

Baidu edges ahead in Chinese online market

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A man walks past the Chinese web search giant Baidu's headquarters in Beijing. Baidu further strengthened its dominance of the Chinese Internet market in the fourth quarter at the expense of US rival Google, according to research firm Analysys International.

Search engine Baidu further strengthened its dominance of the Chinese Internet market in the fourth quarter at the expense of US rival Google, a research firm said Wednesday.

Baidu's share of the increasingly lucrative sector hit 75.5 percent in the last three months of the year, compared with 73 percent in the third quarter, Beijing-based Analysys International said in a statement.

Google saw its share of the Chinese [search market](#), which is the world's largest, continue to slide, falling to 19.6 percent in the fourth quarter from 21.6 percent in previous period.

The value of the Chinese search market reached 3.85 billion yuan (\$585 million) in the fourth quarter, nearly doubling from a year earlier, the data showed.

China's online population increased 19.1 percent in 2010 to 457 million users, with nearly 82 percent of them using search engines, according to the state-backed China Internet Network Information Centre.

[Baidu](#) has seen its market share increase steadily this year following Google's public spat with Beijing over censorship.

In March, Google said it would no longer bow to government censors and effectively shut down its Chinese search engine, automatically re-routing mainland users to its uncensored site in Hong Kong.

But it ended the automatic redirect in June to avoid having its licence suspended by China.

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