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ESTHER DYSON'S MONTHLY REPORT

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WHAT'S A ZINE?

by Jerry Michalski

Zoe and Phil have found the Internet. Zoe has launched a zine on the Net called Zoe's Zoo Zine. Born from Zoe's love of animals, ZZZ is a hybrid publication and conversation space built atop the World Wide Web. It also makes use of many other online tools and hides occasional surprises.

ZZZ is free and quite conversational. Its members adopt animal characters and overindulge in animal metaphors and puns. Of course, it has animal-related discussion groups, pet adoption and pet-sitting classifieds, and Web links to good veterinarians, PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) and the Humane Society. Participants chat every day at feeding time. There's also ZooMOO, an ongoing multi-player text environment in which participants act out food-chain fantasies on the African veldt. (It's not for the faint-hearted.) If they wish to, visitors to ZZZ can hear RealAudio recordings (looped) that include rainforest and barnyard sounds. Disney is trying to convince Zoe to add the Jungle Book soundtrack (in exchange for their logo and link prominently displayed), but so far to no avail. This place has atmosphere, even if your mind tells you it's a bit smelly.

But wait. The zoo motif is really a facade. Zoe's Zoo Zine isn't limited to animal stuff: It's a front-end to the world of new media masquerading as a zoo. It's intended for people with a sense of humor who want to find stuff in general and connect with others on the Internet. People who frequent the zine and participate appreciate this.

Instead of lists of categories at compendium Web sites such as Yahoo and the Virtual Library, ZZZ has more intuitive, often highly visual ways to find your way to what you want, with different points of entry for novices and old hands. The key is Zoe, who discovered that she has a talent for presenting complicated things clearly. Zoe points liberally to the zines of people who have similar expressive gifts. She's also a good discussion moderator, a rare skill. Because of these talents and her generally contagious good spirits, ZZZ now has a hefty base of participants. It helps that there's no fee. In the sea of flashy stuff now prevalent on the Web, Zoe's Zoo Zine is a fun and useful haven.

SHOW US YOUR ZINE!

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A different zine

Phil sniffs profit in the air. His desktop-software venture flopped; it just about burned through the money he made when he sold his ecotourism business. Now he has started a zine of his own, Phil's Philodendron Phantasies (3P), which focuses on gardening. He wants it to be the Bob and Ray Show of gardening (well, maybe just the Bob Show). He's taking a pretty aggressive approach. He uses e-mail "push" promotions: Subscribers receive periodic messages advertising specials. The messages have embedded buttons that take recipients straight to 3P.

Phil's Philodendron Phantasies is a great place to get tips and make contact with other gardeners. Phil connects to botanists, gardeners and hobbyists with spare time around the world. He gets them to answer questions around the clock. No plant species is so exotic that you can't find an expert online at 3P. The zine makes heavy use of multiple ways to communicate. Occasionally Phil invites one or more of the experts to real-time conversations using CU-SeeMe and Internet Relay Chat or WebChat (see glossary, page 23). Sometimes he uses a multiparty version of the Internet Phone, which offers live audio, or public-access cable, with live callers and e-mailers. The choice depends on what format and forum the key participants are most comfortable with. Phil has access to all the different media.

Membership in 3P cost \$3 a month, payable yearly in your favorite form of electronic cash. Phil will take other kinds of payment, but with a 10 percent surcharge. 3P has links to many garden-supply vendors, including Smith & Hawken and Burpee. Phil gets a three percent commission for purchases made through his zine. Phil has linked 3P to the best gardening discussions he can find anywhere, including some on the Usenet (which Phil filters for quality) and on Prodigy. His subscribers can get to those Prodigy discussions for a limited period by using a new "guest pass" protocol, even if they don't subscribe to Prodigy themselves (see page 21). Along with the other resources the zine offers, this ability to cut across service boundaries and map directly to the best conversations around has made Phil's Philodendron Phantasies a very popular place.

