

RESEARCH REPORT

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NAMB Web Site Survey

Robert A. Rennie

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Robert (Bob) Reccord, President and CEO

Mobilization & Media Group

Nate Adams, Vice President

Research Services

Phil Jones, Director

Marilynn Kelly, Administrative Secretary
(770)410-6386

Richie C. Stanley, Strategic Information Researcher

Bob Rennie, Marketing Researcher

Paulette Villarreal, Information Specialist

Introduction

During December 2001, an online survey was conducted among visitors to the North American Mission Board (NAMB) Web site. The purpose of this survey was 1) to determine the ease of use or functionality of the NAMB Web site; 2) to determine what resources were being sought by the visitors; and 3) for visitors to rate the aesthetic quality or look of the Web site.

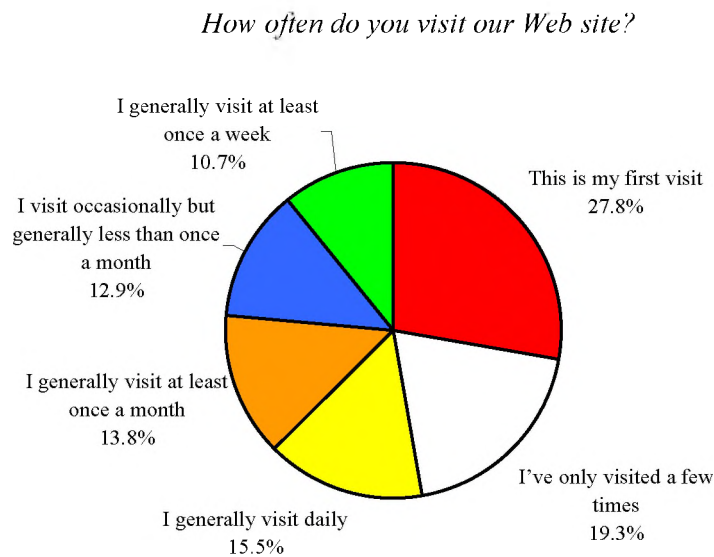
The survey was designed to be a 500-response quota. Once a visitor had logged onto the Web site, a “pop-up” window appeared asking the visitor to participate in the survey. Data was automatically captured and placed in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet as respondents completed the questionnaire. The number of refusals, or those visitors who elected to not participate, were tallied.

There were 551 respondents who completed the questionnaire from a total of 4,721 visitors who were asked to participate. Therefore, 4,170 persons visiting the Web site refused to participate. The response rate was 11.7 percent. While the response rate is low, it is not out of line with a first wave of a mailed survey. Since the response rate is low, it should be noted that these respondents may not be representative of the typical visitor to NAMB’s Web site.

Analysis of Findings

The complete questionnaire and frequencies for each question are available in Appendix A. The following analysis is a digest from that data. Appendix B contains respondents’ comments when the “other” option was selected. These comments are listed following the question they represent.

