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Suruhanjaya Komunikasi dan Multimedia Malaysia
Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission

Statistical Brief Number Eight

Hand Phone Users Survey 2008

Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission, 2010

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from the

chairman

Mobile cellular telephones, or hand phones as they are popularly referred to in Malaysia, have come a long way. Introduced to the country in the eighties, it was destined to be a vital communication tool. In 1991, the number of hand phones was 130,000 and by end-Q2 2009, it grew at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 37.32% with 28,545,000 and still growing.

In fact, when the SKMM Hand Phone Users Survey 2008 (HPUS 2008) was conducted, the mobile cellular penetration rate, hand phone penetration rate if you like, was poised to breach the 100% mark. Today at release date the penetration rate stands at 100.8 and all indications are that it will touch 104% by close of 2009.

These numbers usher in a correspondingly heavier responsibility on the part of the regulator; to promote a civil society, industry growth, consumer protection and efficient allocation of resources.

With the rapid growth and adoption of mobile telecommunications, I welcome the commitment by our mobile phone industry leaders to boost wireless capacity as well as services and product innovation in order to service a growing number of hand phone users in the country.

All these call for in-depth knowledge not only of the industry but also of hand phone users; their experiences vis-à-vis their expectations, their preferences and emerging trends. The SKMM HPUS has provided for these remarkably well, over the years beginning from 2004; from the SKMM CATI Centre, that started as a humble 20-seater which grew to the 50-seater that it has become today. An article about the centre can be found on page 31 of this publication.

To the statisticians at SKMM, well done yet again.

Mohamed Sharil Tarmizi

Acting Chairman / Chief Operating Officer
Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission

introduction

The Hand Phone Users Survey, 2008 is the fifth in the series of purpose built surveys conducted by the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (SKMM). The main objective of this survey is to estimate the proportion of hand phone users who fall into the various classes of the categorization schemes of the key variables.

These proportions and the population estimates at reference date when used correctly yield the various penetration rates.

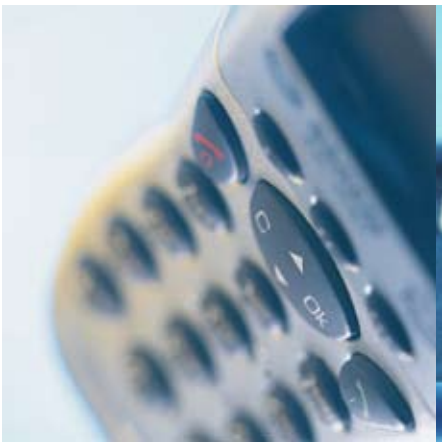
The survey probed demographics and socioeconomics of the hand phone user such as:

- nationality
- gender
- age
- usual state of residence
- income;

as well as other hand phone user trends and usage.

In 2008, these include:

- payment plan
- monthly charges incurred
- SMS usage
- MMS usage
- unsolicited SMS received per week
- Internet access through the hand phone
- participation in TV programs; and
- awareness of Mobile TV



TARGET POPULATION

The target population includes all main users of hand phones on all digital platforms in the states and territories making up the Federation of Malaysia. These were the main users of the 012, 013, 014, 016, 017, 018, 019 networks. Both postpaid and prepaid users were covered.

REFERENCE DATE AND COVERAGE OF THE SURVEY

The reference date of the survey was set at 31 March 2008. The survey was canvassed using a CATI system and operated out of SKMM's CATI centre located at Wisma Pahlawan in Kuala Lumpur. Fieldwork started on 1 August 2008 and ended on 19 September 2008.

The survey achieved 81.7% of planned sample size. No complaints were received either through the press, SKMM hotline or through the hand phone service providers.

METHODOLOGY

The sample size was planned at 4,925 units ($\alpha = 0.01$ and $d = 0.02$). There was only one stage of sample selection as the survey adopted a simple random sample (SRS) approach. Meaningful stratification was not possible because a suitable variable for stratification was not available.

As at 31 March 2008, there were 24,253,000 hand phone subscriptions on the 7 digital networks operating in the country. The survey also determined that as high as 22.9% of hand phones had the same main user and this was netted out to transfer the estimates from the survey, to a 'user' rather than 'subscription' basis.

METHOD OF ADMINISTERING THE INSTRUMENT

The questionnaire was administered by CATI. Trained interviewers call up main users of selected hand phone numbers to seek their cooperation. Answers given to pre-coded questions were clicked in while open ended answers were typed in.

Calls were make from 10.00 pm to 6.00 pm on weekdays and 10.00 am to 9.00 pm on weekends.

main findings

Core Variables

Core variables of the Hand Phone Users Survey are variables that are canvassed every round so as to enable the monitoring of key indicators in mobile telephony. At end March 2008, there were 24,253,000 hand phone subscriptions covering both Malaysians and non-Malaysians. The population in Malaysia at that point of time was 27,590,000. This give a hand phone penetration rate of 87.9%

Note that in all tables in this report, percentages may not add up to 100.0 because of rounding.

Nationality

The survey found that in 2008, 89.6 percent of hand phone users are Malaysians while 10.4 percent of hand phone users are non–Malaysians.

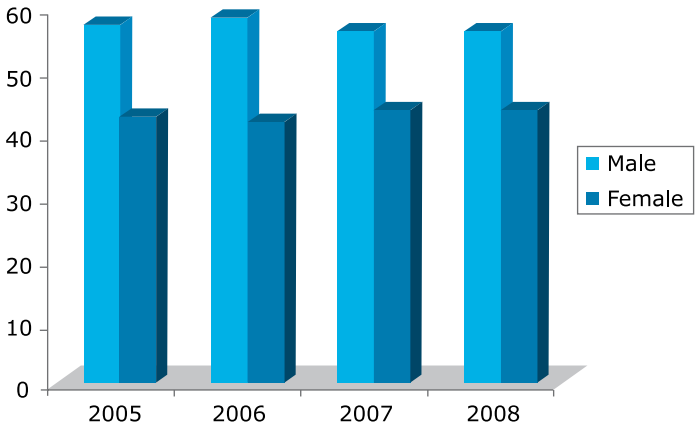
Results from the 2008 and earlier surveys show a steady growth in the non-Malaysian segment.

