

# BEST *of the* WEB 2009 | Gomez Web Performance Awards



GOMEZ "BEST OF THE WEB" REPORT  
RECOGNIZES THE LEADERS IN WEB  
AND MOBILE SITE SPEED AND  
AVAILABILITY ACROSS SIX INDUSTRIES

*"Fidelity constantly strives to provide its millions of brokerage customers the best online brokerage experience in the industry. This includes broad investment choices, industry-leading low prices, award-winning customer service, and Web transactions that are processed quickly, accurately and securely. We are proud to be recognized by Gomez as a Best of the Web Award Winner."*

— Richard Blunck, Executive Vice President,  
Web Distribution at Fidelity Investments

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first annual **Gomez Web Performance Awards** report showcases the leaders in Website performance in six major industries nationwide. Each of these companies sets the industry standard for providing a Website experience that enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty, strengthens their brand, lowers operating costs, and increases revenue.

The leading companies in each of these industries — retail, financial services, media, travel, healthcare and government — were tracked for the entirety of 2009 by the Gomez Web Network. With more than 100,000 testing locations worldwide and over a decade of Website benchmarking experience, Gomez has tracked over 2,000 brands and helped thousands improve their Web performance.

The Gomez Web Performance Awards are based on the following three key performance metrics that the Gomez benchmarks measure on a continuous basis:

- **Response Time** — How fast a given homepage or multistep transaction loads.
- **Availability** — Percentage of successful homepage or multistep transaction downloads out of total download attempts.
- **Consistency** — How consistently a Website performs across different geographies, networks, and times of day, as measured by the standard deviation of successful response times.

The performance results for the leaders in each industry are detailed in this report. This comparative insight can assist any business seeking to determine where its Web performance stands versus the competition, as well as helping them understand how improving Website performance directly leads to more successful business results.



*If your company fits within any of these industries, the winners are most likely the reference points your customers use to judge your site's performance.*

## BEST of the WEB 2009 | Gomez Web Performance **GOLD** Awards

	<b>RETAIL</b>	
	RETAIL HOMEPAGE	<i>QVC</i>
	RETAIL PRODUCTS PAGE	<i>Newegg</i>
	<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>	
	BANKING	<i>Regions Bank</i>
	BROKERAGE	<i>Fidelity Investments</i>
	<b>TRAVEL</b>	
	AIRLINES	<i>Delta Air Lines</i>
	HOTELS	<i>Marriott</i>
	<b>MEDIA</b>	<i>Slate Magazine</i>
	<b>US HEALTHCARE</b>	<i>Mamas Health</i>
	<b>US GOVERNMENT</b>	<i>IRS</i>

## THE WINNERS

Based on Gomez performance metrics and benchmark rankings throughout 2009, three winners (Gold, Silver, Bronze) and a Most Improved Website were chosen for each industry. A Mobile Leader was chosen for select industries.

## KEY CONCLUSIONS

- **Web performance is a business driver** — The performance expectations of online audiences are increasing every day, with many consumers opting for a competitor's Website after only a few seconds' page load delay. A 2009 Forrester study shows that shoppers expect Web pages to load in two seconds or less; this is down from four seconds in 2006. After three seconds, 40 percent will abandon your site.<sup>i</sup>
- **Benchmarking is a best practice** — Testing your site against your competition is now a required business function, especially since your customers will not only compare your site to the best in your industry, but to the best sites on the Internet.
- **Small improvements = big results** — Improvements in Web performance can result in significant increases in customer satisfaction and revenue. A recent Aberdeen report says it all: "Customers Are Won and Lost in One Second."<sup>ii</sup>
- **Improvements can be achieved quickly** — Our Most Improved winners made significant performance strides from the first half of 2009 to the second half. In many cases, performance bottlenecks can be identified and remedied immediately.
- **Measure key customers closely** — It's important to measure performance levels for all key customers segments from their vantage point. This mandates taking an outside-in view of site performance by device, browser, region and time of day; and also tracking how rich media features, third party applications, and other services impact their experience.

The dynamic nature of your site, of your customers' expectations and of the Internet itself converge to make optimal Website performance a challenging focus. The leading Web businesses, many of which are winners in this report, stand apart because they know Website performance can be improved and optimized to directly benefit their bottom line.

These leaders accomplish stellar performance by implementing the best practices discussed in this report, using the appropriate tools and techniques, and understanding that Web performance is an ongoing effort that results in a competitive advantage.

What can your company learn from these winners?



# BEST *of the* WEB 2009

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## THE AWARDS AND THE BUSINESS OF WEB PERFORMANCE

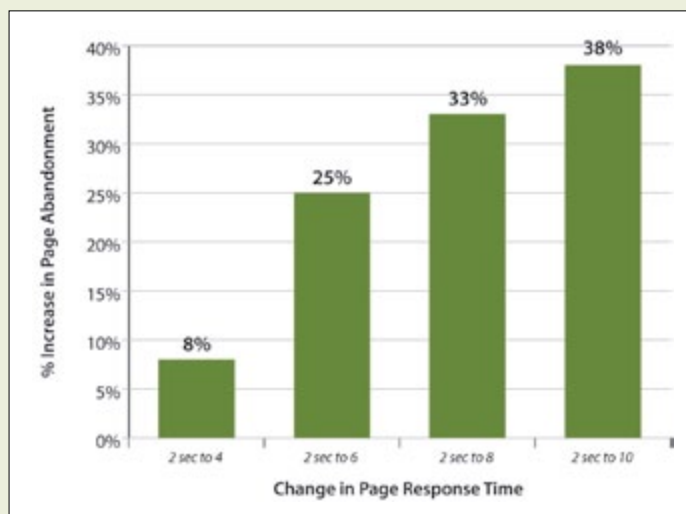
The first annual **Gomez Web Performance Awards** report offers insight into the “Best of the Web” by revealing the leaders in Website performance in six important U.S. industries and providing detailed measurements of their performance. This report sets the industry standards in Website performance and showcases the best practices adopted by the leading Internet businesses.

Gomez has continuously monitored and benchmarked the performance of over 2000 Websites for over a decade. These awards are based on benchmark results we collected throughout 2009 testing for response time, availability and consistency.

We awarded the top three winners in each industry with Gold, Silver and Bronze awards, respectively. We also honored the Most Improved in each industry and created a Mobile Leader award, where applicable, using additional metrics. (See “Report and Web Performance Monitoring Methodology” below, for additional details).

These winning companies understand the value of stellar Website performance. They know it enhances their brand, increases customer satisfaction, and has a direct impact on revenue. They also fully understand the many factors impacting Website performance, and have implemented a continuous process for improving it.