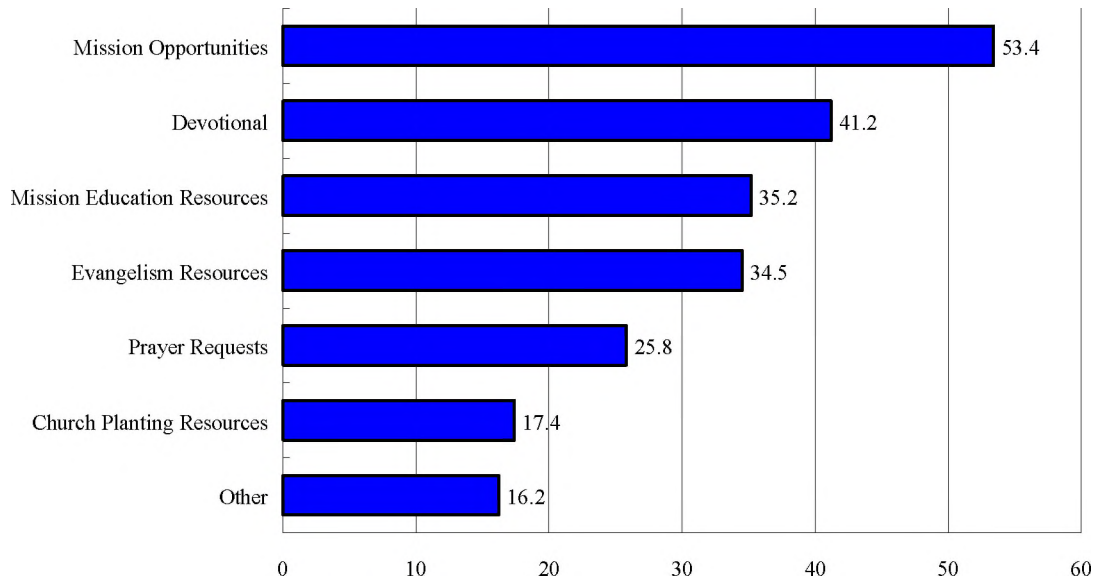
The first question asked the respondent how frequently they visited NAMB’s Web site. About 1 in every 4 (27.8%) respondents stated that this was their first visit to the site. Another 1 in every 4 respondents (26.2%) could be classified as frequent visitors—those who visited the site either weekly or daily. The following chart gives the breakdown by visitor category.



As evident in the chart above, the first-time visitor represents the largest category of respondents. Most other respondents are fairly well distributed across frequency of visit categories.

What areas of the Web site the respondents most often visited was an important issue with this survey. A general question asked,

Which of the following areas of our Web site have you visited?



It should be good news that these respondents were most often looking for mission opportunities. The Web site may become an even more valuable tool as people are able to find various places of mission service. The second area most often visited was related to finding devotional material. A major ministry area of the North American Mission Board is starting churches; however, these respondents were not often looking for church planting resources. This may be more a reflection of the fact that most of the respondents are laypeople and not pastors or church staff.

When asked what their most favorite areas of the Web site are, nearly one-third (32.2%) of respondents chose the devotional area. Another one-fourth (26.2%) chose mission opportunities area as their favorite. Devotionals and mission opportunities were also the top two choices of respondents when asked what is their second favorite area of the Web site.

An additional, clarifying question asked, *“Which of the following best describes why you generally visit our Web site?”* This follow-up question attempted to find specifically why these visitors were searching the NAMB Web site. Again, the respondents were consistent. One-fourth of respondents simply wanted the Henry Blackaby devotionals.

Navigating the NAMB Web Site

An important area addressed in the survey was the ease of use of the Web site. A series of questions focused on the mechanics of navigating the site. The first general question simply asked, *“How easy is it to find what you want on our Web site?”* Nearly half (46.1%) of respondents reported that it was very easy to find what they wanted. Almost 9 of 10 respondents (88.9%) felt that finding what they wanted on the site was either very easy or somewhat easy. Only 2.2 percent of respondents felt that negotiating the Web site was very difficult or they could never find what they needed.

Respondents were asked to rate the Web site. Eight of 10 respondents (80.8%) felt the Web site was extremely helpful or very helpful. Overall, less than 2 percent of respondents reported the Web site was not helpful.

Nearly all (94.3%) respondents felt the Web site was attractive. Slightly more than two-thirds (67.3%) of respondents reported the Web site was very attractive. These high marks reflect favorably on the job the Web Design Team has done in creating a site that is aesthetically pleasing.

About one-third (31.9%) of respondents found the Web site by using a search engine. More than one-quarter (28.1%) became aware of the site through their church. Finding the Web site from an advertisement was reported by less than 6 percent of respondents. Considering the number of publications that include advertisements produced by NAMB, this latter number seems low.

