose from £10 per £100 in 2002 to £17 per £100 in 2003.
- Internet purchases rose by 113 per cent, from £18.7bn to £39.9bn in 2003.
- For every £100 worth of sales over the Internet, £67 was spent on physical products; for every £100 worth of purchases over the Internet, £78 was spent on physical products.
- The value of Internet sales to households rose to £11.4 billion in 2003 from £6.4 billion in 2002.

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BACKGROUND NOTES

1. Estimates in this release relate to the non-financial sector.
2. The survey results can be found on the National Statistics website at: www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=6645.
3. Some 12,000 firms were questioned on ICT usage in the survey, now in its fourth year.
4. The definition of e-commerce has been agreed by the OECD and the European Union. It is the method by which the order is placed which determines whether a transaction is e-commerce - not the payment or delivery channel.
5. The 2002 estimates of electronic trading have been revised as a result of updated estimates provided by businesses.
6. The first stage results of the 2003 e-commerce survey were published on 3 November 2004. This dealt with the use of Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) by UK business.
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