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EURO-TOPTEN MAX

Maximising Topten Communication on Top Runner Products

Survey Report

No. 1

European visitor feed-back survey on Euro-Topten Websites

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Index

1	Initial Situation	3
2	Methods and Procedure	4
3	Preliminary Results	6
3.1	<i>Visitors</i>	6
3.2	<i>Usage of the website</i>	11
3.3	<i>Assessment of the website</i>	15
4	Appendix	17
4.1	<i>Questionnaire 1</i>	17
4.2	<i>Questionnaire 2</i>	22

1 INITIAL SITUATION

This report presents the methodology and progress of the 2012 feed-back survey of Euro-Topten websites and selected results. The objective was to provide information about the typical users of Euro-Topten and to find out how they assess different features of the websites.

The overall objective of Euro-Topten is to promote the market transformation towards energy efficient products. To achieve this goal, Euro-Topten operates several country specific websites in Europe, where the most energy efficient products for different categories and subcategories are listed. Euro-Topten firstly aims to a direct influence on the purchasing decisions of individuals. Second, the site forms the basis for further professional audiences, which use the websites and the criteria as a reference for own activities such as energy consulting, customer service, training, awareness raising and public relations. Through these activities further indirect effects are achieved, which are not necessarily noticed by the buyers themselves.

Internet-based information tools are always confronted with the problem, that there is no direct face-to-face interaction with its users. Hence, it is sometimes difficult to get an impression of the specific needs of the receiver of the information, the use of this information by the receiver and, in the end, the effect of the offered information to the decision making process of the receiver. Therefore it is necessary to constantly monitor which user groups visiting the website, to work with this user groups and consider their specific needs and to apply specific communication strategies and also try to evaluate, which effect occur from the information.

Building on the first information about user groups and the assessment of Euro-Topten websites the second round of the survey will provide further insights into the precise use of the information and the application on the users purchasing behaviour. In addition, a country-specific evaluation will be performed if the number of participants per country allows such an evaluation.

2 METHODS AND PROCEDURE

Over the past 10 years computer aided self interviews increasingly gained importance in the social sciences. This is mainly explained by the increasing number of internet users and the low cost of the survey method. In addition, data can be quickly and easily collected and processed, and in contrast to other survey forms the social desirability bias is rather low¹. A disadvantage of online surveys is the restriction of the representative of the medium, since the online population is characterized by certain socio-demographic characteristics. However, this restriction is not relevant for the survey of users of the Euro-Topten websites, since the population is given by the users of the websites and thus a closed group is questioned.

In order to get a better impression of the different user groups, which are using the Euro-Topten websites, the Wuppertal Institute performed a internet-based survey. The main questions of this first round are:

- Which user groups visit the site with what motivation?
- How assess the users certain features of the website?
- What are specific opportunities for improvement?

The web based feed-back survey was online on all active Euro-Topten partner websites from October to December 2012 (see Table 1). Overall, 2 085 participants opened the survey and 1 791 of them finished the whole survey. According to the web statistics this equals approximately 0.5% of the users, that visit the websites in this time.

For both questionnaires the Wuppertal Institute used LimeSurvey², an open source web-based survey application. The first questionnaire consisted of 17 questions that were partially closed- and partially open-ended to answer (see Appendix 4.1). The questionnaire was translated into the local languages, which are also used on the websites, by the project partners.

For the second round, the participants of the first survey were partially re-interviewed. Requirement was that they gave their e-mail address as well as their agreement to participate in a second survey in the first round. 1 043 participants provided their e-mail addresses and agreed to take part in a follow up survey.

The second round was no longer asking for the evaluation of the site and the specific characteristics from the users, but for the different sources of information and the influence on the purchasing behaviour (see (Appendix 4.2). This can be insightful for the manner in which the information of the Euro-Topten websites affects the decision making process of users.

As an incentive for both rounds of the survey, a prize draw was offered. For the first round, the prize was a Tchibo Caffissimo Duo coffee machine, which is one of the Topten products on the Austrian website. For the survey in Luxemburg and Austria it was possible to acquire further prizes, therefore in Luxemburg a Miele CM 500 coffee machine was offered and in Austria a LED lamp package. In the second round the prize was a package of three 7W Ledon LED lamps, which are also Euro-Topten products.

¹ cf. Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2009). Internet, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

² <http://www.limesurvey.org>

Table 1: Involved websites of the visitor feed-back survey

	Website	Language(s)
	topten.eu	English
	topprodukte.at/	Austrian
	topten.be/	Dutch French
	uspornespotrebnice.cz/	Czech
	ecotopten.de/	German
	ecotopten.gr/	Greek
	Euro-Topten.es/	Spanish
	topten-suomi.fi/	Finnish
	guidetopten.fr/	French
	Euro-Topten.it/	Italian
	top-10.lt/	Lithuanian
	oekotopten.lu/	German French
	besteprodukter.no/	Norse
	topten.info.pl/	Polish
	topten.pt/	Portuguese
	topten.info.ro/	Romanian
	toptensverige.se/	Swedish

3 PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The following section gives an overview of the main results related to the characteristics of the visitors of Euro-Topten websites and the usage and assessment of the websites from the first round of the survey. A more detailed analysis and country specific results will be published together with the results from the second round of the survey at the end of 2013.