Nationality	Percentage share of hand phone user base			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Malaysian	93.7	92.5	90.3	89.6
Non-Malaysian	6.3	7.5	9.7	10.4

Gender

Survey results show that males make up 56.3 percent while females, 43.7 percent of users. This echoes the results in earlier surveys as shown in the table below.

Gender	Percentage share of hand phone user base			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Male	57.4	58.3	56.4	56.3
Female	42.6	41.7	43.6	43.7



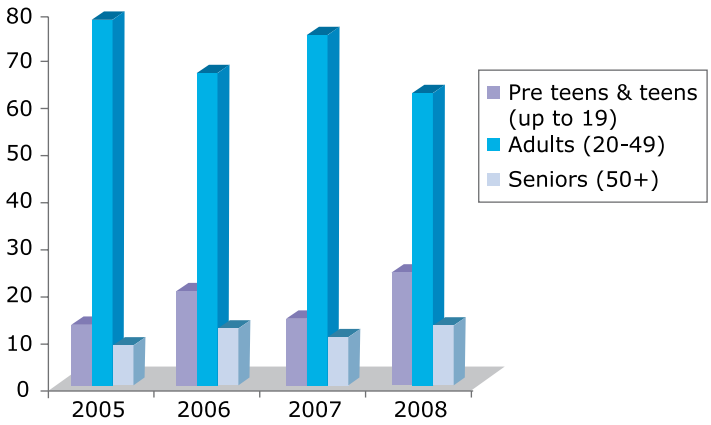
Age distribution

As expected, the hand phone user base continues to be characterized by its youthfulness. The highest number of hand phone users are in the '15-19' age group which accounts for 19.9 percent of all users in 2008. The second largest group of hand phone users is the '20-24' age group which accounts for 16.0 percent. The smallest groups of users are those below 15 year of age. Within this age group are those in the primary and secondary school up to PMR level. Although the '50 and above' group has more hand phone users than the '35-39', '40-44' and '45-49' age groups preceding it, it must be remembered that this is an open ended age group.

Age	Percentage share of hand phone user base			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Below 15	1.6	2.5	2.4	4.5
15 - 19	11.5	12.4	12.1	19.9
20 - 24	20.9	20.1	19.9	16.0
25 - 29	16.2	15.2	17.1	13.4
30 - 34	15.0	13.8	14.4	11.3
35 - 39	10.1	10.6	9.1	8.0
40 - 44	9.7	9.7	8.7	8.4
45 - 49	6.3	6.6	5.7	5.4
Above 50	8.7	9.1	10.5	13.1

Put into broad generational groups the percentage shares are as follows :-

Generational group	Percentage share of hand phone user base			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Pre teens & teens (up to 19)	13.1	20.5	20.9	24.4
Adults (20-49)	78.2	66.8	66.8	62.5
Seniors (50+)	8.7	12.6	12.3	13.1

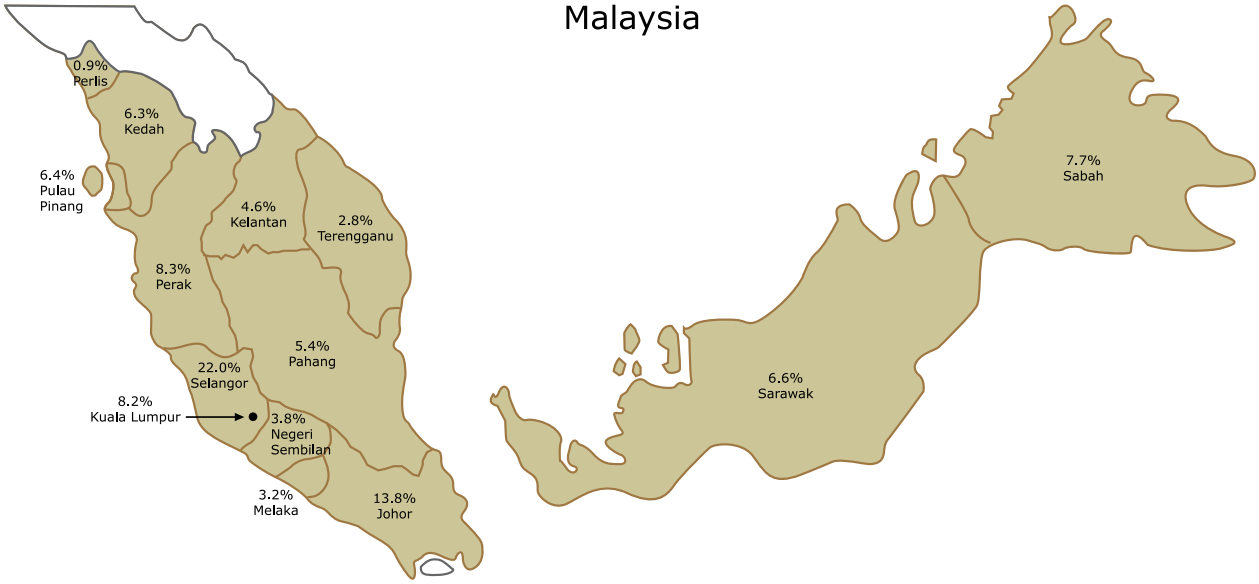


Usual state of residence

The survey shows that Selangor has the largest share of hand phone users. This has been true since 2004 when the HPUS started. In 2008, Selangor recorded 22.0 percent (including Federal Territory of Putrajaya), while Johor came in second with 13.8 percent. This is followed by Perak, 8.3 percent and Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur 8.2 percent.