Gomez’s own studies reveal that even small performance differences can have a significant impact on consumer behavior. By analyzing page abandonment data across more than 150 Websites and 150 million page views, Gomez found that a slowdown in page response time from two to 10 seconds increased page abandonment rates by 38 percent.<sup>iii</sup>



## THE IMPATIENT CUSTOMER

The Website performance expectations of consumers continue to rise. A recent Forrester study shows that the average online shopper expects your Web pages to load in two seconds or less. This is down from four seconds in 2006. After three seconds of delay, up to 40 percent say they will abandon your site.<sup>iv</sup>

Adding to the performance pressure is the growth of sophisticated technologies such as shopping tools, interactive games, and videos designed to attract attention, hold interest or move visitors toward your shopping cart. These elements can put a strain on Website performance. If they create delays or fail to work properly, your visitors may quickly abandon your site and head to the competition.

## Key Web Performance Metrics

**Response Time** — How fast is your home page or key multistep transaction?

**Availability** — What percentage of your customers can successfully access your page or complete a transaction in a reasonable timeframe without experiencing any errors?

**Consistency** — How consistent is your Website performance across geographies, networks, and times of day?

## SMALL PERFORMANCE BOOSTS = SIGNIFICANT REVENUE INCREASES

Internet leaders know the business impact of a slow site or poor site availability. Microsoft's Bing conducted its own study showing that a mere two-second delay led to a 1.8 percent drop in queries, a 3.75 percent reduction in clicks, more than a 4 percent loss in satisfaction and, most importantly, a 4.3 percent loss in revenue per visitor.<sup>v</sup> The conclusion: even small performance issues can have a significant impact on revenue.

While it's clear that poor availability and page load times have an immediate negative impact, will improving performance create a positive business result? The answer for e-commerce site Shopzilla<sup>vi</sup> was a resounding "Yes!" Shopzilla was able to increase site availability to 99.97 percent from 99.65 percent. That seemingly tiny difference in availability — just a third of a percent — resulted in a five to 12 percent boost in revenue.

## THE WINNERS

The winners of the Gomez Web Performance Awards are business leaders who understand how these performance metrics impact their business. They monitor their site's performance continuously and adopt best practices to provide the very best customer experience.

In the following pages, we have outlined the winners by industry and also offered a summary of best practices so you can learn from their success.

*“Performance is a top priority for us at TradeKing and something we work at everyday to ensure our clients experience the very best site performance possible. It’s always wonderful to be recognized by firms like Gomez for our work in this area and combined with our consistently high customer satisfaction ratings, we remain motivated to deliver outstanding performance day in and day out.”*

— Kevin Corrigan, Co-Founder and Vice President of Project Management, TradeKing

## AWARDS AND WEB PERFORMANCE MONITORING METHODOLOGY

For over 10 years Gomez has been publishing the Gomez benchmarks, which now include more than 2,000 participating companies around the world. Gomez benchmarks measure the technical performance of Web or mobile sites.

We measure three key metrics: response time, availability, and consistency from the “outside-in,” using a subset of the Gomez Network, which features more than 100 high-bandwidth “backbone” locations and more than 100,000 actual end-user “Last Mile” locations around the world. This real-world view of Web page and application performance helps companies better understand the experiences being delivered to their customers.

This report ranks both the performance of Website transactions and homepages. Our transactional benchmarks measure similar multistep business processes — such as purchasing a product or performing a stock trade — across major brands in the same industry to provide an unbiased view of the state of the Web or mobile site. Gomez home page benchmarks measure the performance of the home page of the selected brands in each industry.

### BEST OF THE WEB: 2009 GOMEZ WEB PERFORMANCE AWARDS METHODOLOGY

Gomez evaluated rankings throughout 2009 for nine of our benchmarks in the retail, financial services, travel, media, healthcare and government industries. We awarded winners — Gold, Silver and Bronze — for companies with the best average rankings throughout 2009 on three equally-weighted metrics: response time, availability and consistency.

We also recognized the Most Improved, which was determined by the best average improvement in response time from the first half of 2009 to the second half of the year.

For each of our four mobile benchmarks, Gomez awarded one winner — Mobile Leader — based upon average rankings throughout the year. The mobile benchmarks also rank mobile performance based on — response time, availability and consistency — with the additional metrics of discoverability and readiness.

### GOMEZ WEB PERFORMANCE MONITORING METHODOLOGY

#### ***Frequency and Location of Tests***

For our homepage and transactional benchmarks, we ran tests from twelve geographically dispersed co-location facilities across multiple network providers within the United States at regular 30- or 60-minute intervals throughout each business day (several benchmarks include predetermined maintenance windows that limit the reporting period for the benchmark).

Gomez backbone locations used to collect benchmark data are located in:

- Mesa, AZ (AT&T)
- Los Angeles, CA (Level3)
- San Jose, CA (Verizon)
- Denver, CO (Verizon)
- Washington, DC (Verizon)
- Miami, FL (Internap)
- Atlanta, GA (InterNap)
- Chicago, IL (Qwest)
- Kansas City, MO (Global Crossing)
- New York, NY (Sprint)
- Dallas, TX (Verizon)
- Seattle, WA (SAVIS)



***Response Time***

Response time measures the end-to-end time elapsed while downloading each Web page or the entire multistep transaction process. This includes the base HTML page and any referenced objects, third-party content, JavaScript and Cascading Style Sheets and other Web content. The reported metric represents the average time required to download the homepage or execute the multistep transaction without factoring in user latency.

***Availability***

Availability measures the percentage of successfully completed tests out of total test attempts for the period. Availability rates are dependent upon a number of variables including the ability of our testing agent to access the Website, its ability to process a transaction without error, and its ability to download each step of the transaction within a reasonable 60-second time frame. Reported availability rates do not include errors related to the Gomez measurement system or scripting problems.

***Consistency***

Consistency measures the standard deviation of the response times of successful tests. The goal is to have a low number (in seconds), which indicates how consistent the response time is each time a user visits a Website. Highly variable response times (in seconds) indicate inconsistent performance that may be caused by poor Website performance as measured across diverse geographies, issues with Internet peering or an under-powered technical architecture which leads to slowdowns during periods of peak traffic.

**MOBILE BENCHMARK METHODOLOGY**

Gomez's Mobile Web Benchmark series include three fundamental metrics: availability, response time, and consistency. Measurements were collected from three Active Mobile testing locations across the United States. The mobile benchmarks also include two metrics provided by dotMobi: discoverability and readiness

***Discoverability***

Discoverability is the ability of a consumer to receive an appropriate mobile Website when visiting several typical mobile URLs. These URLs include the m., wap, and mobile. subdomains as well as the .com and .mobi domains. These URLs were chosen based on typical user behavior and a site's ability to be found in a search engine based on ICANN standards.