The survey participants are characterised as following:

- 1 008 (56%) are male users, 717 (40%) are female users
- the age of the users vary from 8 to 79 years with a mean of 44 years
- 1 560 (87%) participants are using the websites in a personal capacity, 183 (10%) in a professional capacity. Among the professional users energy consultants are the predominantly group (66 participants or 36% of the professional users)
- 969 (54%) of the users visit the websites to inform a specific purchasing decision
- 856 (48%) visited the websites for the first time
- 573 (32%) use the websites frequently (more than 4 times a year), 332 (19%) use the websites up to three times a year
- 599 (33%) find out about the websites via a web search, 467 (26%) via advertisement or article
- 1 399 (78%) of the users are interested in the category “household appliances”, followed by 881 (49%) of the users who are interested in “lighting” and 737 (41%) interested in “consumer electronics”
- 1 260 (70%) assess the websites as easy or very easy to use
- The best rated properties of the websites are the easy navigation, the product comparison and selection criteria. The least rated properties are the actuality and the range of product categories of the websites.
- 1 528 (85%) would recommend the website to a friend

3.1 Visitors

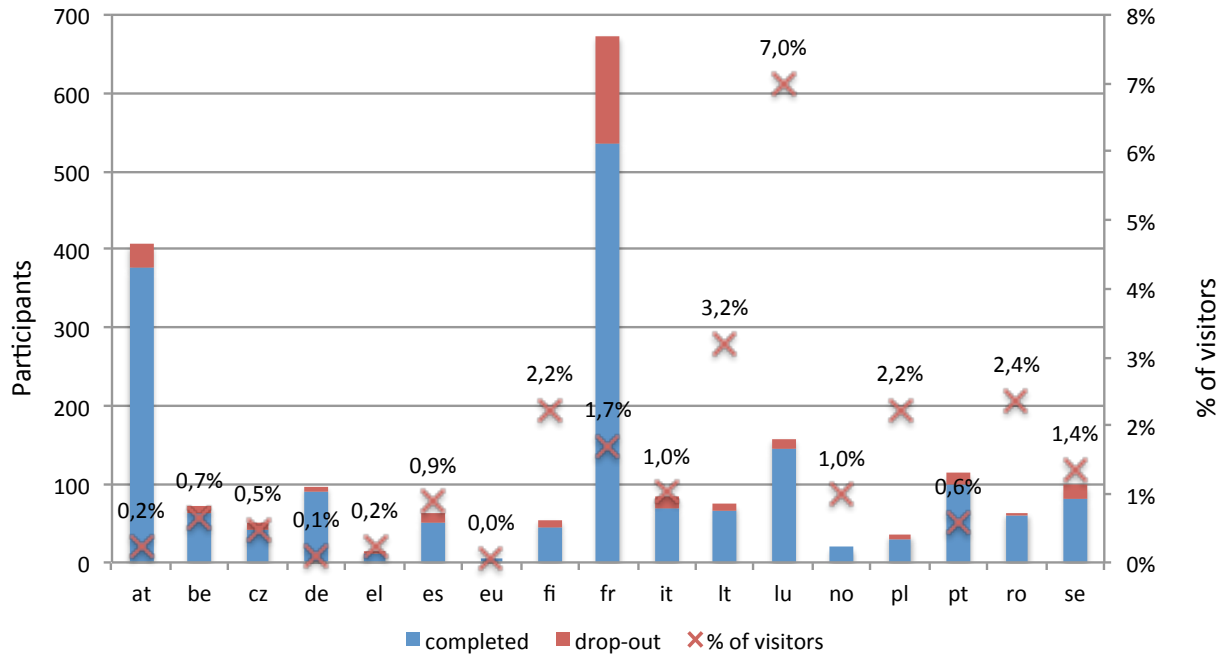
Over the three month period of the survey 2 085 visitors activated the web survey, only 1 791 of them finished the whole survey. Therefore 294 participants ‘drop out’ of the survey during the answer process. For the following calculations and statistics only the participants who filled out the whole survey will be taken into account, because it is unclear whether the dropped out participants finished the survey in a second attempt later.

From October to December over 400.000 people visited the Euro-Topten websites (based on Google Analytics). Compared to this, 0.5% of these visitors take part in the web survey. The number of participants and the percentage compared to the monthly users varies between the different country websites (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Number of participants per country and percentage of monthly users

Persons which didn't finish the questionnaire are listed as "drop-out". The percentage of visitors is calculated on the basis of the number of unique visitors over the three month period of the survey (oct-dec 2012).

n=2085



	Austria	Belgium	Czech Republic	Germany	Greece	Spain	Europe	Finland	France
participants	406	72	50	98	15	62	4	55	673
drop-out	30	10	7	8	3	11	0	9	138
completed	376	62	43	90	12	51	4	46	535
% of visitors	0,2%	0,7%	0,5%	0,1%	0,2%	0,9%	0,0%	2,2%	1,7%

	Italy	Lithuania	Luxemburg	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Sweden
participants	85	74	159	19	36	114	64	99
drop-out	15	7	14	0	5	15	5	17
completed	70	67	145	19	31	99	59	82
% of visitors	1,0%	3,2%	7,0%	1,0%	2,2%	0,6%	2,4%	1,4%

Asked for their background of using the website, the most participants quoted, that they visiting the website in a personal capacity (see Fig. 2). 10% (183) of the participants can be related to a professional use of the website. The share of professional users is particularly high in Romania (36% or 15 participants) and Spain (29% or 15 participants).

