

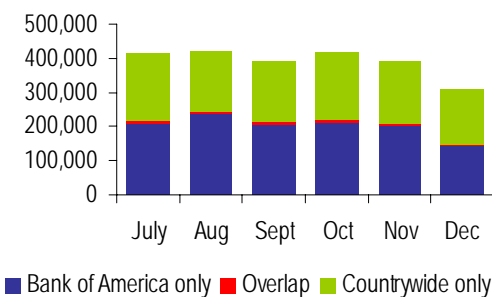
## FINANCIAL SERVICES ADVISOR™

Monthly insights from Compete for financial services executives

### Is Countrywide a good partner for Bank of America?

In the past few weeks, reports have surfaced that Bank of America is considering the acquisition of California-based Countrywide Financial, the largest US mortgage lender. With federal laws prohibiting any bank from making an acquisition that would raise its share of US deposits above 10 percent, the acquisition of a mortgage lender like Countrywide would be a creative way for Bank of America to expand its reach within the confines of this law.

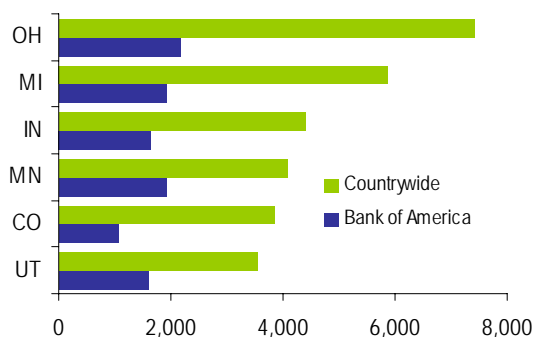
#### Online Prospect Volume for Lending Products July - December 2006



To explore the benefits of such a combination, Compete compared online shopping activity for both companies across their mortgage, refinance and home equity products from July through December of 2006. Few consumers research lending products on both sites, indicating a significant opportunity for Bank of America to acquire additional mortgage business through the rumored merger. By acquiring Countrywide's prospects, Bank of America would see an average gain of 89% more monthly online lending shoppers.

At a regional level, Countrywide receives a larger share of online home lending shoppers than Bank of America in 25 states. Among those states, the largest opportunity for Bank of America lies in Ohio where Countrywide receives more than three times as many lending

#### Average Total Monthly Lending Prospects by State July 2006 - December 2006



prospects as Bank of America. Other states with potentially large gains for Bank of America include Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Colorado and Utah (see chart).

By comparing shopping behavior across competitors, financial services providers can better identify acquisition targets, and understand where new customers are likely to be located.

### Monthly Metrics

#### Financial Services Indicators: Change from December 2006 – January 2007

Percent change in number of search queries		
<b>Top non-branded insurance terms</b>		
auto insurance	▲	33%
car insurance	▲	30%
insurance	▲	17%
<b>Top non-branded brokerage terms</b>		
stock(s)	▲	30%
mutual fund(s)	▲	3%
cd rates	▲	9%
<b>Top non-branded home loan terms</b>		
home equity loan	▲	15%
mortgage calculator	▲	38%
mortgage rates	▲	30%
Percentage change in Prospect and Applicant volume		
Product category	Prospects	Applicants
auto insurance	▲ 46%	▲ 53%
brokerage	▲ 4%	▲ 20%
home loans	▲ 19%	▲ 13%

After a relatively slow December, brokerage insurance and home loan online search activity all surged in January. While some of this trend was seasonal, changes in search behavior show where shoppers were focused; the strong January market made stocks more appealing than other investments; a heightened interest in mortgage related terms (and significant growth in home loan prospects) could foreshadow a much needed boost to the housing market.

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