PSR Reviews

Internet Access Is Limited By Poor Web Designs

Over 23.1% of WEB inquiries fail

Recently, we have conducted studies of several industries and have discovered that almost one quarter of all requests for "commercial" Internet Web pages fail. This does, however, vary by industry with the textile/apparel industry being the least "robust." Out of 3,746 web requests, only 2,396 were completed successfully, leading to a failure rate of 36%.

Background

Three separate studies were conducted in the month of November. They covered the Banking industry (491 enterprises); the Textile/ Apparel industry (375 enterprises); and the Computer Hardware and Software industry (2,492 enterprises).

The intensive study examined on-line performance specifically relating to Internet site load speed, average access time, standard deviation, and URL reliability. The comprehensive study utilized specific METRICS that are statistically

Top Salary Ranges for IT Executives Soar

Salary ranges explode 15% over '96 as middle management stays flat

Positive Support Review (PSR) released the 1997 edition of its Management Information Services Compensation Study. The compensation (mean) for the top MIS executives was $292,000 for large companies (revenues over $500MM) and $226,000 for medium sized companies (revenues less than $500MM); huge increases compared with last year's $209,000 and $146,000, respectively. The top eight positions alone in large companies' highest salary range, rose by an average of 15% demonstrating an increase in perceived value for persons at the vice-president and director levels.

The salary ranges and averages for middle level and staff positions have grown during the last year, but nowhere near as dramatically. The flattening recovery and slower growth in the high technology sector is reflected in MIS compensation at the end of 1996, with the outlook not much better for 1997.
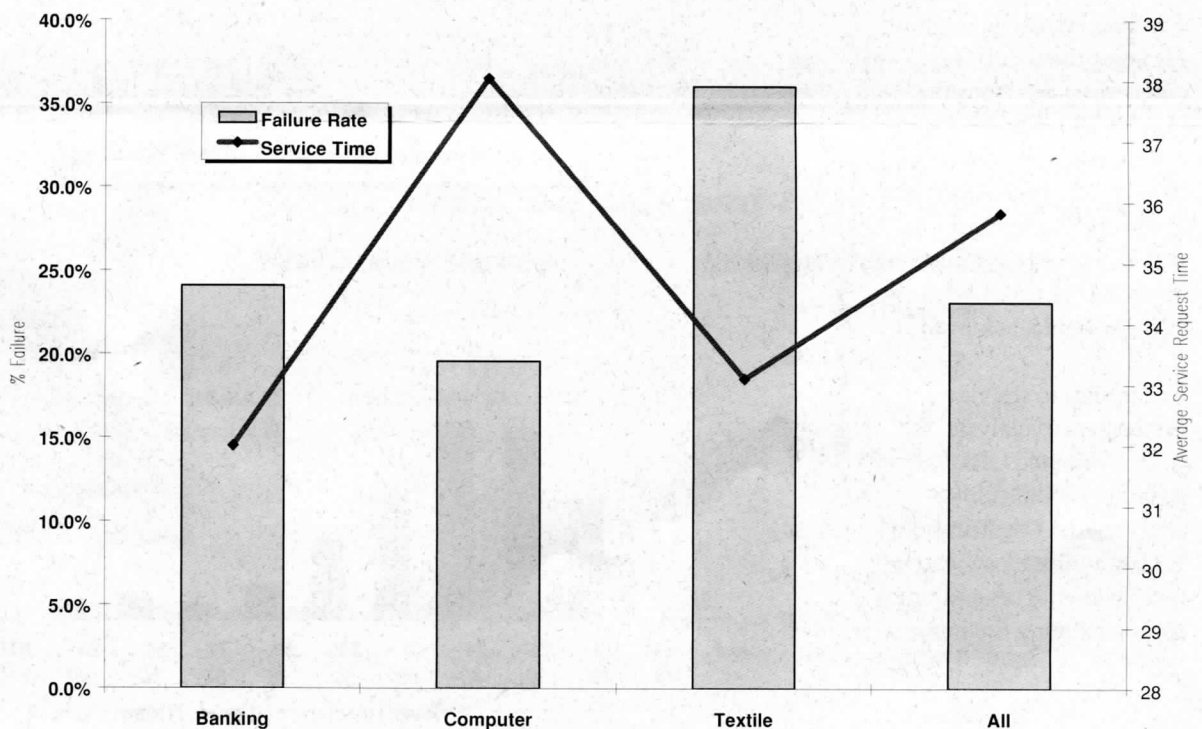
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100% Recycled Paper

Industry Summary

sound. The results showed, for the first time, a comparative analysis of industries and how they are doing business on the Internet.