***Readiness***

Ready.mobi uses a combination of factors when determining a score from 1 to 5. Many factors are considered, including the following examples:

- Points for the home page's ability to pass the W3C's MobileOK tests.
- Points based on the validity of the xHTML Mobile Profile coding of the home page.
- Points based on the weight or size of the home page, since mobile pages generally perform better when they are lighter.

For detailed methodologies and a list of benchmark participants for all of Gomez's homepage, transactional, and mobile benchmarks please visit <http://benchmarks.gomez.com/>.





## BEST OF THE WEB 2009 — RETAIL

Online shoppers are getting savvier and more demanding each year. A 2009 consumer survey commissioned by Gomez showed 41 percent would abandon a shopping Website at peak times after only one or two bad experiences. The 2008 Aberdeen Group report, "Customers Are Won and Lost in One Second" reveals the business impact by finding that poor Web performance can impact overall corporate revenue by up to 9 percent.

Retail shoppers know they have many online buying options, each just a click away. The growth of pricing and comparison sites such as PriceGrabber, NexTag and Yahoo! Shopping only heightens the competition.

Whether due to browser incompatibility problems or a peak traffic mishaps, retail sites can't afford to lose customers, especially in the current economy. "Today's consumers expect a 'Google-like' experience whenever they shop online," comments Matt Poepsel, VP of Performance Strategies at Gomez, adding, "Many retailers are also counting on e-commerce to pick up the slack as they shutter a number of physical stores in search of better operating costs."

Here's one example: During the 2009 Black Friday-Cyber Monday kickoff to the holiday shopping season, only one retailer, LL Bean, achieved a 100 percent success rate in Gomez' retail product order benchmark. Some retailers scored as low as 84 percent. These failed tests indicate time periods when shoppers may not have been able to complete their purchases.

Gomez produces two types of retail benchmarks: one for homepage performance and another that measures the entire order transaction process.



## MOBILE RETAIL BLACK FRIDAY – CYBER MONDAY

Cyber Monday Benchmark Mobile devices are quickly becoming an important channel for Web application delivery, so Gomez recently initiated the Mobile Web Benchmark. Best Buy wins Mobile Leader for a special Black Friday – Cyber Monday benchmark (November 27 – 30, 2009) with the best rank for the period in response time, consistency, availability, discoverability and readiness.

### MOBILE LEADER: BESTBUY



**RETAIL HOMEPAGE BENCHMARK**

The Gomez US Internet Retailer Homepage Benchmark measures the response time, availability and consistency of homepages of the top 50 online retail Websites. Winners had the best average rank on all three metrics throughout 2009.

- QVC won the Gold Award with the number one ranking for the year and a blazing fast response time of 1.21 seconds, plus very high availability and consistency scores.
- LL Bean and Overstock.com won the Silver and Bronze Awards.
- Target won the Most Improved by achieving a 34 percent decrease in response time to just over 2 seconds.

**GOLD WINNER: QVC**



<b>Retail Homepage Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	QVC	1.21	99.97%	1.93
<b>Silver</b>	LL Bean	1.31	99.95%	1.34
<b>Bronze</b>	Overstock.com	1.48	99.96%	1.73

<i>Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09</i>		
<b>Most Improved</b>	Target	34%

**ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION**

The complete list of retailers tracked by Gomez in the 2009 US Internet Retailer Homepage Benchmark were: 1-800 Flowers, Amazon.com, Apple.com, Avon, Barnes and Noble, Best Buy Online, Blockbuster, Blue Nile, Buy.com, Cabelas, CDW, Chadwicks, Circuit City, ColdWater Creek, Comp USA, Costco, Dell, Drugstore.com, Footlocker, FTD, Gap Online, HP Shop, HSN, J Crew, JC Penney, Kohls, LL Bean, Macys, Musicians Friend, Neiman Marcus, Netflix, Newegg, Nike, Nordstrom, Nutrisystem, Office Depot, Office Max, Oriental Trading, Overstock.com, PC Connection, Peapod, Quixtar, QVC, Inc., Saks, Scholastic, Sears, Staples, Target, The Home Depot, Tiger Direct, Toys R Us, Victoria's Secret, Vista Print, Wal-Mart, Williams-Sonoma, and Zappos.



**RETAIL PRODUCT ORDER BENCHMARK**

This benchmark emulates a customer product transaction all the way through to shopping cart and checkout. Winners had the best rank throughout 2009's monthly benchmarks in each of the response time, availability and consistency metrics.

- Electronics retailer Newegg won the category.
- Apple.com and Office Depot took second and third places.
- Office Max won Most Improved with an 18 percent drop in response time.

**GOLD WINNER: NEWEGG**

*"Our highest priority at Newegg has always been customer service, which is why it means so much to us to receive a Gold Best of the Web: 2009 Gomez Web Performance Award. This recognition is a clear indicator of our commitment to meeting and exceeding the expectations of our valued customers. We look forward to continuing to innovate and improve our services and online interactions even more as we move forward."*

— Bernard Luthi, Newegg V.P. of Marketing, Merchandising and Web Management



<b>Retail Product Order Winners</b>		Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)	Average Availability for 2009 (%)	Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)
<b>Gold</b>	Newegg	8.25	98.92%	7.07
<b>Silver</b>	Apple	10.81	99.09%	5.72
<b>Bronze</b>	Office Depot	11.90	99.06%	6.18

<i>Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09</i>		
<b>Most Improved</b>	Office Max	18%

**ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION**

The complete list of retailers tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Retail Product Order Benchmark were: Amazon, Apple.com, Best Buy, CDW, Costco, Dell, HP, HSN, JC Penney, LL Bean, Newegg, Office Depot, Office Max, Overstock, QVC, Sears, Staples, Target, TigerDirect, Victoria's Secret, Walmart, and Williams-Sonoma.



## BEST OF THE WEB 2009 — FINANCIAL SERVICES

*“Customers have woven online banking into their everyday lives, and the Gomez Web Performance Awards are a great honor for the now merged Wells Fargo and Wachovia financial institutions. Our team members’ exceptional efforts continue to enable Wells Fargo to deliver simple, secure, engaging and relevant customer experiences online.”*

— George Tumas, CIO of Wells Fargo’s Internet Services Group

When a banking Website has problems, it can detract from the sense of security all banks must impart. Brokerage sites have a different objective; they must execute at lightning-fast speeds to satisfy stock traders and investors.

Both categories must also offer increasing amounts of accurate, up-to-the-second charts, statistics and other financial data to retain customers.

According to a recent Akamai-Forrester study, customers of financial services sites consider 100 percent Website availability second only to security. Their expectations run even higher than customers of retail shopping sites, with 56 percent of banking and brokerage customers expecting Web pages to load in two seconds or less; only 47 percent of retail shoppers expect that speed level.

