

UKGAP Theme 3 Gathering and maintaining information on our geodiversity

UKGAP Indicator 7 The total number of published geological maps at 1:50 000 scale which have been revised (either completely or partially re-surveyed; refitted 1" to 1:50 000 topographic base map; or, where elements have been modelled into a 3-dimensional format).

Relevance

This indicator is a measure of the effort and investment put into furthering geological knowledge.

Data Sources

All data has been supplied by the British Geological Survey (BGS) and the Office of National Statistics website.

Data

Since this indicator was developed the way people access geological data has changed with the increasing use of the internet and wide adoption of smart phones. For this reason, data is presented on downloads of map tiles and use of the BGS website rather than revised 1:50 000 scale maps.

In October 2012, the UK's first 4G network was launched, offering faster mobile broadband than the existing 2G and 3G networks previously provided. In 2014, the areas covered by 4G services are expanding steadily. Recent developments have not been limited to mobile broadband, with the availability of wireless (Wi-Fi) hotspots also increasing at a rapid rate. These are now regularly available at locations such as pubs, cafes and hotels. The availability of both mobile broadband and Wi-Fi networks means that mobile Internet is now used by more people than ever before.

In 2014, almost 7 in 10 adults (68%) had used devices such as mobile phones, portable computers (tablet or laptop) or other hand held devices to access the mobile Internet, away from home or work in the last 3 months. Almost all those aged 16 to 24 (96%) had used a mobile phone or portable device to access the Internet "on the go", compared with only 23% of those aged 65 and over (Office for National Statistics, 2014).

Figure 1 – Households with internet access, 1998 to 2014 (ONS data)

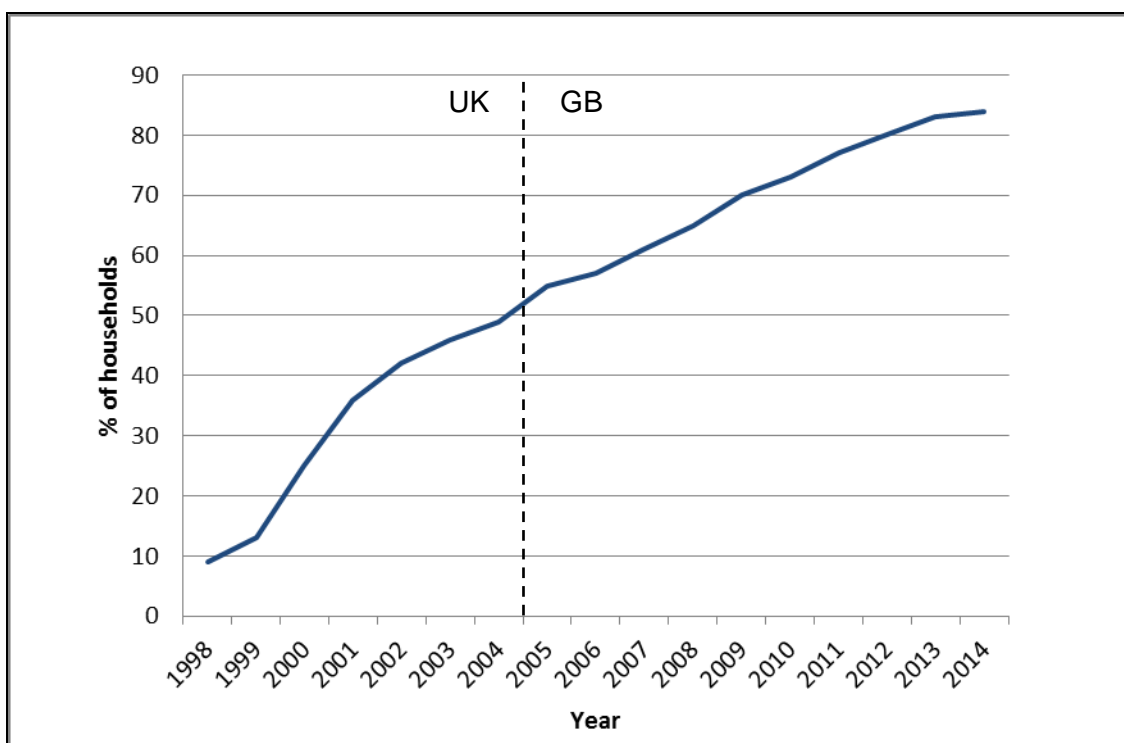


Figure 2 – Number of adults (aged 16+) in millions who use the internet every day (ONS data).