The study found that the average enterprise providing Internet service had an average load speed of 37.1 seconds and that failures, most often, were due to factors caused by the designs selected by the enterprise web designers.
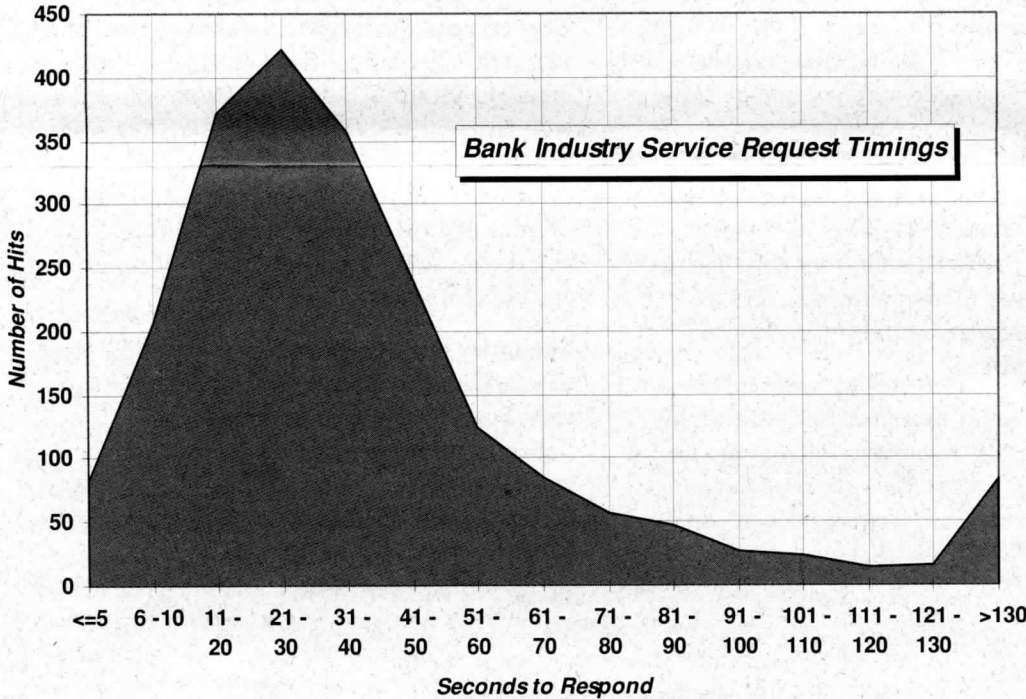
of incidents when the Web-site was not accessible. The study indicates that many of the surveyed enterprises have spotty availability.

