



Participant Services That Matter

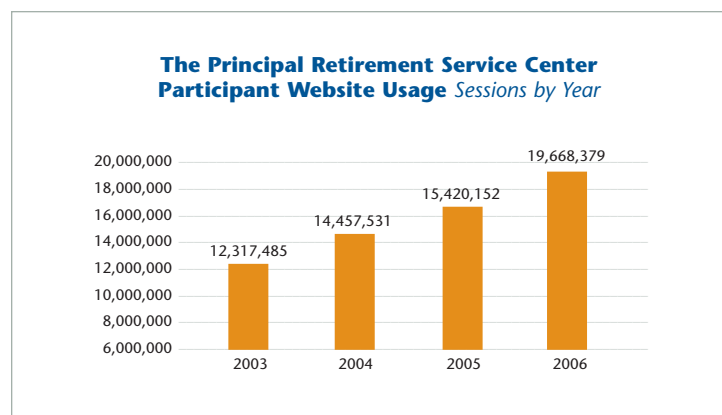
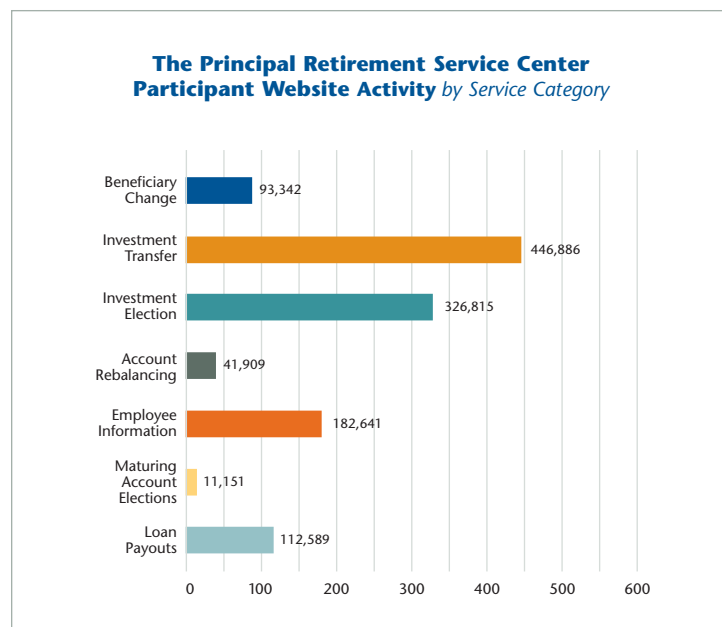
Top Tools and Services

When it comes to needing retirement plan information, not all participants are alike. Some want a more technological approach, while others prefer one-on-one service. A more successful retirement program also requires flexibility, education, and attention, addressing employee needs from pre-enrollment through retirement.

- **Telephone Representatives** – According to a 2006 Retirement Plan Participant Study conducted by Boston Research Group on the retirement industry, 44 percent of participants called a telephone representative to inquire about their retirement plan features. The percentage of Principal Financial Group participants that called and spoke to a representative was equal to that of the industry (approximately 44 percent).

- **Website** – Overall, a website was the most common communication channel used, by more than 50 percent of retirement plans participants.¹ **Likewise, plan participants with services provided by The Principal continued to utilize The Principal Retirement Service Center® as their primary online tool to monitor and manage retirement accounts.** Website usage increased significantly from prior years with just under 20 million sessions in 2006. This was an increase of 25 percent from 2004 and more than a 60 percent increase from 2000.

Beyond checking account balances, participants used the website most frequently to make investment transfers, change their asset allocation, and update their information. **The website was the preferred method for obtaining information and making changes for more than 60 percent of participants.¹** In addition to the transactional aspects of The Principal Retirement Service Center, participants were also using the educational components available online – for example, there were nearly 75,000 visits to our Retirement Planning Calculator.



Client Contact Center

When participants are looking for assistance beyond the Internet or simply prefer to speak to an individual, the Principal Financial Group has retirement specialists available to assist them.

The more common reasons participants call to speak with a retirement specialist include: options for withdrawing retirement funds (in-service withdrawals, and distribution options for retirees and/or job changers), loan provisions, applications and procedures, verification of tax forms (1099-R), and statement clarifications (transfers, vesting, investment return).

Other common tactical issues the retirement specialists address include assisting with log in access to the website, verification of receipt of paperwork, notification of separation of service, and status of transactions (loans, withdrawals, distributions). Of the participants who called a retirement specialist, the majority only called once a year, with very few calling on a monthly or weekly basis.¹

¹ 2006 Boston Research Group DCP Participant Study

Fast Fact

The communication channel least used by retirement plan participants is an automated telephone service.¹