Fig. 2: "Are you visiting the website in a personal or professional capacity?"
Single choice question.
n=1791

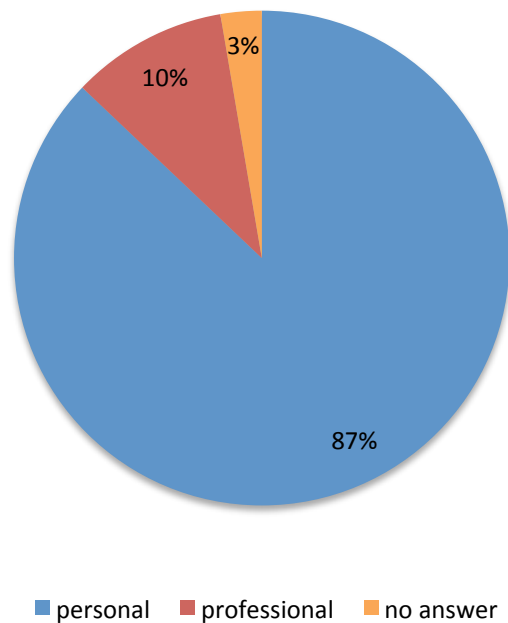


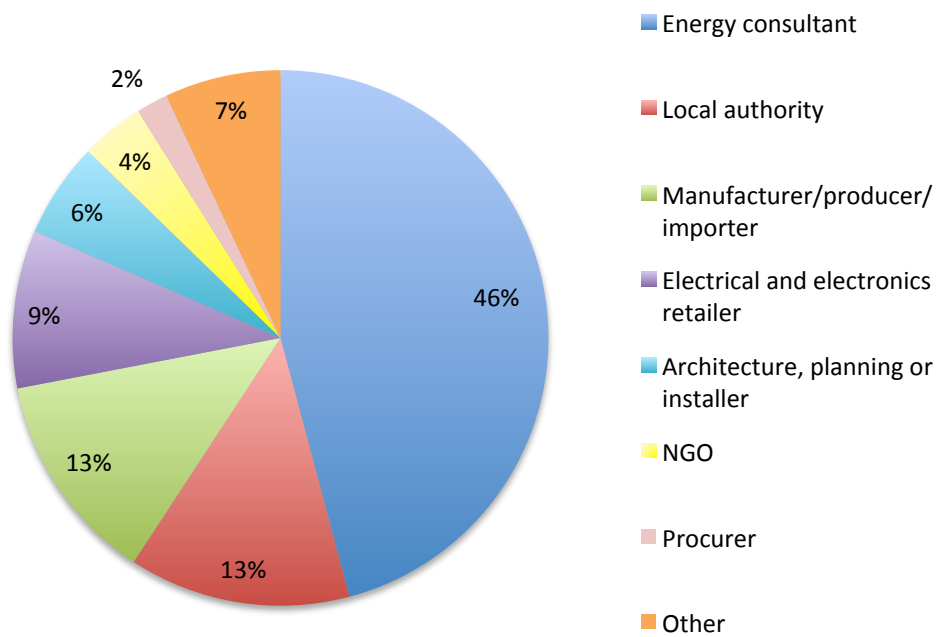
Fig. 3 shows, that the professional users are mainly related to energy consultancy (46% or 72 participants). This shows, firstly, that the Euro-Topten websites serve also as a reference for appropriate energy advice and that the information are made available to a wider range of people, not only for the visitors of the websites itself.

Fig. 3: "If visiting the website in a professional capacity, which of the following best describes your organisation/company?"

Only answered by persons which answered the previous question with "professional".

Single choice question.

n=183



Users of the website are 44 years old on average, a relatively high average age for web-based information (see Fig. 4). Based on the age groups, the Euro-Topten users distribute mainly to the 30-60 year-olds, with a relatively high purchasing power (1237 or 73%). Overall, among the users are more men than women, which is typical for internet-based information services (see Fig. 5).