Good News

There are a number of enterprises that know what they are doing on the Internet. One organization took the data from this study and redesigned their Web home page.
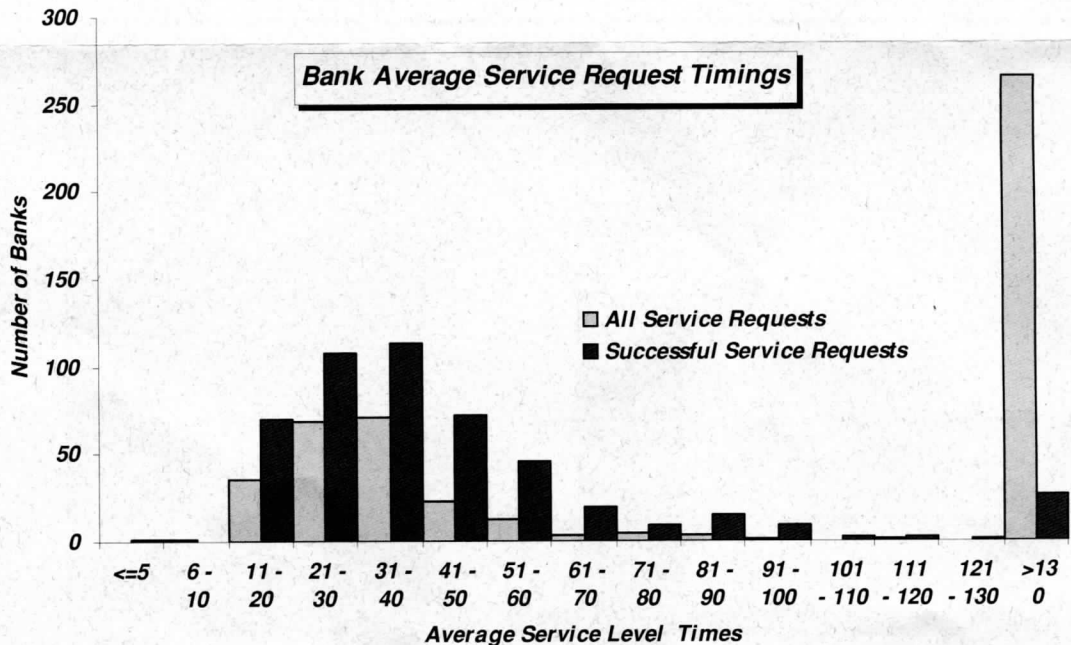
The results were amazing. The average service request time was originally at 32.5 seconds. With the redesign the average service request time was reduced to 9.6 seconds, over a 70% improvement. That was accomplished with the same content utilizing some techniques that we have perfected.

The value placed on this support function quickly appreciated within this enterprise. Soon other groups started to emulate this team approach. Senior management was so impressed that the scope of responsibility for this manager was increased.

The end result of this process was a significant improvement in the quality of service provided, as well as significantly lower attrition rates for all levels of the organization. Not a bad investment!!

Bank Industry Service Request Timings

Number of Hits (y-axis): 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300, 350, 400, 450

Seconds to Respond (x-axis): <=5, 6 -10, 11 - 20, 21 - 30, 31 - 40, 41 - 50, 51 - 60, 61 - 70, 71 - 80, 81 - 90, 91 - 100, 101 - 110, 111 - 120, 121 - 130, >130

The data revealed just how far apart the top 100 enterprises are from the bottom 100 of all industries. For example, in the banking industry, the average load speed for the bottom 100 was in excess of 2 minutes, more than 4 times what the top 100 Banks achieved.

In addition to the raw performance analysis, the study evaluated URL reliability. The study analyzed the Organizations' URL stability by accessing their Web-site several times and calculating the number

Bank Average Service Request Timings

Number of Banks (y-axis): 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250, 300