*Heavy trading or banking days are no excuse for poor site performance. More than half of online bank customers and almost 70 percent of online traders said they took “some negative action” as a result of a bad web experience according to a Gomez survey about Web performance during peak traffic.*



## MOBILE BANKING

*“As consumers become more aware and knowledgeable of the safety and ease of Mobile Banking, the vision of managing your money from the palm of your hand is now a reality. With a Mobile Banking user base of 4 million and growing, we’re pleased to continue to set the standard for industry-leading financial innovations for customers.”*

— Laurie Readhead,  
e-Commerce Executive,  
Bank of America

Mobile Banking Home Page Benchmark Bank of America won the Mobile Leader award in this category. It scored the best average rank from March through December 2009 in the equally weighted metrics of discoverability, readiness, as well as response time, availability and consistency.

### MOBILE LEADER: BANK OF AMERICA



**BANKING ACCOUNT DETAILS BENCHMARK**

The Banking Account Details Benchmark emulates a typical transaction to review account details across multiple pages from verification to account summary to logout. The overall winner had the best rank throughout our bi-weekly benchmarks in 2009 for our three equally-weighted metrics — response time, availability and consistency.

- Regions Bank won the top prize among the top 25 banks
- Wachovia ranked second and Wells Fargo third.
- Sun Trust won Most Improved by lowering its response time to under 10 seconds from 13.49 seconds.

**GOLD WINNER: REGIONS BANK**



<b>Banking Account Details Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	Regions Bank	4.85	99.40%	3.12
<b>Silver</b>	Wachovia	7.40	99.60%	4.87
<b>Bronze</b>	Wells Fargo	9.55	99.64%	4.53
<i>Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09</i>				
<b>Most Improved</b>	SunTrust		29%	

**ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION**

The complete list of banks tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Banking Account Details Benchmark were: Bank of America, BB&T, Capital One, Chase, Citibank, Citizens Bank, Fifth Third Bank, HSBC, KeyBank, M&T Bank, National City, PNC Bank, Regions Bank, Sovereign Bank, SunTrust, TD Banknorth, USBank, Wachovia, Washington Mutual and Wells Fargo.





**BROKERAGE GENERATE ORDER BENCHMARK**

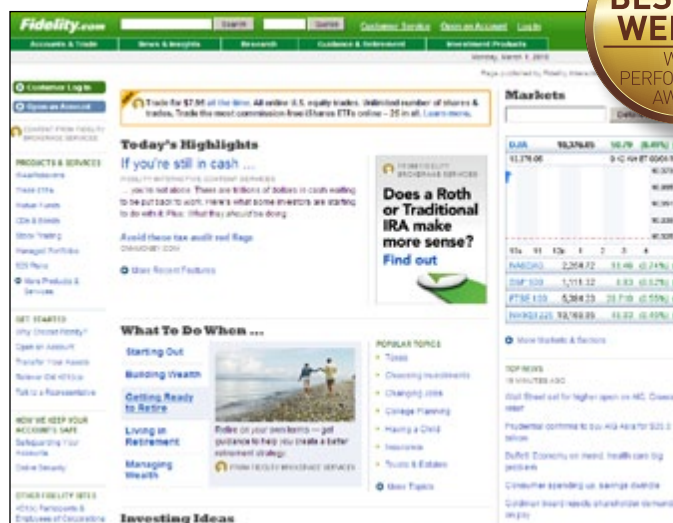
This benchmark's rankings were based on a sample stock trading transaction across the nation's largest online discount brokerage firms measuring from the homepage to the trade page, preview page, then back to the trade page before logging out. Winners were determined by the best rankings throughout the year for the equally-weighted metrics of response time, availability and consistency.

- Fidelity Investments led the pack with response times just over 4 seconds and very high availability and consistency scores.
- Scottrade came in second.
- TradeKing ranked third and also won Most Improved by dropping its response time 15 percent to 4.78 seconds.

**GOLD WINNER: FIDELITY INVESTMENTS**

*"Fidelity constantly strives to provide its millions of brokerage customers the best online brokerage experience in the industry. This includes broad investment choices, industry-leading low prices, award-winning customer service, and Web transactions that are processed quickly, accurately and securely. We are proud to be recognized by Gomez as a Best of the Web Award Winner."*

— Richard Blunck, Executive Vice President, Web Distribution at Fidelity Investments



<b>Brokerage Generate Orders Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	Fidelity Investments	4.05	99.82%	2.02
<b>Silver</b>	Scottrade	4.23	99.81%	3.38
<b>Bronze</b>	TradeKing	5.22	99.57%	2.78

*Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09*

<b>Most Improved</b>	TradeKing	15%
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**ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION**

The complete list of brokerage firms tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Brokerage Generate Order Benchmark were: Bank of America Investment Services, Inc., Charles Schwab, E\*Trade, Fidelity, FirstTrade, Muriel Siebert, Options Xpress, Scottrade, TD Ameritrade, TradeKing, Vanguard, WallStreet E, and Wells Fargo Brokerage.



## BEST OF THE WEB 2009 — TRAVEL

*"KAYAK is all about finding the best deal and the best travel choices easily. Our innovation is focused on three things: search speed, relevance of the search results, and new ways to search, such as by maps and photos"*

— Paul English, KAYAK Chief  
Technology Officer and Co-founder

The recession is hitting the travel industry particularly hard, so profitability is the key business driver. To reduce or contain costs, airlines and hotels are increasingly shifting customer service duties to the Web, as 38 percent of all travel dollars will be spent online by 2011. If site performance lags, consumers will either revert to a more expensive, employee-manned phone call or take their business elsewhere.

In particular, airlines should not expect customers to be understanding during busy travel periods. One in four people had a "negative experience" with a travel Website in 2009 during peak traffic times, with more than half saying they would abandon a site after one or two bad experiences, according to a Gomez-sponsored consumer survey. With many available options, including travel aggregators, this puts a lot of pressure on travel sites to perform.



## MOBILE AIRLINE

*"JetBlue is very proud to have received this award from Gomez. We believe our web interface is one of the cornerstones of our prized customer service and we're glad to see the hard work our team has put behind it being recognized."*

— Michael Stromer, Director  
E-Commerce & Interactive  
Marketing at JetBlue Airways

Mobile Airline Homepage Benchmark This benchmark was launched in March of 2009 to track this fast-growing category, so we don't have a full year of data as in our other benchmarks. We're using the equally-weighted metrics of ease of discoverability, readiness, as well as response time, availability and consistency.

JetBlue Airways wins our Mobile Leader award in this category as it scored the best average rank from March through December 2009.