Fig. 4: Age
 Single choice question.
 n=1702 (no answer: 89)

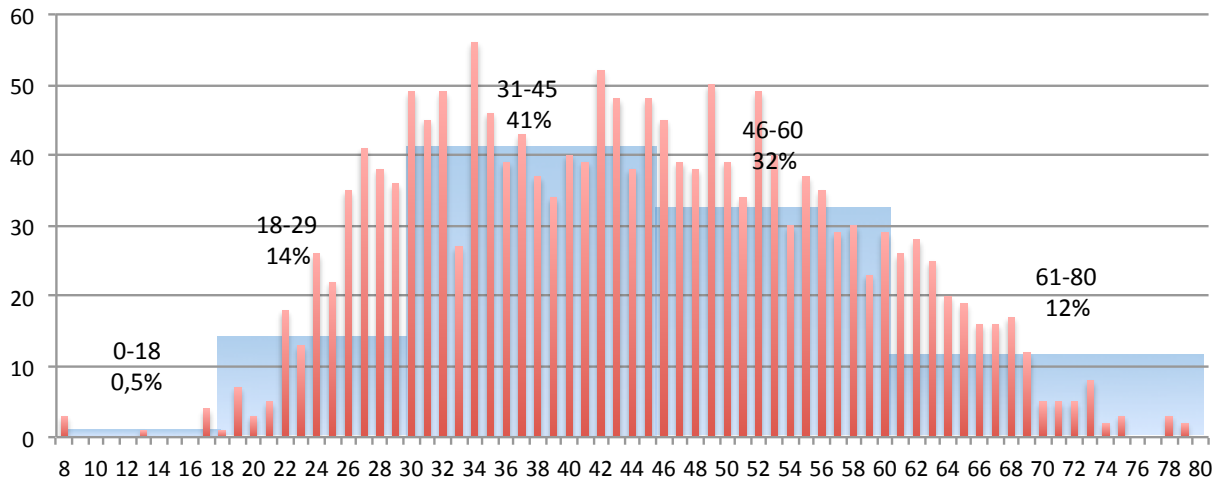
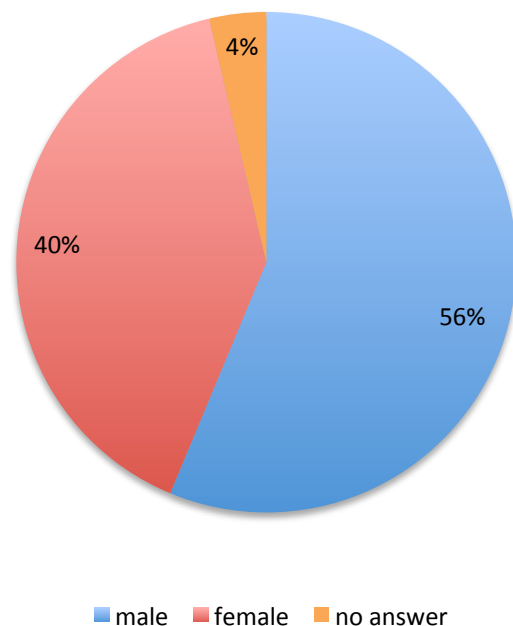


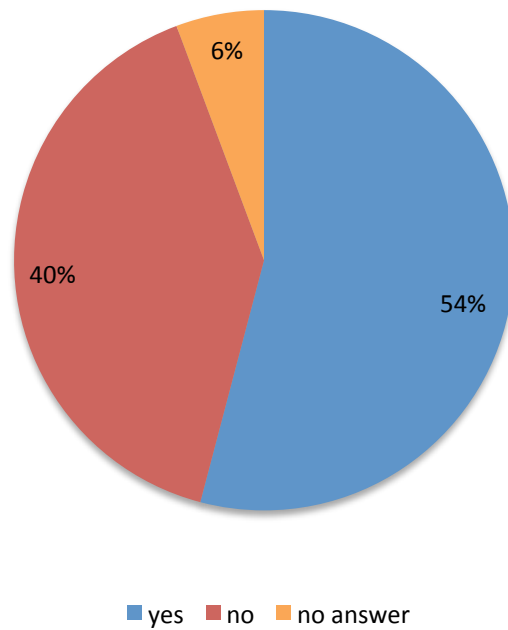
Fig. 5: Gender
 Single choice question.
 n=1791



3.2 Usage of the website

The majority of visitors (949 or 54%) uses the pages to support specific purchasing decisions (see Fig. 6).

Fig. 6: "Are you visiting the website to inform a specific purchasing decision?"
Single choice question.
n=1791