Sabah (including Federal Territory of Labuan) has 7.7 percent. Among other states, Sarawak, Pulau Pinang, and Kedah have shares between 6.0 to 7.5 percent, while Pahang, Kelantan, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Terengganu have shares between 2.5 to 5.5 percent.

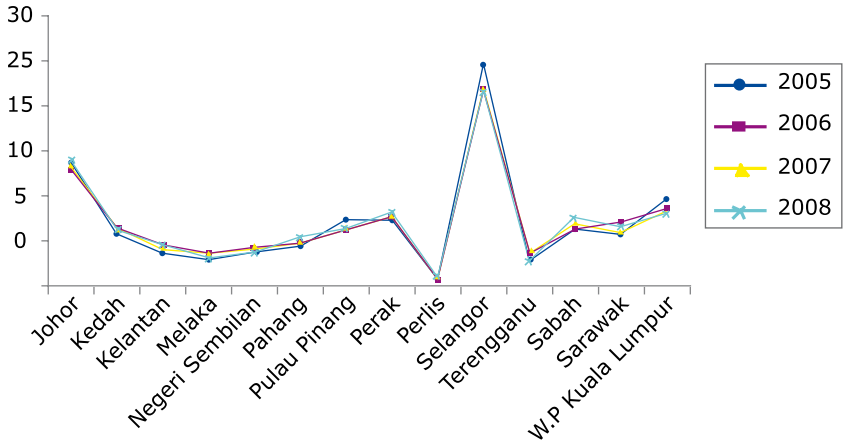
Perlis, has only 0.9 percent.



Usual state of residence	Percentage share of hand phone user base			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Johor	13.7	13.0	13.5	13.8
Kedah	5.9	6.6	6.6	6.3
Kelantan	3.7	4.6	4.2	4.6
Melaka	3.0	3.7	3.7	3.2
Negeri Sembilan	3.9	4.3	4.2	3.8
Pahang	4.5	4.8	5.1	5.4
Pulau Pinang	7.4	6.4	6.5	6.4
Perak	7.3	7.7	7.8	8.3
Perlis	0.8	0.9	0.8	0.9
Selangor*	24.7	21.7	22.1	22.0
Terengganu	2.9	3.8	3.7	2.8
Sabah**	6.4	6.4	7.1	7.7
Sarawak	5.9	7.1	6.1	6.6
F.T Kuala Lumpur	9.7	8.6	8.6	8.2

* including F.T Putrajaya ** including F.T Labuan

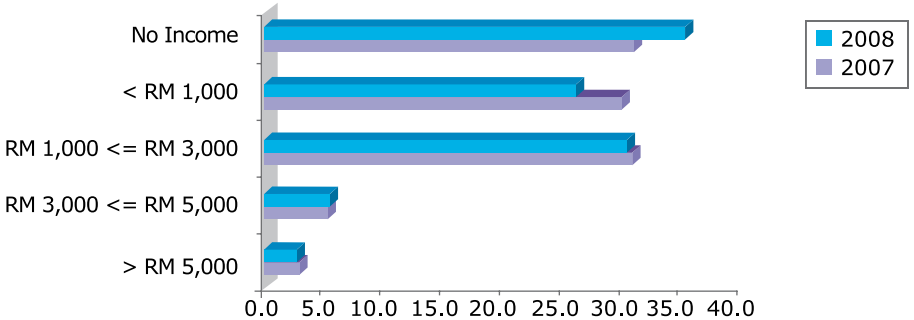
The graph below shows the consistent pattern that emerges in each survey round.



Monthly income category

Among hand phone users, 26.2 percent had incomes below RM1,000, 30.3 percent had incomes between RM1,000 and RM3,000, 5.5 percent reported monthly incomes ranging from RM3,000 to RM5,000, 2.7 percent had incomes in excess of RM5,000 while 35.3 percent had no income. This group includes retirees, housewives, students and unemployed persons, who in all likelihood are supported in whole or in part by other household members with income.

Monthly income category	Percentage of hand phone user base	
	2007	2008
No Income	31.0	35.3
< RM1,000	29.9	26.2
RM1,000 <= RM3,000	30.8	30.3
RM3,000 <= RM5,000	5.3	5.5
> RM5,000	3.0	2.7



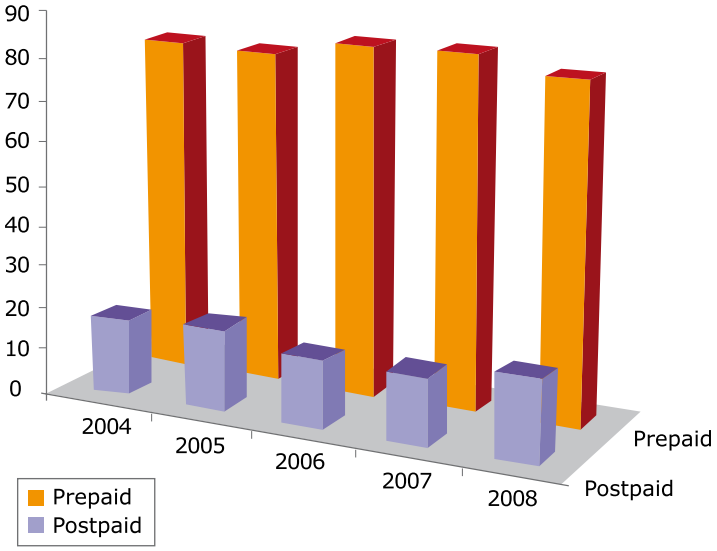
User Trends and Experiences

This section of the survey probes into current trends and issues in the use of hand phones and the experiences of hand phone users.

