

Microsoft touts early feedback on Bing

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The number of people that used [Bing](#) in June for online searches was eight percent higher than the number that used its predecessor, MSN Live, in the same month last year, according to Microsoft.

Meanwhile, figures released in recent weeks by industry analytics firms reveal mixed data, leaving it unclear whether Bing is doing much to close the gaps with Yahoo! and [Internet search](#) king [Google](#).

California-based Google's regal share of the US online [search market](#) was approximately 74 percent, stats from Compete indicate.

Yahoo! remains the second most popular [search engine](#) with about 16 percent of the US market, and Bing is third with 6.5 percent, according to Compete.

Other Internet-tracking firms report different figures, with the ranking remaining constant but conflicts emerging as to whether Bing is gaining, holding, or losing ground.

"It's really too early to tell how Bing is doing; the numbers are really mixed," said Danny Sullivan, editor-in-chief at SearchEngineLand.com, a website devoted to developments in the industry.

"Microsoft does deserve to pat itself on its back a bit. They do seem to have had some lift but it is not an extraordinary amount. An increase in visitors is not surprising given the marketing they are doing."

Microsoft is reportedly spending 80 to 100 million dollars marketing Bing but has not publicly disclosed its promotional budget.

"We're gratified to report that there has been some great interest in trying out Bing and that those experiences are yielding positive results," Microsoft senior vice president of Online Audience Business Group Yusuf Mehdi said in an online posting.

"It's been a busy month, but we're just getting started. We have a long term view, and we are committed to steady progress over the years to come."

June is the first full month the Bing "decision engine" has been live.

[Microsoft](#) said Bing is aimed at online shoppers and will initially focus on helping people make buying decisions, plan trips, research health matters, or find local businesses.

For example, people using Bing to shop online will automatically be provided product reviews, and those planning trips will get information regarding travel bargains.

Mehdi said visits to Bing Travel surged 90 percent in June and that traffic to Bing Shopping tripled during the month.

Some analysts believe Bing is more likely to lure users away from Yahoo! than Google, which is woven into people's lives so thoroughly that the company's name is used as a verb to express the act of searching the Internet.

"The next big goal for Bing is not to beat Google, but to beat Yahoo!," Sullivan said. "If they can't get to number two, then getting past there is much harder."

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