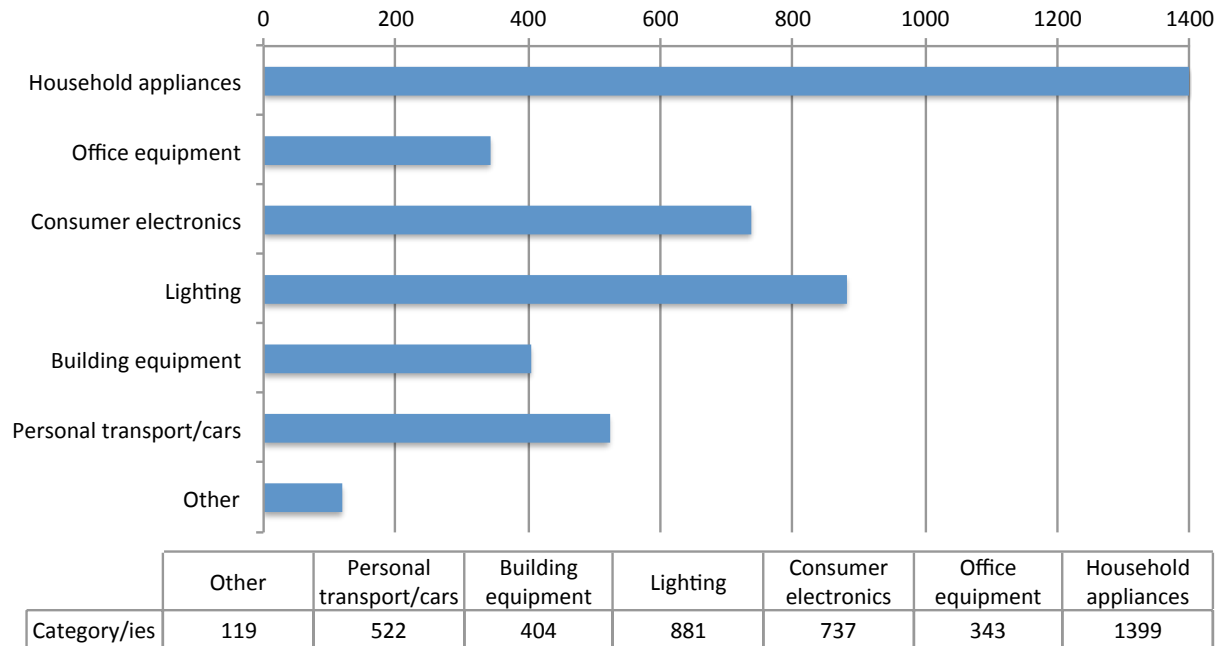


Regarding the most requested categories household appliances, lighting and consumer electronics are the most demanded categories by users (see Fig. 7). This is consistent with the monitoring of the pageviews on the Euro-Topten websites.

Fig. 7: "Which of the following product category/ies are you interested in?"

Multiple choice question.

n=1791

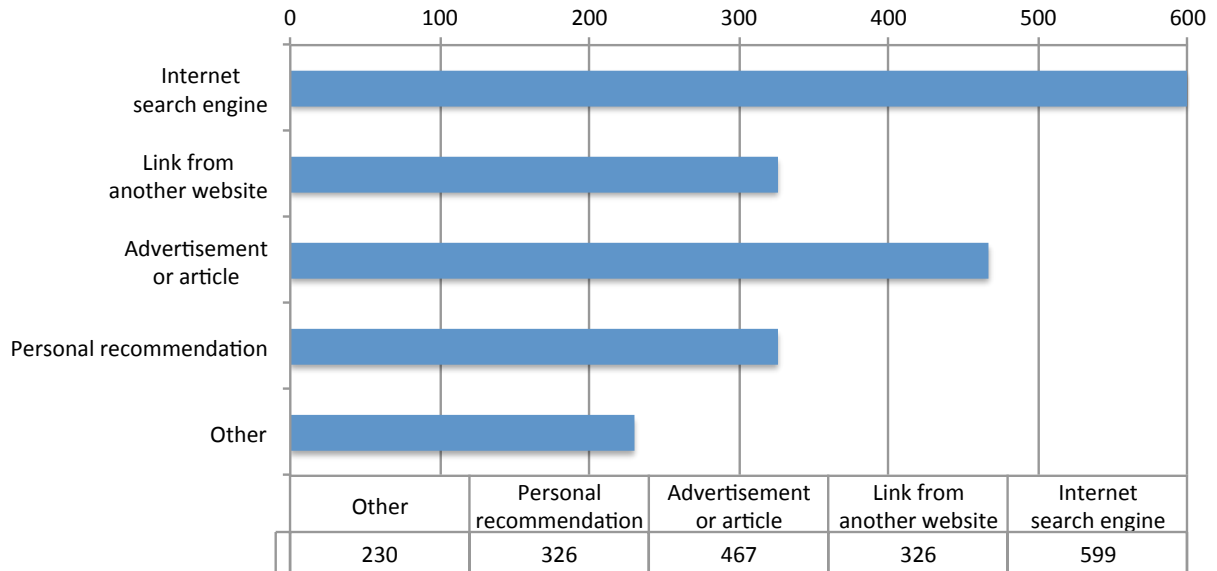


The users mainly find out about the Euro-Topten websites via internet search engines as well as articles and advertisements (see Fig. 8). Among the "other" responses are mainly links from other websites and references from radio and TV.

Fig. 8: "How did you find out about the website?"

Multiple choice question.

n=1791



More than half of the respondents visited the website for the first time (see Fig. 9). This suggests a continued high attraction to new users of the Euro-Topten websites. For already well-established Euro-Topten websites as the Austrian side, the share of first-time visitors is only at 18% (or 68 visitors). Of the repeated visitors around 63% visit the page more than 3 times per year (see Fig. 10).