Payment plan

Prepaid users outnumber postpaid ones 80 to 20. This has been a persistent finding since 2004.

Payment plan	Percentage share of hand phone user base				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Prepaid	81.4	80.4	84.1	83.9	80.5
Postpaid	18.6	19.6	15.9	16.1	19.5



Monthly charges incurred

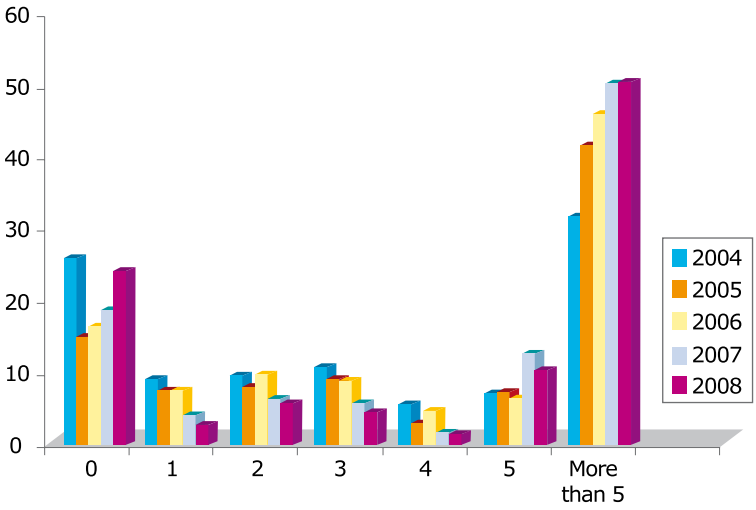
50.6 percent of hand phone users do not incur more than RM50 charges per month, while 29.8 percent spend between RM50 and RM100. 8.6 percent spend between RM100 and RM150 followed by 4.8 percent between RM150 and RM200. Only 6.2 percent had charges over RM200.

Monthly charges incurred	Percentage share of hand phone user base
	2008
< RM50	50.6
RM50 <= RM100	29.8
RM100 <= RM150	8.6
RM150 <= RM200	4.8
> RM200	6.2

SMS Usage

As many as 24.3 percent of hand phone users reported that they are not regular SMS users. At the other end as many as 50.7 percent reported an average of more than 5 SMS per day on average. This represents an increase of 0.3 percentage points from 2007.

SMS per day	Percentage share of hand phone user base				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
0	25.9	15.1	16.4	18.8	24.3
1	9.1	7.6	7.5	4.1	2.8
2	9.7	8.1	9.9	6.5	5.8
3	10.8	9.2	9.0	5.9	4.6
4	5.6	3.0	4.7	1.7	1.5
5	7.2	7.4	6.4	12.7	10.4
More than 5	31.7	41.8	46.1	50.4	50.7



MMS Usage

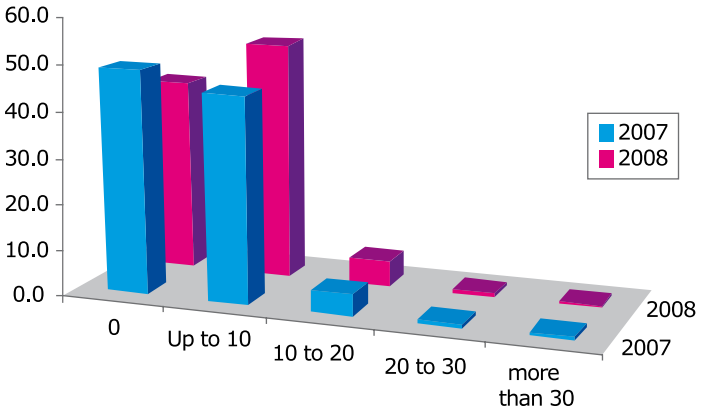
MMS usage has not caught in a big way among users. 89.9 percent of users said that they do not send any MMS while 9.0 percent of hand phone users send 1 to 5 MMS per day. Only 1.1 percent send more than 5 MMS per day.

MMS per day	Percentage share of hand phone user base
	2008
0	89.9
1	3.9
2	2.3
3	1.2
4	0.2
5	1.4
More than 5	1.1

Unsolicited SMS

58.2 percent of users say that they received unsolicited SMSes while on the other hand, 41.7 percent of hand phone users say they did not. A more detailed indication is given below:

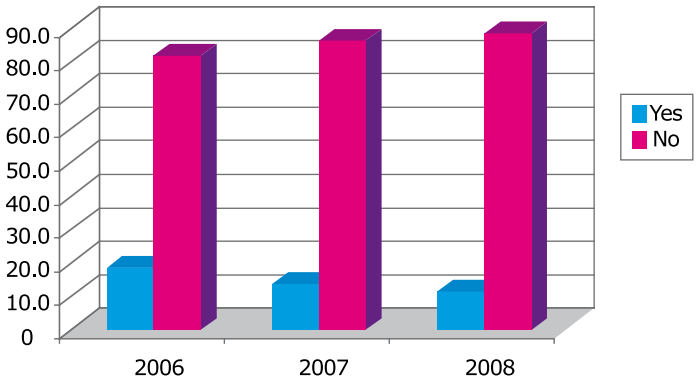
Unsolicited SMS per week	Percentage share of hand phone user base	
	2007	2008
0	48.7	41.7
Up to 10	44.9	51.5
10 to 20	4.7	5.5
20 to 30	0.9	0.7
More than 30	0.8	0.5



Internet access using hand phones

In 2008, 11.5 percent of those interviewed say that they accessed the Internet through their hand phones while 88.5 percent say they did not. This continues the decline from the proportion observed in 2006.

