**Press Release:**

**INDEPENDENT Digital and Independent.ie has** recorded yet another record year, according to figures just published by ABC Electronic (ABCe) – the online / digital arm of newspaper circulation auditors.

The most dramatic news year in Ireland since the advent of the internet saw millions of people flock to Independent.ie for news and analysis. Crucially, research shows that people who use Independent.ie are highly engaged loyal users with an appetite for current affairs/news content and the readers are more likely to be Irish.

The latest audited figures from ABCe show that Independent Digital racked up **3.15 million** unique browsers in November, up 37% on its audit just over a year ago.

Page views were also massively up at 41.2 million. The figures show that hits were highest on heaviest news days with a record number accessing Independent.ie around the arrival of the IMF negotiators in Ireland.

“What’s exceptionally interesting about these figures is that it’s content and depth of content available on Independent.ie that is driving traffic. Independent.ie users are spending, on average, 10 minutes reading our content. Time on site has increased by 25% in the last two years*,”* said Aisling Nagle of Independent’s Digital business.

“Far from online consumption hurting print sales what we’re actually seeing is, that as we deliver innovation in online news, large spikes in online actually correspond to high newspaper sales and high news values.”

More than 70 per cent of page views to Independent.ie came from the topical news sections (Homepage, Breaking, National, and World News, plus our Opinion, Weather, Most Popular and Topics pages).

In addition to enjoying a continuing and strengthening appetite for Independent.ie as the news provider of choice for online news consumers in Ireland we are also beginning to see key trends and changes in the way our content is being consumed. Findings from Ireland’s largest online media consumption survey (over 16,000 respondents) carried out by Independent.ie in November 2010 reveal that:

* Independent.ie visitors are highly engaged, heavy internet users, 97% of whom are accessing the internet at least once a day.  They are also highly active in the social media space, with 73% of respondents having visited a social media site in the past four weeks. 62% of our online audience are based in Ireland and 77% are ABC1's.
* As a result of broader coverage and improvements in broadband communications in Ireland, more and more of our visitors are accessing the site from their homes, evidenced by the fact that just short of 70 per cent of respondents completed the survey in their homes.
* Despite the rapid growth in the number of Irish Smartphone (600K in 2010) and tablet owners, for 71 per cent of respondents the laptop/notebook is still the preferred way to access our content.  However, we have seen growth in the use of other devices, with 22 per cent of those surveyed, using mobile and iPad devices. This growth is expected to increase in 2011.

"The results of the survey show that we have very loyal consumers and that they are using Independent.ie in increasing numbers, for more time at a sitting and in much greater depth,” concluded Aisling Nagle.

- ENDS -

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**Independent Digital** is the digital arm of Independent News & Media Group.

Independent Digital operates sites such as [Independent.ie](http://www.independent.ie), [Herald.ie](http://www.herald.ie), [LoadzaJobs.ie](http://www.loadzajobs.ie), [LoadzaCars.ie](http://www.loadzacars.ie), [Yourlocal.ie](http://www.yourlocal.ie), Independent Local Sites, and [TheMeetingPoint.ie](http://www.themeetingpoint.ie) and delivers over 41.2 million page impressions.

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