Fig. 9: "Is this your first visit to the website?"
Single choice question. n=1791

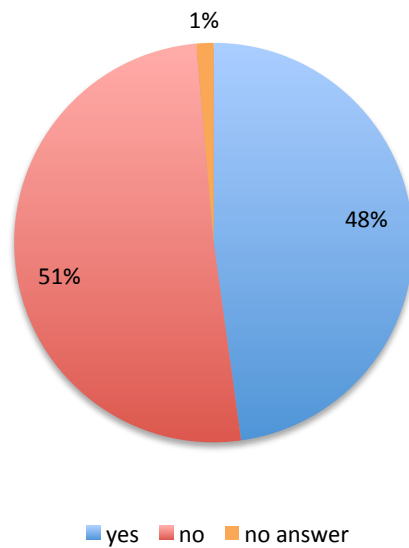
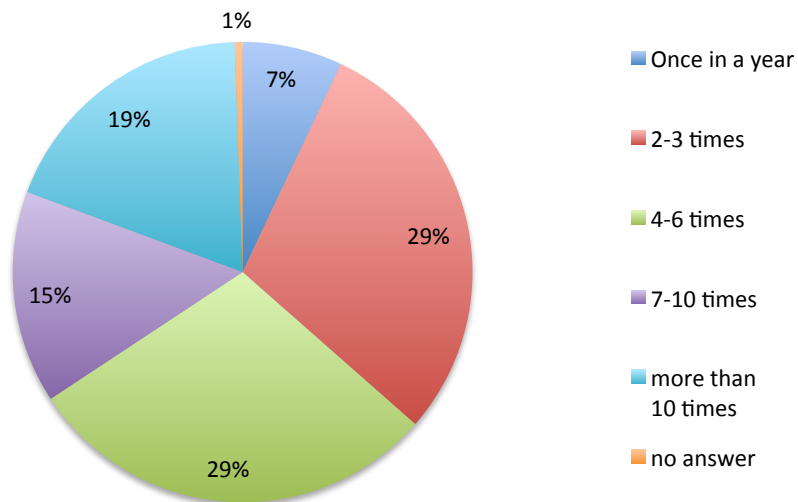


Fig. 10: "If you have visited the website before, on how many occasions would you say you have used it in the past year?"
Only answered by persons which answered the previous question with "no".
Single choice question. n=910



3.3 Assessment of the website

Overall, the visitors assess the website very positive (see Fig. 12). Especially the easy navigation of the website, the product comparison and the transparent selection of products are rated positive. The least rated properties are the actuality and the range of product categories of the websites, but still 58% of the respondents agree with the statement, that the actuality and range of product lists are sufficient. Also, 85% would recommend the website to a friend (see Fig. 12).

Fig. 11: "Overall, how easy to use did you find the website?"

Single choice questions.

