

Web crashes lose custom

Lack of web performance monitoring is impacting UK e-commerce arena

OVER ONE third of UK companies aren't monitoring their website performance, and website crashes have forced consumers to abandon their online shopping, according to two recent reports.

Web performance firm CatchFire Systems claims that 90 per cent of UK online consumers have been forced to quit their transactions online because e-commerce web applications have failed. More than half of the consumers interviewed said that they had been forced to move to alternative channels, such as call centres and retail outlets, while others gave up completely or turned to competitors.

Around 70 per cent of these

lost transactions were worth £200 or more, involving financial services, booking, purchasing consumer goods and gambling.

And the survey reveals that the most serious complaint was when the website failed at the end of the transaction or while payment was being processed, as it forced consumers to repeat the operation or make changes to ensure the transaction had been successful.

While companies are losing online customers through web crashes, the *Web effectiveness report 2003* by website testing firm SciVisum finds that 34 per cent of organisations surveyed never monitor their website performance. Many of those

which said they did check their websites only did so after customers complained, and almost half relied on internal colleagues to notify them of problems.

The survey found that just 33 per cent of those questioned from the retail sector performed page availability testing. And in the financial sector, while all the companies had websites, half admitted to never monitoring their performance. Government organisations fared better — over 70 per cent of this sector's organisations monitoring their website performances more closely.

One of their main focuses is on accessibility for disabled users.