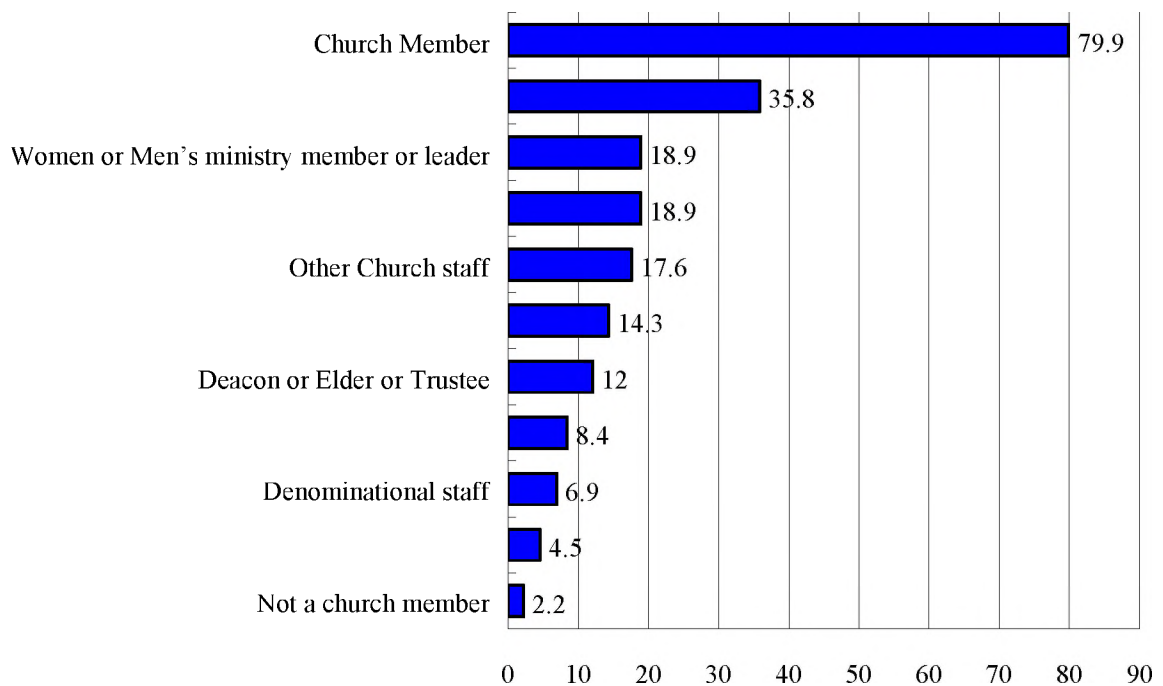
When asked about how they access the Internet, nearly two-thirds of respondents reported using a phone dial-up connection. About 3 of 10 respondents used a faster cable modem or DSL connection. Given the type of connection primarily used, these respondents are probably not sophisticated Web surfers. As NAMB evaluates how best to use the Web site, it may be beneficial to allow visitors to choose a less graphic-intensive presentation in order to speed up their connect time.

Demographics of Respondents

The respondents were evenly divided between male (50.5%) and female (49.5%) visitors. Nearly two-thirds (62.9%) of all respondents are under the age of 44. Slightly less than half of that total (or 29.6 percent of all respondents) is age 34 or younger. The age distribution of respondents 35 years and older follows fairly closely to the age distribution of adults age 35 and older enrolled in Sunday School.

Nearly 9 of every 10 respondents (85.5%) are Southern Baptist. About 8 of every 10 classified themselves simply as a church member. Slightly more than one-third of these respondents are either Sunday School teachers or leaders. Only 14.3 percent of respondents were pastors. The following chart gives a breakdown of classifications. The number do not total to 100 percent since a person could be classified in multiple categories.

Which of the following church-related descriptions fit you?



Summary

NAMB's presence on the World Wide Web is a useful tool. It provides another avenue where Southern Baptist can find information about missions. In general these respondents were able to find the information they were seeking. Mostly, this involved accessing devotional resources and a desire to find information regarding mission opportunities.

It should not be overlooked that these respondents may not be sophisticated Web users. Most respondents still use a dial-up connection, which limits how fast the site will load on their computers. Given this information it may be necessary to provide various formats to allow faster Web site loading times.

While respondents were likely to be occasional or even first time users this may really be a function of the survey itself. Regular users may simply have refused the survey when it appeared while the new user may have been more willing to participate in the survey. Overall, the respondents reported the Web site was attractive and easy to use.