Platforms for business and pleasure

Alas, Zoe and Phil's zines are fantasies. We're not aware of any online spaces that combine all these functions, although there are many great near-zine experiments going on, such as Wired Magazine's HotWired and the WaxWeb, which links a MOO to the Web. There's no guest-pass protocol that pierces proprietary service boundaries -- not yet, anyway.

The Zoe and Phil zines are meant to offer a taste of zines' potential, which is the subject of the rest of this issue of Release 1.0.

The term "zine" usually describes quirky, highly personal, small-circulation paper publications written partly as a hobby, partly by compulsion. They are one person's continuing compendium of humor, insight, literature or wicked prose. The typical zine is mimeographed or photocopied and mailed or handed to a short list of subscribers. Zine prices are quite low; they often barely cover printing and mailing. Pushing the tools of assembly is sometimes part of the challenge and charm. Photocopiers become special-effects machines. The thing that most characterizes zines is the author's presence in the work.

Some aspects of this description are ideal for the concept we'd like to convey. Others aren't, so the first section of this issue redefines the term "zine" and fleshes out what this new kind of zine might be.¹ The second section focuses on zines as platforms for business. The third looks at the changes happening to the communications and publishing infrastructure and presents a model for understanding that change. The final section is a wish list: It describes a variety of business opportunities that emerge from the foregoing ideas and trends.

This newsletter is a zine, just not an electronic one, yet.

Emerging electronic zines blur the line between publishing and communications. They use the fact that documents are becoming more distributed and interactive. Zines take advantage of the extremely low cost and high rate of change of the new infrastructure. They benefit from the easy linking of content and function that the Internet makes possible. Link zines to each other, and you can build loose service confederations that span the globe. More on these ideas in a moment.

Zine hosting is a natural progression for online services that want to find leverageable benefits for their subscribers. The services have begun to offer Web browsers. Many will soon offer simple Web publishing for all, a great way to secure subscriber loyalty. (Would you abandon the family Web site?) Zines as small-business platforms might follow shortly afterward.

Take a left at GNN, go straight two links...

Zines also help solve a major problem in cyberspace: selection. Before online services and the Web, the thorniest navigation question most families had to face was whether to watch Seinfeld, 48 Hours or that old black-and-white Hope and Crosby movie on a Thursday night. The navigation aids they would use were the TV listings in the paper, the *TV Guide* and that awful "preview" cable channel that shows what's up on all the channels but takes forever to get to what you want to know. Stargazer and other interactive TV initiatives are dealing with this problem, but only for TV and with little added functionality.

With the advent of networked PCs, business people have their own navigational nightmares finding and sharing files; the icons-windows-cursor interface that really doesn't resemble anyone's desktop offers little help.

The telephone system has evolved its own navigation methods that work quite well, in part because of the limited kinds of communication that phones offer. People regularly exchange phone numbers. Individuals and companies are automatically listed in directory services and have to pay extra to be

 1 *Calling them sites is too Web-centric and tool impersonal; places or spaces doesn't convey much; publications evokes a stronger sense of the editorial process, advertising and other baggage. "Zine" conveys the most important aspect, the preeminence of a person's voice or approach.*

excluded. Businesses use Yellow Pages, which is the closest anyone gets to browsing the phone system (except for pranksters and phreaks).

The online and Internet worlds are exacerbating the problem because they offer communication options that the phone and TV systems don't have. The phone system is point-to-point; TV is broadcast. The Net allows for these and many other topologies, such as mailing lists, newsgroups and multicasting (for more details, see page 15). All of these options make it easy for confusion to take over and panic to set in.

To fight confusion and meet the needs of end-users, technology vendors have developed search tools, intelligent agents and centralized directories. They have designed systems such as MusicNet that use statistical algorithms to tell us what we'll probably like, given our current preferences (see Release 1.0, 2-93). While these mechanisms are important (goodness knows we'd be lost without InfoSeek and Yahoo), they lack spark.