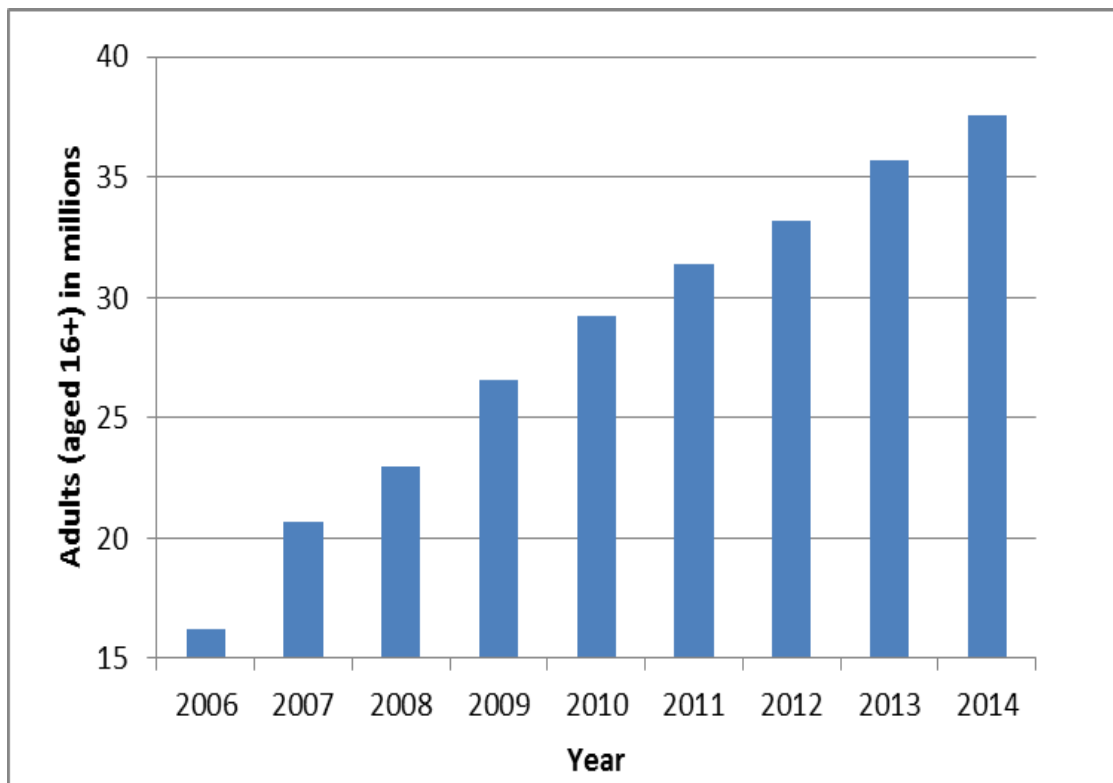


Figure 3 – Number of map tile request by month for September 2010 to February 2013