## MOBILE LEADER: JET BLUE AIRWAYS



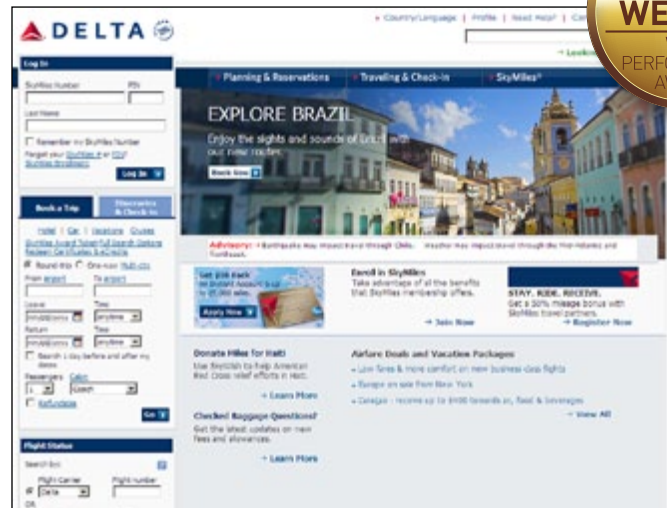


## AIRLINE FLIGHT SEARCH BENCHMARK

This Gomez benchmark represents the speed, availability and consistency of a typical flight search transaction for the nation's largest airlines and flight aggregators. This includes tracking the home page, departure, return flight and itinerary pages.

- The Gold standard for airline Web performance goes to Delta Air Lines, with JetBlue Airways and AirTran taking the Silver and Bronze Awards.
- Delta Air Lines had the best average ranking for 2009 with average response time at 5.65 seconds, availability at 99.50% and consistency at 5.14 seconds.
- Continental wins the Most Improved award with the largest decrease in response time from the first half of the year to the second half, 34 percent.

### GOLD WINNER: DELTA AIR LINES



<b>Airline Flight Search Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	Delta Air Lines	5.65	99.50%	5.14
<b>Silver</b>	JetBlue Airways	11.41	99.32%	3.77
<b>Bronze</b>	AirTran	8.34	97.40%	4.63

*Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09*

<b>Most Improved</b>	Continental	34%
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### ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION

The full list of airlines reservation providers tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Airline Flight Search Benchmark were: AirTran, Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, CheapTickets Air, Continental, Delta Air Lines, Expedia Air, Frontier Airlines, JetBlue Airways, Midwest, Northwest / NWA, Orbitz Air, Priceline Air, Southwest Airlines, Spirit Airlines, Travelocity Air, United and USAirways.



## HOTEL ROOM SEARCH BENCHMARK

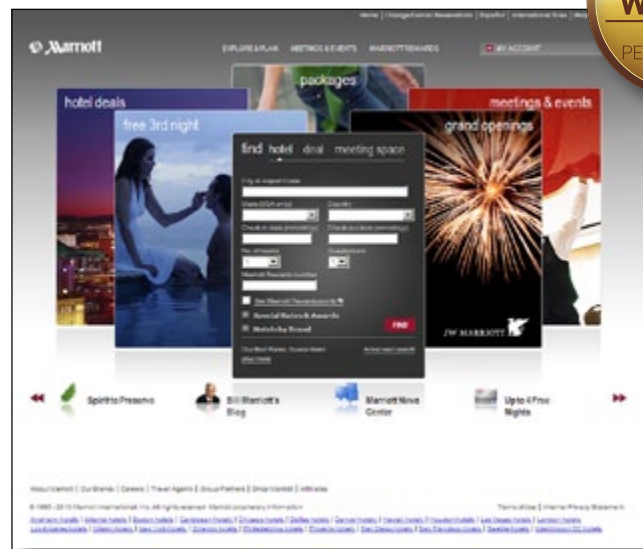
Consumers are looking for a different set of details when seeking and evaluating hotel rooms, so our Hotel Room Search Benchmark tracks home page, search results page and room details page for the largest hotel chains and travel aggregators.

- The overall winner was Marriott showing superb overall availability.
- Best Western and Kayak took second and third places.
- Radisson won the Most Improved prize with a 48 percent improvement in average response time from the first half to the second, a drop from 5.66 to 2.94 seconds, the best average response time in the category.

### GOLD WINNER: MARRIOTT

*“Marriott is honored to be recognized by Gomez for the performance of Marriott.com which is often times referred to as “our digital front door”. At Marriott, we are dedicated to ensuring our guests have easy access to our growing number of worldwide hotels, and are able to interact with our brands in a meaningful way. Our Spirit to Serve philosophy of providing exceptional service for our guests often begins on Marriott.com, with a focus on a very reliable and consistent experience. The insights and metrics attained from Gomez have assisted us in meeting our high performance goals.”*

— Bruce Hoffmeister, Senior Vice President, Information Resources Shared Services, Marriott



<b>Hotel Room Search Winners</b>		Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)	Average Availability for 2009 (%)	Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)
<b>Gold</b>	Marriott	6.51	99.90%	4.08
<b>Silver</b>	Best Western	6.36	99.52%	4.48
<b>Bronze</b>	Kayak	5.89	99.31%	4.28
<b>Most Improved</b>		Radisson		
		48%		

*Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09*

### ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION

The complete list of hotel reservation providers tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Hotel Room Search Benchmark were: AOL Travel, Best Western, Cheap Tickets, Choice Hotels, Days Inn, Expedia, Harrahs, Hilton, Hotel-Guides, Hotels.com, Hotels-and-Discounts, Hyatt, InterContinental Hotels, Kayak, LasVegas.com, Marriott, One Travel, Orbitz, Priceline, Radisson, Ramada, Starwood, Travelocity and Yahoo Travel.



## BEST OF THE WEB 2009 — MEDIA

Think of all the media an average person consumes: television, film, video, music, photos and news. Now imagine it all migrating to the Web. Then add the breadth of social or other content generated by users themselves. The result: the sheer volume of news, information and entertainment content on the Web is staggering.

While consumers may be a bit more forgiving of problems encountered on a newspaper site than for the task-oriented, immediate dollar impact of shopping or financial sites, this category has its own unique Web performance challenges.

User engagement and increased page views is critical because of the multitude of options available, many driven by an increasingly social, community-building element. As a result, these sites tend to have lengthy Web pages of extended news articles or blog post comments, an increasing use of graphics, photos and audio, interactive games, and most importantly, large amounts of video.

Video means big data files that can slow page load times to a crawl. However consumers are becoming less patient with slow loading media content. In addition, much video, audio, and advertising content are pulled into media sites from third-party sources out of the publisher's direct control.