n=1791

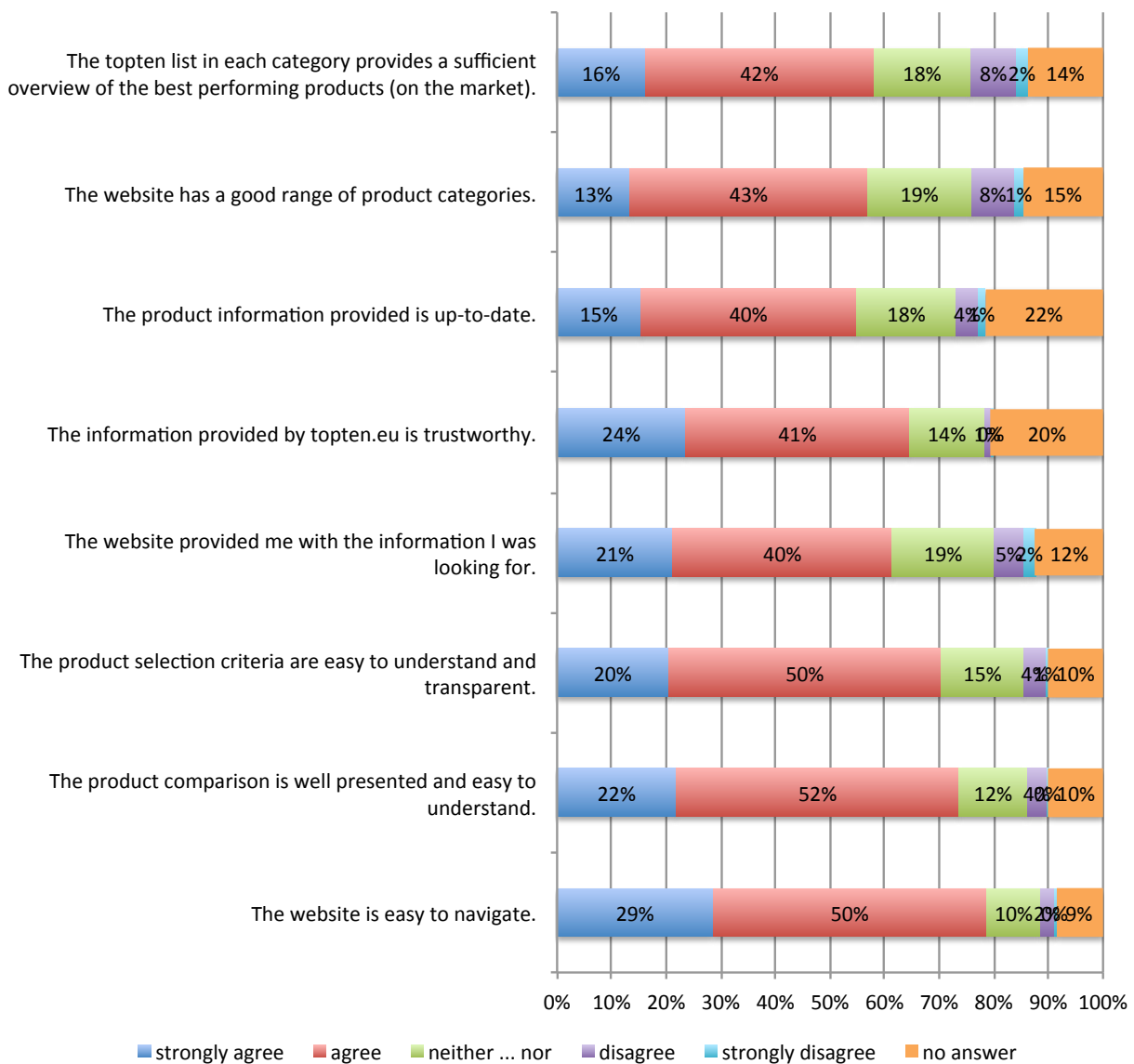
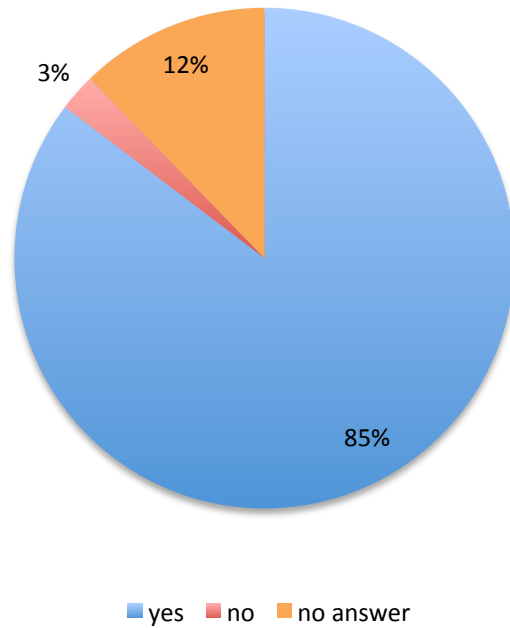


Fig. 12: "Would you recommend the website to a friend?"
Single choice question.
n=1791



4 APPENDIX

4.1 Questionnaire 1

European user-feedback survey

To help us make topten.eu as user-friendly as possible, we would appreciate your feedback via a short survey. The survey will take only a few minutes to complete. Participants that complete the full survey will have the chance to win a coffee machine. To enter the prize draw, please provide an active email address.

This survey is anonymous. No data provided will be passed on to third parties.

(Q1) Your usage of the website topten.eu

Are you visiting the website topten.eu in a personal or professional capacity?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Personal
- Professional

(Q2) If visiting the website topten.eu in a professional capacity, which of the following best describes your organisation/company?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was 'Professional' at question '1 [1]' (Are you visiting the website topten.eu in a personal or professional capacity?)

Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Electrical and electronics retailer
- Architecture, planning or installer
- Energy Consultant (e.g. Consumer Advice Centre or Energy Agency)
- Manufacturer/Producer/Importer
- Procurer
- Local authority
- Other

(Q3) Are you visiting the website topten.eu to inform a specific purchasing decision?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

Yes

No

(Q4) Which of the following product category/ies are you interested in?

Please choose **all** that apply:

Household appliances

Office equipment

Consumer electronics

Lighting

Building equipment

Personal transport/Cars

Other:

(Q5) Are there any additional product categories you would like to see included?

Please write your answer here:

(Q6) How did you find out about topten.eu?

Please choose **all** that apply:

Internet search engine

Personal recommendation

Advertisement or article

Link from another website

Other:

(Q7) Please specify from which website.**Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**

Answer was at question '6 [6]' (How did you find out about topten.eu?)

Please write your answer here:

(Q8) Is this your first visit to topten.eu?Please choose **only one** of the following: yes no**(Q9) If you have visited topten.eu before, on how many occasions would you say you have used it in the past year? Please tick as appropriate.****Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:**Answer was 'no' at question '8 [8]' (Is this your first visit to topten.eu?) *and* Answer was 'no' at question '8 [8]' (Is this your first visit to topten.eu?)Please choose **only one** of the following: Once 2-3 times 4-6 times 7-10 times more than 10 times**Assessment of topten.eu****(Q10) Overall, how easy to use did you find topten.eu?**

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

Very easy to use	Easy to use	Neither easy nor difficult to use	Not very easy to use	Rather difficult to use

(Q11) Please tell us about your experience of using topten.eu by clicking the score that best describes your experience.
 5 buttons from 'Strongly agree' to 'Strongly disagree'

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Topten.eu is easy to navigate.					
The product comparison is well presented and easy to understand.					
The product selection criteria are easy to understand and transparent.					
Topten.eu provided me with the information I was looking for.					
The information provided by topten.eu is trustworthy.					
The product information provided is up-to-date.					
Topten.eu has a good range of product categories.					
The topten list in each category provides a sufficient overview of the best performing products (on the market).					