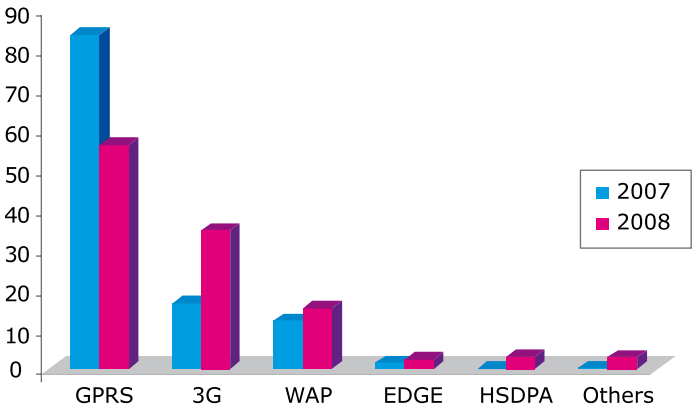
Internet access	Percentage share of hand phone user base		
	2006	2007	2008
Yes	18.4	13.7	11.5
No	81.6	86.3	88.5



GPRS continues to be the main access to the Internet for hand phone users with 56.6 percent despite a sharp drop from the 84.4 percent recorded for 2007. 3G had a following of 35.0 percent compared to the 16.5 percent of a year ago. EDGE was reported by 2.4 percent users while HSDPA garnered 3.0 percent.

Types of Internet access	Percentage share of those who accessing Internet through hand phones	
	2007	2008
GPRS	84.4	56.6
3G	16.5	35.0
WAP	12.1	15.3
EDGE	1.5	2.4
HSDPA	-	3.0
Others	0.2	2.8

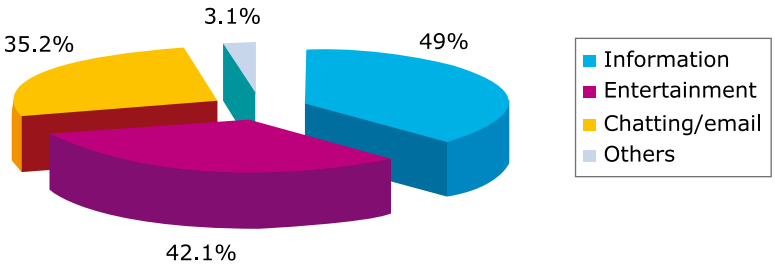
Multiple response question



Activities on the Internet through hand phones included search for information (49.0 percent) followed by entertainment (42.1 percent), chatting/email (35.2 percent) and others (3.1 percent).

Activities on the Internet through hand phone	Percentage share of those who accessing Internet through hand phones
	2008
Information	49.0
Entertainment	42.1
Chatting/email	35.2
Others	3.1

Multiple response question



Participation in TV programs

Only 6.2 percent of hand phone users participated in TV programs using their hand phones.

Participation in TV programs	Percentage share of hand phone user base
	2008
Yes	6.2
No	93.8

Among those who participated in TV programs, 83.6 percent reported participation in the form of voting. Game shows came in second and had 15.6 percent of hand phone users participating in it. These are followed by donations, chat shows and contests.

Type of participation	Percentage share of those who participate in TV programs
	2008
Voting	83.6
Game shows	15.6
Chat shows	3.2
Contests	2.8
Donations	5.2
Others (Download)	1.2

Multiple response question

Regardless of form of participation, 76.4 percent of hand phone users are willing to spend up to RM10 each time through their SMSes, 20.8 percent between RM10 and RM50, 1.2 percent between RM50 and RM100 and 1.6 percent, more than RM100.

Willing to spend	Percentage share of those who participate in TV programs
	2008
< RM10	76.4
RM10 <= RM50	20.8
RM50 <= RM100	1.2
> RM100	1.6

55.6 percent reported that they will participate again, while 44.4 percent said they will not.

Will participate again	Percentage share of those who participate in TV programs
	2008
Yes	55.6
No	44.4

Among those who would participate again, the 4 biggest factors cited were as follows:

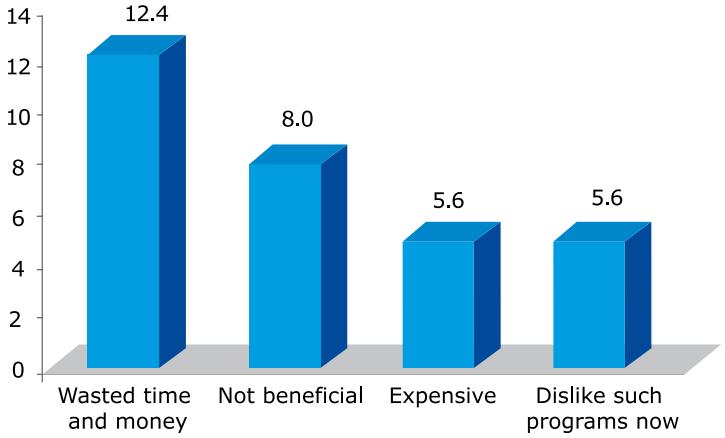
Factors spuring participation	Percentage share of those who would participate again
	2008
Interesting content and an opportunity to give encouragement to contestant	33.6
Sympathy votes	9.2
Fun	3.6
Chance to donate	3.2

A total of 15 factors were mentioned.
Multiple response question

Among the 44.4 percent who said that they will not participate again, the main four reasons cited were that it wasted time and money (12.4 percent), was not beneficial (8.0 percent), was expensive (5.6 percent) and that a dislike for such program has now developed in them (5.6 percent).

Reason for not wanting to participate again	Percentage share of those would not participate again
	2008
Wasted time and money	12.4
Not beneficial	8.0
Expensive	5.6
Dislike such programs now	5.6

Multiple response question



Awareness of mobile TV

Only 35.0 percent of hand phone users reported awareness of mobile TV.

Awareness of mobile TV	Percentage share of hand phone user base
	2008
Yes	35.0
No	65.0

tables

Caution is required in the use of the estimates tabulated below.

