

Mutual Fund Ownership Returns to Near-Record Levels, November 2006

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Annual ICI Study Shows That Fund Investors' Internet Use Is Nearly Universal

Washington, DC, November 1, 2006 – Nearly 55 million U.S. households now own mutual funds, according to ICI's [annual survey](#). That's about half of all households in America – the highest level of ownership since the peak of more than 56 million households in 2001. An estimated 96 million individuals are fund shareholders today, according to the survey.

The survey also finds that more than nine out of 10 fund-owning households now have Internet access, up from two-thirds in 2000. Internet access has grown most rapidly among older shareholders: the share of fund investors age 65 or older who have Internet access rose from 63 percent to 72 percent during the past 12 months, according to the survey, and has more than doubled since 2000.

"The Internet has become central to many shareholders' management of their finances," said Sandra West, Director of ICI's Investor Research program. "Today, about eight in 10 shareholders who access the Internet go online for financial purposes, such as to check their bank or investment accounts, obtain investment information, or buy or sell investments."

Additional survey findings include:

- Most mutual fund shareholders have moderate incomes. About three in five U.S. households owning mutual funds have incomes between \$25,000 and \$99,999. Mutual fund ownership increases with household income; 70 percent of all U.S. households with incomes of \$50,000 or more own funds in 2006.
- Mutual fund shareholders are in their peak earnings and savings years. Two-thirds of mutual fund-owning households are headed by individuals between the ages of 35 and 64. Since 1998, more than half of households in this age range have owned mutual funds.
- Ownership of mutual funds through employer-sponsored retirement plans continues to rise. 40.6 million households own funds outside workplace retirement plans, while 38.3 million households own funds through these plans. A decade ago, roughly 10.4 million more households owned funds outside of employer plans than owned inside such plans.

The study, [Ownership of Mutual Funds and Use of the Internet, 2006](#), is based on a survey of 3,000 randomly selected U.S. households conducted in June 2006.