

Americans not fans of online targeted ads: survey

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The survey by the Pew Internet & American Life Project also found that the vast majority of Internet search users -- 83 percent -- use Google, up from 47 percent in 2004.

Just six percent of those surveyed said they use Yahoo! search the most often, down from 26 percent in 2004. Three percent said they use Microsoft's Bing search engine.

While 91 percent of those surveyed said they find the [information](#) they are looking for all of the time or most of the time, a majority of Internet users frown on targeted advertising or personalized search results.

Sixty-eight percent of those surveyed said they are "not okay" with [targeted advertising](#) because they do not like having their online behavior tracked and analyzed.

Twenty-eight percent said they do not have a problem with it because it means they see ads and information about things they are interested in.

Seventy-three percent said they would not be okay with a search engine keeping track of their searches and using that information to personalize future search results because they see it as an [invasion of privacy](#).

Twenty-three percent were okay with the practice.

Sixty-five percent said it is a bad thing if a search engine collects information about their searches and then used it to rank future search results, because it may limit what results they see.

Twenty-nine percent said they are OK with the practice because it provides search results that are more relevant.

"Search engines are increasingly important to people in their navigation of information spaces, but users are generally uncomfortable with the idea of their search histories being used to target information to them," said Kristen Purcell, the author of the report.

"A clear majority of searchers say that they feel that search engines keeping track of search history is an invasion of [privacy](#), and they also worry about their [search results](#) being limited to what's deemed relevant to them," Purcell said.

The release of the Pew report comes amid a debate over privacy online and changes by Google, which makes most of its money from search-related ads, to its privacy policies and data-collection methods.

The [survey](#) of 2,253 adults was conducted between January 20 and February 19 and has a margin of error of plus or minus two percentage points.

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