While SKMM takes every care to minimize non-sampling errors, which cannot be quantified, the estimates presented are also subjected to sampling error, which is a measure of the chance variation that occurs because a sample, and not the entire population is canvassed. The sampling error of an estimate is usually expressed as a percentage of that estimate to give the relative sampling error (RSE) of that estimate.

In general, estimates that are small are subjected to high RSEs. As a guide, only estimates with RSEs of 25 percent or less are considered reliable for general use. Estimates with RSEs greater than 25 percent but less than or equal to 50 percent are denoted with an asterisk in these tables and should be used with caution while those with RSEs greater than 50 percent are denoted by two asterisks and are considered too unreliable for general use. However these estimates may be aggregated with others until an RSE of less than 25 percent is obtained.

Confidence intervals for very small estimates should be based on the binomial distribution rather than the normal approximation to the binomial. As an alternative, the method of Korn and Graubard, 1998 may also be used.

Percentages may not add up to 100.0 percent because of rounding.

Table 1 : Nationality

	Percent	RSE
Malaysian	89.6	0.5
Non-Malaysian	10.4	4.6

Table 2 : Gender

	Percent	RSE
Male	56.3	1.4
Female	43.7	1.8

Table 3 : Age

	Percent	RSE
Below 15	4.5	9.3
15 -19	19.9	4.2
20 -24	16.0	3.3
25 -29	13.4	3.6
30 -34	11.3	4.0
35 -39	8.0	4.9
40 - 44	8.4	4.8
45 -49	5.4	6.1
Above 50	13.1	4.4

Table 4 : Usual state of residence

	Percent	RSE
Johor	13.8	4.0
Kedah	6.3	6.1
Kelantan	4.6	7.2
Melaka	3.2	8.7
Negeri Sembilan	3.8	8.0
Pahang	5.4	6.6
Pulau Pinang	6.4	6.0
Perak	8.3	5.2
Perlis	0.9	16.4
Selangor	22.0	3.2
Terengganu	2.8	9.3
Sabah	7.7	5.5
Sarawak	6.6	5.9
W.P. Kuala Lumpur	8.2	4.7

Table 5 : Income

	Percent	RSE
No income	35.3	2.1
<RM1000	26.2	2.7
RM1000 <= RM3000	30.3	2.4
RM3000 <= RM5000	5.5	6.6
>RM5000	2.7	9.5

Table 6 : Payment plan

	Percent	RSE
Prepaid	80.5	0.8
Postpaid	19.5	3.2

Table 7 : Monthly charges

	Percent	RSE
< RM50	50.6	1.6
RM50 <=RM100	29.8	2.4
RM100<= RM150	8.6	5.1
RM150<= RM200	4.8	7.0
> RM200	6.2	6.1

Table 8 : SMS sent per day

	Percent	RSE
0	24.3	2.8
1	2.8	9.3
2	5.8	6.4
3	4.6	7.2
4	1.5	12.8
5	10.4	4.6
More than 5	50.7	1.6

Table 9 : MMS sent per day

	Percent	RSE
0	89.9	0.5
1	3.9	7.9
2	2.3	10.4
3	1.2	14.2
4	*0.2	33.3
5	1.4	13.4
More than 5	1.1	14.5

Table 10 : Unsolicited SMS received per week

	Percent	RSE
0	41.7	1.9
Up to 10	51.5	1.5
10 to 20	5.5	6.5
20 to 30	0.7	18.2
More than 30	0.5	22.3

Table 11 : Use of hand phone to access Internet

	Percent	RSE
Yes	11.5	4.4
No	88.5	0.6

Table 12 : Mode of hand phone access to Internet

	Percent	RSE
GPRS	56.6	4.1
3G	35.0	6.3
WAP	15.3	11.0
EDGE	*2.4	30.0
HSDPA	*3.0	26.3
Others	*2.8	27.3

Multiple response question

Table 13 : Activities on the Internet

	Percent	RSE
Information	49.0	4.7
Entertainment	42.1	5.5
Chatting / email	35.2	6.3
Others	3.1	22.5

Multiple response question

Table 14 : Participation in TV programme

	Percent	RSE
Yes	6.2	6.1
No	93.8	0.4

Table 15 : Types of TV programme

	Percent	RSE
Voting	83.6	2.8
Game shows	15.6	14.7
Chat shows	*3.2	34.8
Contests	*2.8	37.3
Donations	*5.2	27.0
Others (Download)	**1.2	57.4

Multiple response question

Table 16 : Willingness to spend on TV programme

	Percent	RSE
< RM10	76.4	3.5
RM10 <=RM50	20.8	12.3
RM50<= RM 100	**1.2	57.4
> RM100	*1.6	49.6

Table 17 : Willingness to continue participation in TV programme

	Percent	RSE
Yes	55.6	5.7
No	44.4	7.1

Table 18 : Factors spuring participation

	Percent	RSE
Interesting content and an opportunity to give encouragement to contestant	33.6	8.9
Sympathy votes	9.2	20.0
Fun	*3.6	32.7
Chance to donate	*3.2	34.7

Multiple response question

Table 19 : Reason for not wanting to participate again

	Percent	RSE
Wasted time and money	12.4	14.2
Not beneficial	8.0	21.4
Expensive	5.6	26.0
Dislike such programs now	5.6	26.0

Multiple response question

Table 20 : Awareness of mobile TV

	Percent	RSE
Yes	35.0	2.2
No	65.0	1.2

The SKMM CATI Centre

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SKMM's Computer Assisted Telephone Interview Centre has been instrumental in making available key C&M statistics beyond the basics since 2004. Koay Hock Eng takes us behind the scenes.