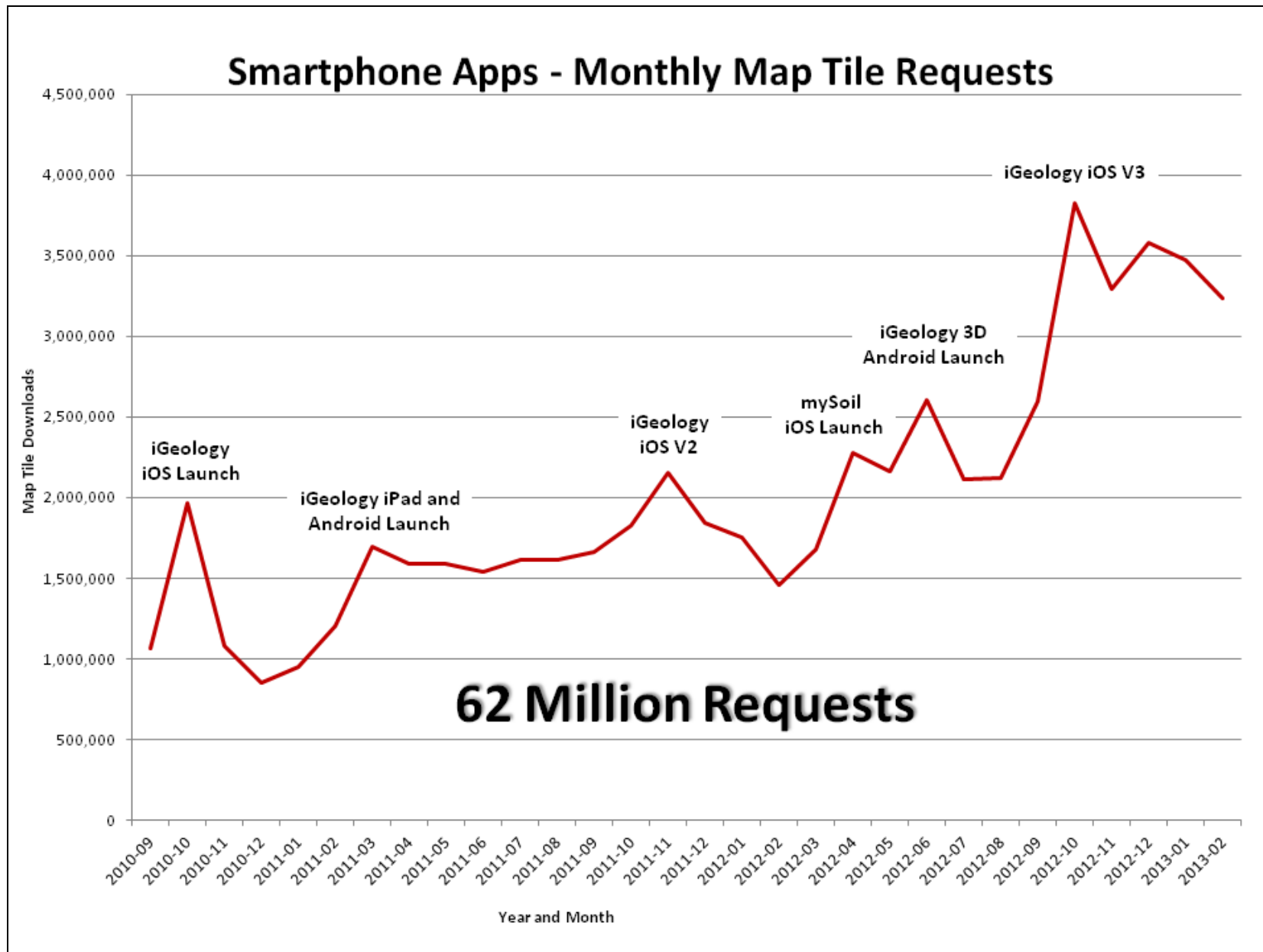
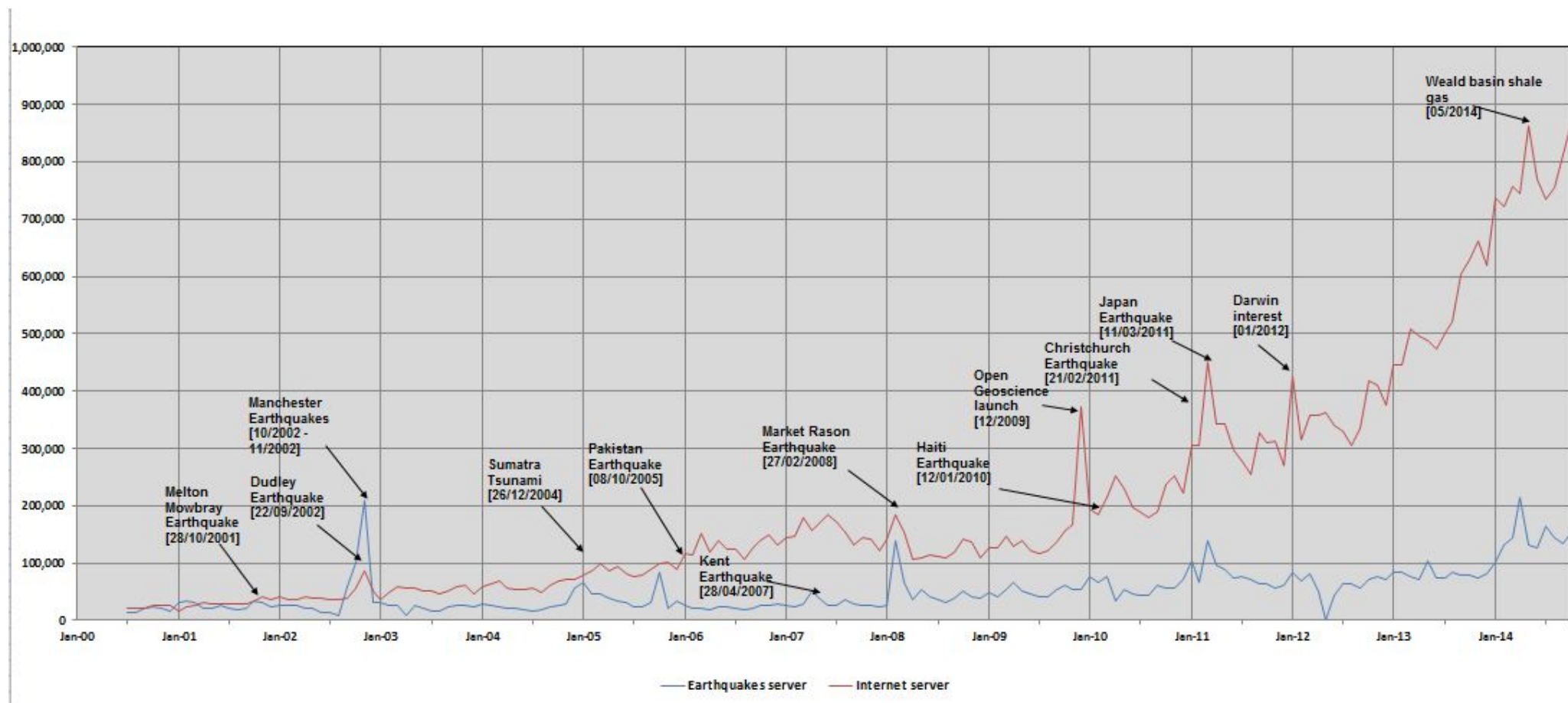