Gomez clients, for example, engage an average of eight hosts to present their Websites, many of which are third-party partners, such as ad networks, CDNs and dynamic imaging providers. Media sites must constantly monitor the performance of their providers in order to optimize their performance, page views, and advertising revenue.



## MOBILE MEDIA SEARCH BENCHMARK

Based on the new Gomez Mobile Search benchmark, search giant Google wins Mobile Leader for delivering the best search process across a variety of mobile devices.

This evaluation was determined based on the best average rank over the five metrics in Gomez's mobile benchmarks – response time, availability, consistency, readiness and discoverability. Mobile search and media represents a new battleground for traditional and Internet media or advertising companies, where top performance is a key factor in user satisfaction and adoption.

**MOBILE LEADER: GOOGLE**



**MEDIA ARTICLE SEARCH BENCHMARK**

This Gomez benchmark tracks an article search transaction for the nation's largest online news and publishing firms. Winners had the best rank throughout 2009 for response time, availability and consistency.

- Slate Magazine won the top prize, followed by CNN and MSNBC.
- The Most Improved award goes to AOL News which showed a 57 percent improvement in load time from the first half of the year to the second half: down to 6.75 seconds from over 15 seconds.

**GOLD WINNER: SLATE MAGAZINE**



<b>Media Article Search Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	Slate Magazine	5.30	99.83%	5.39
<b>Silver</b>	CNN	7.68	99.58%	5.92
<b>Bronze</b>	MSNBC	9.16	99.76%	6.61
<i>Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09</i>				
<b>Most Improved</b>	AOL News	57%		

**ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION**

The complete list of news outlets tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Media Article Search Benchmark were: ABC News, AOL News, Associated Press, Atlanta Journal, BBC News, Boston.com, CBS News, Chicago Tribune, CNN, Dallas News, FOX News, Miami Herald, MSNBC, NPR, NY Times, Seattle Times, SF Gate, Slate Magazine, Time Magazine, Topix.net, truTV, USA Today, Washington Post, WNBC, and Yahoo News.



## BEST OF THE WEB 2009 — HEALTHCARE

The healthcare industry has been slow to enter the digital age. A myriad of complex standards and privacy issues still need to be resolved before healthcare providers of all sizes can share information with other hospitals, doctors, insurance companies and patients, across state lines and worldwide.

The healthcare Websites of the future, whether public or private, will be involved in life-and-death situations. Home care will have the option of sharing patient records with doctors in real-time, and emergency crews will use mobile devices to upload blood pressure or other patient data while in the field. The more critical the medical condition, the more important the Web performance of these systems will become.

While ubiquitous access to medical records is in our future, access to health and medical information online is today. A 2009 Pew study shows 61 percent of Americans seek out health information online, with over half saying that Web-based information changed their overall approach to maintaining their health.



## HEALTH INFORMATION HOME PAGE BENCHMARK

The winners in this benchmark category had the best rank throughout 2009 for response time, availability, and consistency.

- Mamas Health won the Gold award.
- WebMD and Yahoo Health took second and third places.
- American Heart Association won Most Improved by dropping its average response time by 74 percent to 4.02 seconds in the second half of 2009.

## GOLD WINNER: MAMAS HEALTH



**MamasHealth.com Home**

Category Links

- About Us
- Allergies
- Autoimmune Disorders
- Blood Diseases
- Bone Injuries
- Cancers
- Children's Health
- Cosmetic Surgery
- Dating
- Dental Information
- Diabetes
- Dieting
- Digestive Health
- Doctor Says...
- Domestic Violence
- Eating Disorders
- Ear Health
- Environmental Health
- Eye Health
- Financial Health
- Fitness
- Food Bank Programs
- Foot Care
- Gardening
- Green Energy
- Head & Brain Info
- Health Insurance
- Healthful Work
- Environment
- Heart Disease
- Infectious Stuff
- Instructional Videos
- Kidney Diseases
- Liver Disorders
- Lung Diseases
- Massage Therapy
- Mama's Top Picks
- Men's Health

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a debilitating condition that can develop following a terrifying event. Often, people with Post-traumatic stress disorder have persistent frightening thoughts and memories of their ordeal and feel emotionally numb, especially with people they were once close to.

Post-traumatic stress disorder was first brought to public attention by war veterans, but it can result from any number of [traumatic incidents](#).

**American Red Cross Month** The American Red Cross uses this opportunity to promote its services to the American public and for fund-raising. Also, honor is given to the men and women of the American Red Cross who exhibit the spirit and character of America by serving others in need.

Win a copy of our featured book

**Denise's DAILY DOZEN**

The Easy Diet Plan to Lose Up to 12 Pounds in 2 Weeks

**DENISE AUSTIN**

Mama's Green Living Tip: Disposing batteries...Standard or alkaline batteries must be disposed of differently than rechargeable batteries...

<b>Health Information Home Page Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	Mamas Health	1.03	99.96%	1.47
<b>Silver</b>	WebMD	1.47	99.88%	2.55
<b>Bronze</b>	Yahoo Health	1.27	99.49%	2.86
<i>Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09</i>				
<b>Most Improved</b>	American Heart Association	74%		

**ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION**

The complete list of health information providers tracked by Gomez in the 2009 Healthcare Information Home Page Benchmark were: AOS, AARP, Abbott Laboratories, About Health, Aetna, AMA, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, AOL Health, Beachbody, bmj.com, Cancer.org, DepressionHurts, Discovery Health, Drugs.com, eDiets, Family Doctor, FootSmart Health Centers, Health Communities, HealthAtoZ, Healthcentral, Healthline, Healthology, HealthScout, HealthSquare, HealthyPlace, InteliHealth, iVillage Health, Jenny Craig, LifeScript, Mamas Health, Mayo Clinic, Medco Health, Medhelp, Men's Health, Mercola, NetDoctor, Prevention.com, Puritans Pride, Realage, RevivalSoy, Science Daily, United Health, Waterfront, WebMD, Weight Watchers, WholeHealthMD and Yahoo! Health.





**BEST OF THE WEB 2009 — U.S. GOVERNMENT**

The United States now has its first Chief Technology Officer, Anish Chopra, whose appointment was seen by many tech leaders as a positive step. Chopra, the former secretary of Technology for Virginia, was hailed by Tim O’Reilly, founder of tech publisher O’Reilly, as a guy who “gets it,” a smart public servant who could talk the talk and also make things happen.

At the top of Chopra’s priorities is using technology to make government as transparent as possible. He also believes that existing government information and data is enormously useful and, when accessible, many industries can “unlock (its) economic value,” creating new sources of jobs and business growth.

Chopra is also focused on making broadband infrastructure a priority. The recently announced FCC “100 Squared” plan has the goal of bringing 100Mbps service to 100 million homes by 2020.