Before 2004, all statistics pertaining to C&M, be it cellular mobile penetration rate or Internet penetration rate, were based on administrative records of the service providers. As service providers maintain only the barest of records, it is to be expected that indicators derived from these records were limited to the very basic national penetration rate and subscriber numbers. This is especially so in cellular mobile when prepaid mobile was at that point of time still unregistered. This was also the case in prepaid dialup Internet. Another weakness in relying on administrative records stems from multiple subscriptions to different or the same service providers by the same consumer leading to double counting. Needless to say, it is well-nigh impossible to even surmise at gender specific or urban and rural penetration rates.

As part of its regulatory functions, SKMM is obligated to monitor industry performance and report to the Minister of Energy, Water and Communications at the end of each financial year. Such reporting would undoubtedly include a statement of the state of play in each industry. But the industry has grown beyond the basics and for meaningful reporting, basic penetration rates at national level will no longer suffice. This is especially critical considering that SKMM oversees the equitable access to C&M across all social strata of society. Thus a need was felt for statistics and indicators beyond what is available from administrative records. Apart from this, SKMM has, from its inception, served as the authoritative public source of industry statistics in Malaysia; and public demands for data have also moved beyond basics. For these two reasons, SKMM had to embark on a proactive stance to collect data, particularly socio-economic data, directly from demand side to fill an increasing need; a need that cannot be filled by administrative records. In other words, SKMM had to start conducting its own surveys.

The need to do surveys was entrusted to the Research and Planning Division which is also the division responsible for knowledge resource and publications of SKMM. Within this division, the Statistics & Knowledge Resource Department was the department coordinating statistical activities and this function was subsequently expanded to include the conduct of surveys.

The method of choice for the conduct of surveys, taking SKMM's resources into consideration is the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI). This raised some concerns when it was first suggested, considering that the household penetration rate of fixed lines at that time was only around 52 percent, that of mobile cellular around 57 percent while that of Internet was only 11 percent. These concerns would be real if one were to do a conventional household survey as the low household penetration rate will not enable SKMM to reach a representative sample of households. However SKMM was not about to do a household survey. All it wanted was to reach out to households that had a fixed line (as opposed to all households) or individuals that had a hand phone (as opposed to all individuals) in order to collect socio-economic data as well as usage data from these groups. Estimates made from such surveys can then be combined with population estimates of relevant demographic segments to yield very specific

penetration rates. For example, the number of female hand phone users can be estimated from a CATI survey covering all hand phone users. Relate this to the number of females in the population at the same reference date and that would yield female mobile cellular penetration rate! The Internet households could also be reached, as at that point of time, Internet access was 99 percent dialup or ADSL. Both require a fixed line and that brings them within the reach of SKMM CATI Centre.

Advantages and disadvantages of CATI

Using CATI to conduct surveys has many advantages. Telephone interviews are a very cost efficient means for collecting data. It is a lot faster to contact people over the phone. Interviewers need only be at the CATI centre, meaning a lot of travelling time is cut because the interviewers would be able to move on to the next respondent almost immediately after finishing with one. Face to face interviews will cost far more and take up much travelling time.

Telephone surveys are also safer from all angles. The people being interviewed need not worry about opening their doors to strangers purportedly conducting a survey; interviewers too face less unpleasantness such as having doors slammed in their faces or having to contend with dogs! All interviews are carried out over the phone in the air-conditioned comfort of SKMM CATI Centre.

With the use of a CATI system, data can also be captured directly, going straight into secondary storage in the server or master PC. There is no need for data to be keyed in, in a separate exercise. In fact, when interviewers are on a CATI system, and provided it is a very simple survey that requires minimal data cleaning, the results can be available minutes after completing the last interview.

Skilled CATI interviewers can often elicit longer or more complete answers than people will give on their own through mail surveys for instance. Interviewers can also probe and seek clarification for unclear responses.

Telephone surveys do have disadvantages too. For example, many telemarketers have given legitimate research a bad name by claiming to be doing research when they start a sales call. Consequently, many people are reluctant to participate in telephone interviews.

Another problem is the growing number of households where both spouses work. This may mean that no suitable respondent is at home during the day. This limits calling time to, say, from 7 pm to 9 pm; not quite the ideal time as families would be settling down to dinner or watching prime time TV.

Phone surveys, of course, will also not work in cases where respondents are required to see or try new products such as new mobile phones.

Understanding a CATI system

A CATI centre goes beyond phones and people. CATI technology uses computers to automate the key activities of telephone interviewing. However, before this can happen the paper questionnaire will have to be scripted so that the system can read, understand and implement the logic behind the questionnaire.

A good CATI system can control the survey questionnaire that an interviewer will use. Interview questions are recalled in a predetermined sequence and displayed for each interviewer on a computer monitor. Interviewers read the questions to respondents and click in or enter answers provided by respondents. Most CATI systems can handle skips and pipe answers to one question into the text of another related question. For example, if based on an earlier answer, a question is to be skipped, the system will cause that particular question to be skipped taking it out of the hands of the interviewer. This improves internal consistency. Thus the system is intelligent enough to guide the interviewer through the questionnaire following the logical route set by the answers given by the respondent.

But interviewing is just a part of the CATI automation process. A good CATI system will also handle the administrative and telephony functions associated with surveys, such as sample management, productivity reporting, interviewer monitoring and rating, watch functions and voice capture. Phone calls and callbacks can be scheduled and an administrator can virtually decide what each interviewer will do for the day.

Arising from these functionalities, CATI centre administrators have at their finger tips accurate up to date reports on all aspects related to the smooth conduct of surveys.

