



We Have Much Work to Do, People...

Posted by [Prof. Goose](#) on May 10, 2006 - 10:05pm

Topic: [Sociology/Psychology](#)

Tags: [australia](#), [gas prices](#), [google](#), [new zealand](#), [peak oil](#), [portland](#) [[list all tags](#)]

A couple of interesting things emerged in the comment thread of the previous post. You might have seen us play with [blogpulse in past posts](#). Well now, google has a new tool (posted by stiffpicken and expanded on by Mike A) that looks at trends in google searches. Here's a link to the ['peak oil' search](#), and here's a link to the ['peak oil' versus 'gas prices'](#) search. Click around between the two, and you will notice a few things.

Stiffpicken says rightly: "I punched in "peak oil" ... search volume appears to have hit its own plateau but news volume is on the rise." Then Mike A notices: "What is really SOBERING though, is to compare search and news volumes between 'peak oil' and 'gas prices'. 'Peak oil' hardly shows a blip compared to 'gas prices', which implies to me that most people are still not making the connection. [...] Again, check the distribution of languages - in English 'gas prices' have far, far more results, but the Europeans seem to "get it", with 'peak oil' having more responses in Swedish, Finnish, Dutch & German (in that volume order)."

Then I was playing around and made a couple more observations: 1) Portland seems to be the most peak aware city via google, followed by Austin and Seattle. 2) BUT, even more interestingly, look at the regions tab. New Zealand and Australia have more raw numbers of people (i.e., not percentages folks) searching for "peak oil" than in the United States! What's the population proportion between the US and those two countries? 20m-ish for Australia and 4m-ish for New Zealand, compared to 300m-ish for the US!

We have much work to do in the US folks. Much much work. And good on you New Zealand and Oz!



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