Today government already has a strong role in many important Web services used daily by business and citizens. They range from the revamped and increasingly participatory White House site to the FEMA site, which can serve to be a vital information and mobilization source during emergencies.



**U.S. GOVERNMENT HOME PAGE BENCHMARK**

This Gomez benchmark tracks government agencies’ Website home pages on response time, availability and consistency. Winners had the best rank throughout 2009 for each of these three core metrics.

- The IRS site won the top award with a very fast response time of just over a half-second.
- The FEMA and White House sites came in second and third.
- The Department of Transportation won the Most Improved award by dropping its response time to 1.47 seconds from 3.01 seconds.

**GOLD WINNER: IRS**





<b>U.S. Government Home Page Winners</b>		<i>Average Response Time for 2009 (seconds)</i>	<i>Average Availability for 2009 (%)</i>	<i>Average Consistency for 2009 (seconds)</i>
<b>Gold</b>	IRS	0.56	99.97%	1.06
<b>Silver</b>	FEMA	0.60	99.96%	1.40
<b>Bronze</b>	White House	1.19	99.96%	1.36
<i>Response Time Improvement in 2H09 versus 1H09</i>				
<b>Most Improved</b>	Department of Transportation	51%		

## ADDITIONAL BENCHMARK INFORMATION

The complete list of government Websites tracked by Gomez in the 2009 US Government Home Page Benchmark were: Air Force, Army, Center for Disease Control, CIA, Citizenship and Immigration, Department of Census, Department of Defense, Dept of Agriculture, Dept of Education, Dept of Housing, Dept of Justice, Dept of Labor, Dept of State, Dept of Statistics, Dept of Transportation, Dept of Treasury, EPA, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Federal Drug Administration, Federal Trade Commission, FEMA, General Services Administration, Geological Survey, House of Representatives, Human Services, IRS, Library of Congress, Medicare, NASA, National Institute of Health, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Navy, Occupational Safety and Hazard, Office of Personnel Management, Park Service, Printing Office, Security and Exchange Commission, Small Business Administration, Social Security, Thrift Savings Plan, US Courts, US Mint, US Patent and Trademark Office, US Senate, USA Jobs, USA Search, USA.gov, Veterans Affairs, and the White House.

*“SunTrust strives to put our clients in the center of all that we do. This includes the client-centric design approaches that we have been applying to our Web properties throughout the past 18 months. We are delighted to see that the efforts we have taken to improve our systems are beginning to make a difference for our clients. At SunTrust, we are committed to making it easier for our clients to do business with us across all of our channels, and we know that fast, reliable Web access is an increasingly vital dimension of that commitment.”*

— Lindsay E. Soergel,  
Senior Vice-President Channel  
Technology Delivery at SunTrust

## BEST PRACTICES FOR OPTIMIZING WEBSITE PERFORMANCE

*How can my company make it to the winner's circle?*

To help your company deliver a top performing, highly-available, and consistent Website, we've outlined some of the most important best practices that our “Best of the Web” companies follow:

### BENCHMARK THE COMPETITION

Benchmarking is where your best practices begin. The benchmarks in this report can give you a head start for comparing your site to those in your industry. In addition:

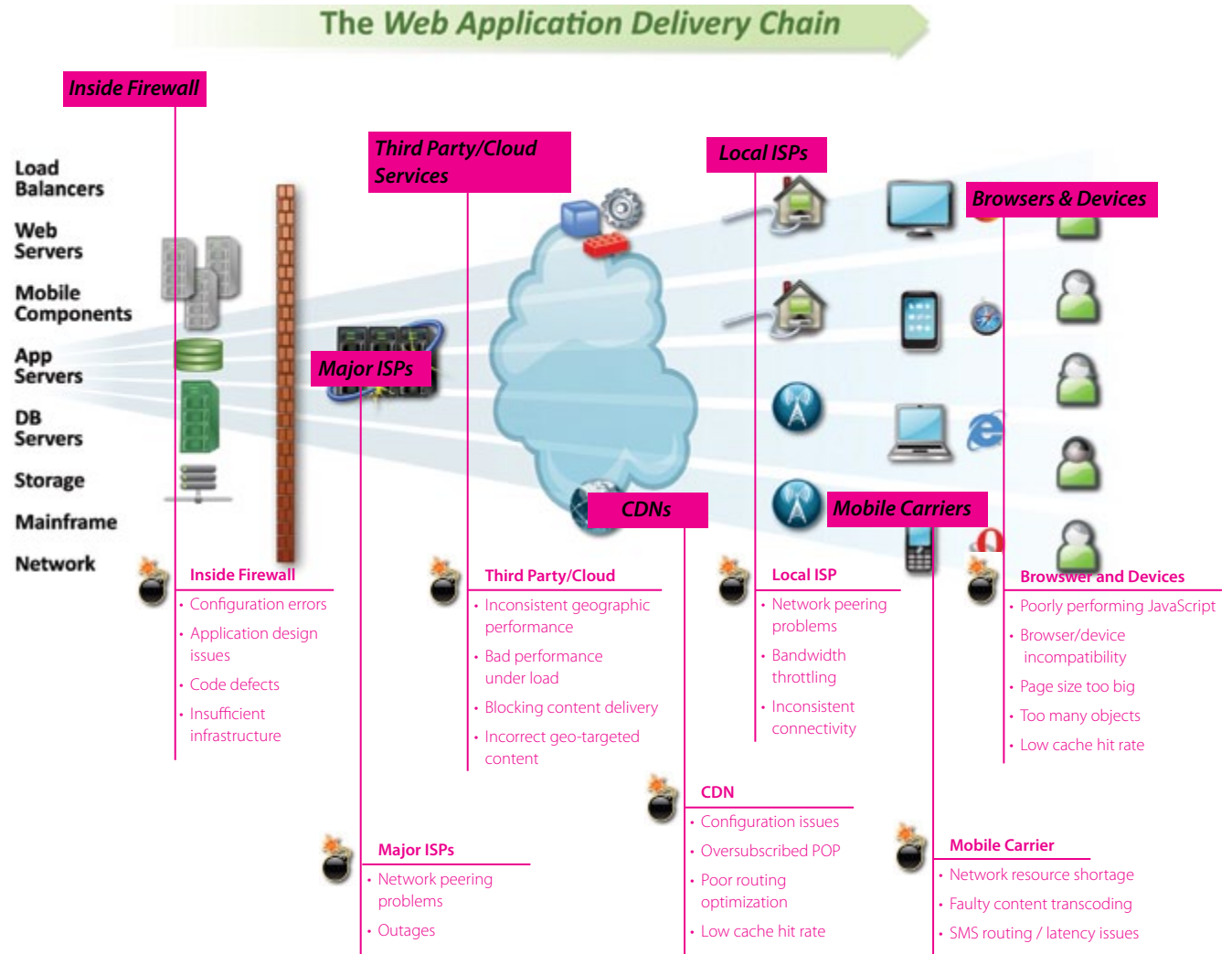
- **Benchmark against the very best** — Top performers don't limit their site comparisons to the competition, since most end-users will also judge it against Internet leaders such as Amazon, Google and Yahoo!
- **Benchmark against yourself, over time** — We've shown how quickly performance improvements can be made. Constantly upping the bar will translate to happier customers and increased revenue.
- **Use a common benchmarking scorecard** — Once all Website stakeholders — business and IT — have a common point of reference, alignment of business goals (see below) becomes easier.