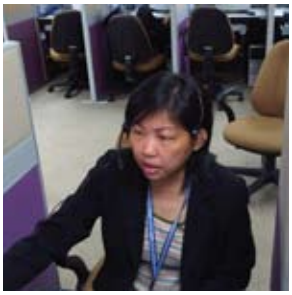
SKMM CATI Centre

SKMM CATI Centre was approved in January 2004 and became operational in July the same year, from Wisma SunwayMas, Shah Alam. It is a 20 seat CATI Centre powered by NIPO CATI Solution of Amsterdam and was established at a cost of RM 250,000. The first survey to roll out of SKMM CATI Centre was the SKMM Hand Phone Users Survey 2004 at a cost of RM 50,000. Considering the myriad penetration rates useful for tracking and monitoring as well as the trends in hand phone usage that it made available, the SKMM Hand Phone Users Survey 2004 fully justified its cost.

Since then, SKMM CATI Centre has not looked back; it has been playing a central role, gathering valuable data to meet the many needs of SKMM and other users.

Earlier this year SKMM CATI Centre moved to Wisma Pahlawan in Kuala Lumpur. The new centre was opened by the Chairman of SKMM on 19 April 2008.

SKMM CATI Centre combines state of the art technology and well trained personnel. SKMM CATI Centre utilizes a mixture of full time and part time staff. Full time staff include supervisors and administrators. These persons are given extensive training on the finer workings of the CATI solution. They are fully knowledgeable about creation and conduct of surveys. Regular training helps them keep abreast.



The actual interviewers are part-timers drawn from a pool of about 20 when SKMM CATI Centre first started. Over the years and after several recruitment drives and surveys the pool has now grown to around 60 trained interviewers. Most of them hold the SPM (equivalent to O-Levels) but increasingly, many have degrees under their belts. These interviewers receive extensive training. The training is split into three areas. They will first receive a full briefing on SKMM and its role in the industry. This is to ensure that they can answer questions on the organisation from respondents wanting to know who is behind the survey.

The interviewers will then undergo subject matter training for each survey, so that they understand fully the subject matter of that particular survey. They will know issues on the subject so that they understand the purpose and the intent of the survey. They will then be taken question by question through the questionnaire. Each term used is explained to them so that they can in turn explain to the respondents if required.

The most important training portion is the final one where they are trained on telephony and interviewing skills. Using an in-house manual, these interviewers are transformed into professionals trained to conduct surveys, minimizing refusals and maximizing completes. This entails sticking to a script, yet sounding conversational enough to evoke cooperativeness, probing and handling difficult respondents and dealing with just about any situation over a phone line. Training is complemented by mock sessions to further hone their skills.

When the SKMM launches a survey, the best interviewers from this pool are contacted and invited to take part in the survey. A refresher course is mandatory prior to beginning work. Their performance in each survey is monitored and evaluated. SKMM maintains very high standards in this area and interviewers who do not make the grade are dropped from its pool.

Every year SKMM CATI Centre carries out regularly scheduled surveys. Among the surveys held annually are the Hand Phone Users Survey and the Household Use of the Internet Survey. Respondents are chosen using a technique called Random Digit Dial (RDD). This technique yields a statistically representative sample from the target population. The surveys are designed to reveal the latest usage patterns as well as more specific penetration rates in mobile cellular and household Internet access respectively. Survey findings are normally published in the form of survey reports.

Many bodies, locally and internationally use the data compiled through the SKMM CATI surveys.

The SKMM CATI Centre has received widespread interest and it regularly receives delegations from bodies wanting to know more about its operations. Among others, the Universiti Islam Antarabangsa Malaysia and the Department of Statistics, Malaysia have paid visits. The centre has also received delegations from afar such as from Botswana and Brunei Darussalam.

glossary

Term	Descriptions
The hand phone	The hand phone is seen as a personal, rather than a household equipment. This is because hand phones are normally carried by their main users when they leave the house or office. When the hand phone rings at home, more often than not the person who answers it is the main user as calls received by that device are expected to be for him. (see also main user below)
The main user	The main user may or may not be the legal owner of the device. He may also not be the one who pays for the bills incurred as in the case of supplementary subscriptions and company subscriptions.
Age	Age referred to age as at last birthday.
Usual state of residence	Usual state of residence refers to the state where the respondent has a home and stayed continuously there for the past 6 months. If he has stayed for less than 6 months but knows beyond reasonable doubt that he will be there at least 6 months continuously, then he should be counted in that state. This is especially so in cases where the respondent has just been transferred in, prior to the interview taking place. If a respondent knows that he will be moving to another state shortly but has not done so yet at the time of the interview then he is not considered as a resident of the state where he is moving to. This is especially so in cases where the respondent has a notice of transfer but has not moved yet. Usual state of residence does not refer to the state where ancestral homes or kampungs are located.

	FOR MORE STATISTICS ...
WEBSITE	The SKMM website contains more statistics pertaining to the Communications and Multimedia industry. This is updated every quarter of the year. The SKMM website is at www.skmm.gov.my
STATISTICAL BULLETIN	The SKMM publishes the following publications : 1. Communications & Multimedia: Selected Facts & Figures (ISSN:1675-6223), a quarterly bulletin of the communications & multimedia industry. 2. Postal & Courier Services: Selected Facts & Figures (ISSN: 1823-9919) a half yearly bulletin of the postal & courier industry. Please contact the SKMM for more details or email statistics@skmm.gov.my
STATISTICAL BRIEF	The Statistical Briefs series (ISSN:1823-2523) is issued by the SKMM to disseminate survey findings and statistical updates. These briefs are aimed at the general to intermediate user audience. Titles in this series so far: Statistical Brief Number One - Hand Phone Users Survey 2004 Statistical Brief Number Two - Household Use of the Internet Survey 2005 Statistical Brief Number Three - Hand Phone Users Survey 2005 Statistical Brief Number Four - Hand Phone Users Survey 2006 Statistical Brief Number Five - Household Use Of Internet Survey 2006 Statistical Brief Number Six - Hand Phone Users Survey 2007 Statistical Brief Number Seven - Household Use of Internet Survey 2008 Statistical Brief Number Eight - Hand Phone Users Survey 2008 (this issue)
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