

Online Research in Russia

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An overview of research related activities in the field of online surveying and the computer-mediated communication that have been undertaken in Russia and in the former Soviet Union will be presented. The earliest research was performed in mid-eighties, before the access to global computer networks became available; research was restricted to the analysis of LANs users' activities. Beginning with 1992, systematic online surveying of the Russian-speaking Internet community members is undertaken. For several years surveying procedures were restricted to e-mail mode: questionnaires were sent to the sample members via e-mail and/or published in newsgroups. Beginning with 1998, web surveys have been undertaken as well. Several representative surveys of the Internet users' population have been carried on recently; the methods used are telephone polls and face-to-face interviews. Other methods used include marketing and formal experiments (i.e., DNSs testing to find out the number of unique active web-servers). The pros and cons of different methods and research directions will be discussed. Actual quantitative data describing the Russian segment of the Internet will be presented: some of the data refer to Summer, 1999, the rest to Winter, 1998/1999.

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