☐ All Service Requests
■ Successful Service Requests

Average Service Level Times (x-axis): <=5, 6 - 10, 11 - 20, 21 - 30, 31 - 40, 41 - 50, 51 - 60, 61 - 70, 71 - 80, 81 - 90, 91 - 100, 101 - 110, 111 - 120, 121 - 130, >130
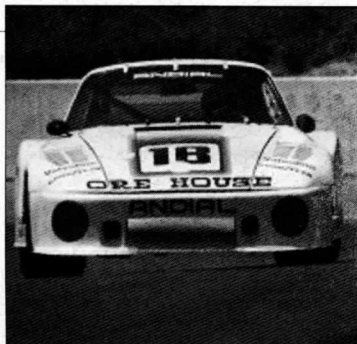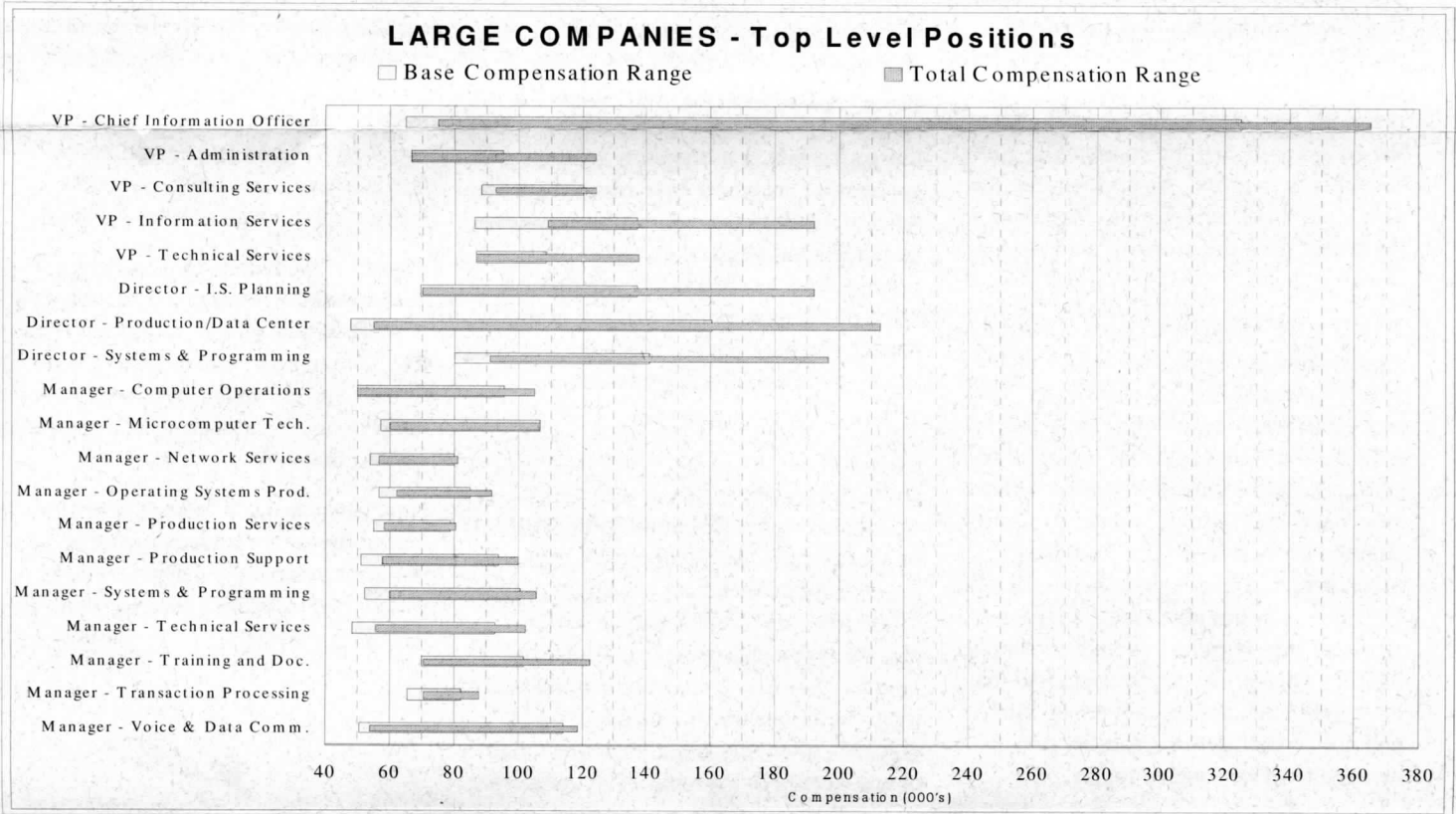
Top Salary Ranges for IT Executives Soar

This top-end "weighting" has resulted in supplemental compensation (bonuses, auto allowances, stock options, etc.), especially for middle management and staff positions, taking a back seat, as they comprise a smaller proportion of total compensation than in previous years' surveys. Supplemental compensation represents 9% of total compensation for top positions and 5% for mid-level in large companies, compared to 13% and 6% respectively the previous year.

The survey was conducted in the fourth quarter 1996, but draws on data collected throughout the year. Two hundred and sixty-three (263) data processing organizations and sixty-nine (69) positions were surveyed. These positions are fully described in the "Position Description HandiGuide®" that is also published by PSR. Reflecting the growing impact of the Internet on all aspects of commerce, the positions of Webmaster and Web Analyst join the surveyed jobs. The population of the survey was 17,173 individuals, 150% higher than in the previous year's study. The survey data reflects MIS salaries in 73 major cities in the United States as well as 28 cities in Canada.

