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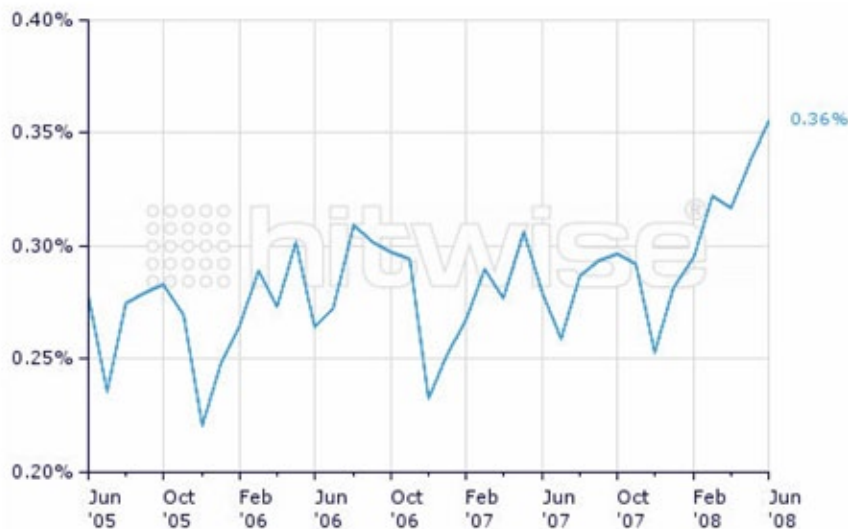
Demand for personalized health services online

While the launch of the 3G iPhone has our attention on the uptake of mobile apps and services, I believe this points to a greater trend of the adoption of personalised web services. The health care industry is one leading example - two websites that have caught my interest recently are the genetic web-based service, 23andMe and Google Health, which allows users to organise their own health information.

There are many trust, privacy and regulatory issues that need to be nussed out before these types of websites will flourish. Similarly to the banking industry where online services have been widely adopted by users to gain greater control over their finances, web-based personalised health services have the potential to help consumers manage their own health care.

Hitwise data indicates that the climate for these kind of services in Australia could be ripe. Visits to our Health & Medical – Information category was at the highest point ever over a 3-year time period in June 2008. There was a 27.4% increase in visits to Health & Medical – Information websites year-on-year comparing June 07 and June 08.

Australian Visits to Health and Medical - Information Industry



■ Health and Medical - Information

Monthly market share in 'All Categories', measured by visits, based on Australian usage.
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Virtual Medical Centre, an Australian website that provides health information written by medical professionals, was one of the fastest growing websites contributing to the growth in this category. Traffic to Virtual Medical Centre gathered momentum in August last year, and since then has increased by 322.7% amongst all websites.

While it appears that health information websites are burgeoning in Australia – are consumers willing to yield their health details online yet? Your thoughts?



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