(Q12) Would you recommend topten.eu to a friend?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

Yes

No

(Q13) Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

Please write your answer here:

Personal details**(Q14) Year of birth**

Please write your answer here:

(Q15) Gender

Please choose **only one** of the following:

Male

Female

(Q16) Thank you for taking part in this survey. All completed surveys will be entered into our prize draw to win a prize. Please ensure that you have provided us with your email address to enable us to notify the winner. The survey closes on 31.12.2012 and winners will be notified by 31.03.2013.

Please write your answer here:

(Q17) We would like to ask a few participants to take part in a follow-up survey to learn more about your use of the website topten.eu. May we contact you one more time for this purpose?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

Yes

No

4.2 Questionnaire 2

Second European user feed-back survey

Welcome to the second round of the European Visitor-Feed-Back Survey!

Thank you for your time to answer a few short questions. We would like to know how you purchase appliances and what appliances you have purchased in the past year. The survey will take less than 10 minutes of your time.

Participants that complete the full survey will have the chance to win a package of three LED lamps. Simply answer all questions and indicate at the end of the survey that you want to participate in the prize draw.

(Q1) If I buy an item, it is important for me...

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
that it was produced in an environmentally friendly way.					
that it is of good quality and long-lasting.					
that it is inexpensive to purchase.					
that costs of operation are low.					
that the design or colour is attractive.					
that it is of a certain brand.					
that it consumes as little energy as possible.					
that it consumes almost no energy in stand-by-modus.					
that a long warranty is included.					
that it is awarded with a very good energy efficiency label.					
that its operation is as environmentally friendly as possible.					

(Q2) In terms of a chosen appliance, where do you buy it?Please choose **all** that apply:

- Internet
- Retailer
- Other:

(Q3) If you purchase an item/appliance, do you orient yourself by criteria or product lists of topten.eu?Please choose **only one** of the following:

- Yes
- No

(Q4) How important do you consider the following sources of information for the purchase of a product/appliance?

Please choose the appropriate response for each item:

	very im- portant	important	neutral	less im- portant	not im- portant
Producer prospectus and information					
Articles/reports in newspapers					
topten.eu					
Information sites on the internet					
Professional advice in a shop.					
Friends and acquaintances					

**(Q5) Please state if you have purchased one or more products of the categories shown below within the last 12 months.
For the applicable categories, you can then specify more precisely which items you purchased, how many of them you bought and whether the items purchased are among the topten.eu recommendations.**

Please choose **all** that apply:

- Household Appliances
- Office Equipment
- Consumer Electronics
- Lighting
- Building Equipment
- Mobility

(Q6)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was at question '5 [Q0005]

Total number of purchased items Thereof topten.eu products

Fridge / Fridge Freezer		
Freezer		
Dishwasher		
Washing Machine		
Tumble Drier		
Vacuum Cleaner		
Coffee Machine		
Other		

(Q7) Please specify which other household appliance did you purchase.

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was greater than or equal to '1' at question '6 [Q0006]

Please write your answer here:

(Q8)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was at question '5 [Q0005]

	Total number of purchased items	Thereof topten.eu products
Monitors - Flat Screen		
Inkjet Printers		
Laser Printers/Multifunctional		
Other		

(Q9) Please specify which other office equipments you purchased.

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was greater than or equal to '1' at question '8 [Q0008]

Please write your answer here:

(Q10)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was at question '5 [Q0005]

	Total number of purchased items	Thereof topten.eu products
TV		
Other		

(Q11) Please specify which other kind of consumer electronics did you purchase.

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was greater than or equal to '1' at question '10 [Q0010]

Please write your answer here:

(Q12)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was at question '5 [Q0005]

Total number of purchased items Thereof topten.eu products

Energy saving lamp (CFL)		
LED		
Halogen		
Other		

(Q13) Please specify which other kind of lighting did you purchase.

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was greater than or equal to '1' at question '12 [Q0012]

Please write your answer here:

(Q14)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was at question '5 [Q0005]

Total number of purchased items Thereof topten.eu products

Heating Boiler		
Heat Pump		
Circulation Pump		
Air Condition		
Other		

(Q15) Please specify which other kind of building equipment did you purchase?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was greater than or equal to '1' at question '14 [Q0014]

Please write your answer here:

(Q16)

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was at question '5 [Q0005]

	Total number of purchased items Thereof topten.eu products	
Car	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

(Q17) Please specify which other kind of mobility item did you purchase?

Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:

Answer was greater than or equal to '1' at question '16 [Q0016]

Please write your answer here:

(Q18) Do you want to participate in the prize draw and have the chance to win a package of three LED lamps?

Please choose **only one** of the following:

Yes

No