The 1997 MIS Compensation Study is an invaluable tool for MIS and HR executives, as well as those in the information field who want to know their worth in the marketplace. ◄PSR►

LARGE COMPANIES - Top Level Positions
☐ Base Compensation Range   ▨ Total Compensation Range

Positions (top to bottom):
- VP - Chief Information Officer
- VP - Administration
- VP - Consulting Services
- VP - Information Services
- VP - Technical Services
- Director - I.S. Planning
- Director - Production/Data Center
- Director - Systems & Programming
- Manager - Computer Operations
- Manager - Microcomputer Tech.
- Manager - Network Services
- Manager - Operating Systems Prod.
- Manager - Production Services
- Manager - Production Support
- Manager - Systems & Programming
- Manager - Technical Services
- Manager - Training and Doc.
- Manager - Transaction Processing
- Manager - Voice & Data Comm.

X-axis: 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200 220 240 260 280 300 320 340 360 380

Compensation (000's)

Internet Metrics Study and 1997 Salary Survey

1997 Salary Survey
www.psrinc.com

✔ 263 Data Processing Organizations
✔ 69 Positions
✔ 73 Major Cities
✔ 150 Plus Page Study

Internet Metrics Study
www.psrinc.com

✔ Top 100 List
✔ Industry Rankings

  - 491 Banking
  - 375 Textile/Apparel
  - 2,492 Computer

✔ Study and Summary Data available

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Forecast for the National Information Technology Market

Economic growth is driving the demand for seasoned IT professionals and those with Internet experience.

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One of the bad things about forecasting in print is that you leave a paper trail. For several months now, I have been forecasting a downturn and a rise in interest rates that would adversely effect the IT job market. Even though I still believe that all of the conditions for that to occur are there, the empirical evidence as shown by the economy is that the economy is going to continue to grow. As we look into the new year, based on what has happened in the recent past, the economy will continue to move ahead.

What I have seen in the last few months is a move towards expansion of IT with the user community being the driver and in many cases the source of funding and job expansion. Many organizations are now starting to show much frustration with the slow pace of IT groups and are frustrated with the service levels that they are receiving. A common complaint is that the IT community has not created an infrastructure that is robust enough to support the total enterprise. Many users feel that IT is in the business of defending "turf" and not accepting responsibility or ownership of new technologies.

Central IT budgets continue to be under scrutiny; however, when value or need are great enough enterprises will see that budgets are approved. The areas where we have seen the greatest focus recently, are in the "Help Desk" and user support functions. Many organizations are now going through a "centralization" of support process in order to improve customer service.

We have developed some metrics on the staffing for various levels of support. Interestingly, the number of support personnel per PC has DECREASED. This is due to the fact that operating systems and application programs have reached such a level of maturity that some of the mystery and magic has been taken out of the process. In a future article I will publish some of the metrics that we have found to work. You may want to check out our Web site for more detailed information.

This is the basis of where opportunity exists. IT professionals who know that they are in the service business and respond in a way that is supportive of the enterprise will be successful. The best example of this is the concept of Web year. In the traditional IT environment nothing can be accomplished in less than twelve or eighteen months. In today's environment, that is too long. Solutions need to be put in place quickly - often this is less than one month or one week. For example, in November we had a client that needed some "competitive information" that was available from several sources but in a format that required user managers in the enterprise to capture and manipulate the data before they could do anything with it. The IT function said it would take six months and $150,000 to automate this process. The user was not happy with this, but approved the budget to proceed with this effort. One enterprising manager, from IT, contracted with an outside company to capture the data and format it in such a way that the users could massage the information themselves. This took less than one week to complete, cost less than $15,000 and helped the business unit increase its profits by over $800,000 in the first month with this new "system."

There are limitations to what has been accomplished - foremost is the fact that this is a throwaway system. After the competitive advantage is attained, there is no need to have infrastructure necessary to support the process. That is how the overhead of IT can be eliminated.

Now we have a user who is happy and an organization that understands that you do not have to have the perfect solution in place - just something that you can make decisions on.

Vic

Location	Prospects Short Term	Prospects Long Term
Northeast	Excellent	Excellent
Mid Atlantic	Good	Excellent
Southeast	Good	Good
South	Good	Good
Midwest	Good	Excellent
Southwest	Good	Good
West	Good	Good
Pacific Northwest	Good	Excellent
Best Location	Northeast	MidAtlantic