Figure 4 – Hits on the BGS earthquake and internet servers between June 2000 and September 2014.



Assessment of trend

Figure 3 shows the number of map tile requests from smartphone apps between September 2010 and February 2013. Overall there is a progressive increase in the number of downloads over the period assessed, with peaks in downloads relating to releases of new versions of the software. The largest peak corresponds with the release of version 3 of the software in October 2012, with almost 4 million downloads.

Figure 4 shows hits on the earthquake and BGS internet servers between June 2000 and September 2014. From around 25,000 hits per day in 2000, access to the main BGS sever has increased to around 850,000 per day. There are obvious peaks in the data related to local or global geological events, such as earthquakes and, most recently, the Weald Basin shale gas exploration, with an extra 100,000 to 150,000 hits per day.

The data from the Office of National Statistics shows that:

- In 2014, 38 million adults (76%) in Great Britain accessed the internet every day, 21 million more than in 2006, when directly comparable records began.
- Access to the internet using a mobile phone more than doubled between 2010 and 2014, from 24% to 58%.
- In Great Britain, 22 million households (84%) had Internet access in 2014, up from 57% in 2006.

This upward in increased internet use and the increase in access to the internet through mobile phones is reflected in the data from BGS.

Data limitations and future recommendations

It is recommended that the indicator is reworded to better reflect the way people use and access data.

References

Office for National Statistics, 2014. Internet Access – Households and Individuals 2014. Available from <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/rdit2/internet-access---households-and-individuals/2014/stb-ia-2014.html> [last accessed 29 May 2015].