### TAKE AN OUTSIDE-IN, END-USER PERSPECTIVE

All lights may be signaling green from within your firewall, but your users may be having a very bad experience, due to problems occurring between your data center and your customer's browser. This series of links across the Internet is known as the Web Application Delivery Chain, and the Gomez Web Performance winners monitor it 24/7 all year long. Web performance monitoring and analysis tools can provide the insight you need, but only if they track performance as the end-user experiences it. This outside-in view will help you stay aware of the following:

- **Regional performance differences** — There are wide differences in site performance across different geographies. A region nearby your data center may perform well, while customers across the country may be experiencing slower site response times or even site failures.
- **Third-party content or functionality** — Most of today's Websites are comprised of an increasing number of third party elements such as ad servers, video feeds or diagnostic code, so it's important to monitor the impact of each one.
- **Browser performance variation** — Gomez data shows almost an 8 second difference in response time between the slowest and fastest browsers. Website managers must optimize performance for the browsers that their end-users use and which generate the most revenue.
- **Complex Web 2.0 features** — Familiar e-commerce features such as shopping carts and interactive catalogs depend on sophisticated programs that run within end-users' browsers. Site managers must monitor how they perform, as the user sees them.

- **Mobile applications** — While a mobile device is very different than a computer, customer expectations remain the same. According to a recent Gomez study, 58 percent of mobile device users expect sites to download as quickly as they would on their home computers.



Internet leaders test and monitor the performance of their Websites by focusing on the key pages and transactions their customers use. They measure performance across top browsers, mobile devices, and geographies. And finally, they determine the performance impact on consumer behavior during both peak and non-peak traffic times.

## **RECOGNIZE THAT WEB PERFORMANCE IS A BUSINESS ISSUE**

Poor Web performance can directly impact your business performance. To ensure success, the need for optimized Web performance must be a shared goal by IT and business departments. The basis of this is a common set of performance metrics and measurements understood by all.

If the VP of an online business unit knows how much a new Website feature could impact site performance and ultimately, revenue generation, the rollout of this new capability becomes a shared responsibility of IT and business. This attitude will empower all of your company's stakeholders to share responsibility for improving Website performance.

These are just some of the best practices that top Web businesses, many of which are "Best of the Web" winners showcased in this report, have adopted to ensure a quality Web experience and the increased revenue that accompanies it.

## WHAT'S NEXT

How does your company get started on the path toward superior Website performance?

We recommend these few first steps to improve your Website's performance, your customers' experience and your business results:

- **Use these benchmark results to rank your Website**
  - If you participate in a published benchmark and are not a winner, contact us and we can provide you with your rank for the year.
  - If you don't, assess your performance for free using the [Gomez My Custom Benchmark Tool](#)
- **Do the math** — Make sure you understand how delays in site load time and availability specifically impact your customers and your bottom line business results.
- **Collaborate with your counterparts** — Whether you work in IT or the business side of your organization, each has a role in presenting a Website experience that supports your brand. Use common language and tools like the Gomez Benchmarks to ensure that both teams are working toward the same end goal — better business results.
- **Use Web performance management tools like Gomez's to understand your customers' perspective** — Knowing you are fast is a step in the right direction. But do you understand how your site is performing for key customers across devices, browsers, and geography? Do you know if third parties are impacting your overall site performance? Website monitoring tools can help answer these questions and identify problems that are impacting your customers.

## ABOUT GOMEZ

Gomez, the Web performance division of Compuware, provides the industry's leading solutions for optimizing the performance, availability, and quality of Web and mobile applications. The on-demand Gomez platform integrates solutions for Web load testing, Web performance management, Web cross-browser testing, and Web performance business analysis that test and measure Web and mobile applications from the "outside-in" — across all users, browsers, devices, and geographies — using a global network of over 100,000 locations. When combined with Compuware Vantage, Gomez offers the industry's only solution for optimizing application performance across the Enterprise and the Internet. Over 2,500 customers worldwide, ranging from small companies to large enterprises — including 12 of the top 20 most visited US Web sites — use Gomez solutions to increase revenue, build brand loyalty, and decrease costs.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Forrester Consulting, "eCommerce Web Site Performance Today: An Updated Look At Consumer Reaction To A Poor Online Shopping Experience," A commissioned study conducted on behalf of Akamai Technologies, Inc., August 17, 2009

<sup>ii</sup> Simic, Bojan, "The Performance of Web Applications: Customers Are Won or Lost in One Second," November 2008, Aberdeen Group

<sup>iii</sup> 150 Gomez customers, 34,000 Web pages and over 150 million page views captured between November 10 and December 10, 2009

<sup>iv</sup> Forrester Consulting, "eCommerce Web Site Performance Today: An Updated Look At Consumer Reaction To A Poor Online Shopping Experience," A commissioned study conducted on behalf of Akamai Technologies, Inc., August 17, 2009

<sup>v</sup> Schurman, Eric, Bing and Brutlag, Jake, Google Search, "Performance Related Changes and their User Impact," 2009 Velocity Conference

<sup>vi</sup> Dixon, Phil, Shopzilla, "Shopzilla's Site Redo – You Get What You Measure," 2009 Velocity Conference

<sup>vii</sup> [http://www.akamai.com/html/about/press/releases/2010/press\\_012610.html](http://www.akamai.com/html/about/press/releases/2010/press_012610.html)

<sup>viii</sup> While Wells Fargo and Wachovia announced their merger on January 1, 2009, they remain separate entities on the Gomez benchmark. Both maintain a separate branded Website and Gomez monitored both on its benchmark throughout the year.

<sup>ix</sup> According to Jupiter Research. See: <http://www.travelindustrywire.com/trends-detail-sid-25159.html>

<sup>x</sup> "When more Website visitors hurt your business: Are you ready for peak traffic?" Conducted for Gomez by Equation Research

<sup>xi</sup> Pew Internet & American Life Study: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/1248/americans-look-online-for-health-information>

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Specifications may change. Consult the technical documentation for the most current information. Some features described are extra cost options. Ask your sales representative for details.



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