The killer app

The companies looking for ways to conquer chaos ignore one abundant source of energy, judgment, intelligence and perspective: human beings. These companies seem to share the unspoken assumption that human labor is too expensive to devote to these tasks, and that these services can and will be performed by bots (short for software robots) of varying intelligence.

Whether one needs to navigate through information, entertainment or conversation spaces, making sense of it all and putting it together in a compelling way is difficult. There isn't enough artificial intelligence out there to do it well, consistently. There's plenty of the natural variety to go around and a need for new jobs.

People already help each other get around with the clunky tools they have at hand. They publish their hot lists on the Web and use e-mail messages to send each other pointers to useful or fun new things. They could use a far more powerful vehicle, as well as a way to get paid for doing so, when it's appropriate. The tools to build such a vehicle exist, but nobody's integrated them and defined the new entity yet.

Think of this vehicle as a hopped-up electronic zine. First, though, some background on traditional zines.

Zines, e-zines and perzines

Zines probably started in the science-fiction world as "fanzines." Now they cut across all topic areas and forms of expression, from poetry to prose and pop-up paper cutouts. Most zines are labors of passion, not profit. They exist because their authors can't help but create them -- over and over. That's a large part what makes them compelling and useful.

One reason zines don't make much money is that their attention/cost ratio is rotten. They rely on word-of-mouth marketing and paper distribution. Also, there are small but significant transaction costs to subscribers (write a check, lick a stamp) and to publishers (process the checks and deposit them; maintain the subscription list). When each check is \$15 or \$20, the labor adds up. Finally, of course, many zines are fringe publica-

tions. Regardless how magical a medium or advertising campaign one could create, they would still find only a few readers.

Many zines have gone to the Web, which offers them vastly larger audiences and a publishing environment that's less flexible in some ways (it's hard to transmit the coffee stains, wrinkled pages of thrice-recycled paper and bent staples over the Web) and more flexible in others (hacking the Web can be fun). Once a publisher has a PC, electronic publishing is significantly cheaper than the paper kind.

The principal compilation of zine activity is Factsheet Five (F5), a newsletter that catalogs thousands of paper and electronic zines and is run by Jerod Pore and Seth Friedman. F5 offers some editorial on each of the zines, but little editorial comparing them, so it can be time-consuming to locate things of interest. John Labovitz maintains a list of electronic zines (see Resources, page 23). He's co-publisher of a zine called Crash and on sabbatical from the Web-based Global Network Navigator (which O'Reilly & Associates recently sold to AOL). Labovitz also avoids editorial, though he quotes others' comments on various zines. His e-zine list points to Webbed zines titled *Intrrr Nrrrd*, *Ooze*, *biancaTroll productions*, *Justin's Links from the Underground*, *The Morpo Review*, *geekgirl* and *Depth Probe*, among many others.

*"It's hard to explain the appeal of personal zines. It's like a line from that dorky '70s song: 'It's like tryin' to tell a stranger 'bout rock 'n roll.' I'm addicted to *perzines* (personal zines). I have been since before I even restarted *Factsheet Five*. It's easy to explain why people create perzines, for the same reason that anyone creates a zine -- because they *have to*. After all these years I've deduced two of the many reasons that people read them. Zines as a whole can create virtual communities and connections between people; perzines directly connect publisher to reader. The other way that perzines are appealing is that they allow the reader to be a voyeur into someone else's life. We can minutely examine someone else's life and compare it to our own."*

-- Jerod Pore, Factsheet Five

Redefining the zine

To soup zines up, it's important to harness their creative, personal essence. Electronic zines are not just about using copiers in funky new ways. They live in a new, evolving medium with more choices that will allow zine owners to offer a spectrum of capabilities. If they so desire, they can go beyond publishing, beyond one-way communications, beyond paper and the online sphere. (Section three, page 15, describes the underlying changes in the medium.)

In the not-too-distant future, zines might combine the features of MTV veejays, local-access TV, Internet tools (e.g., mailing lists, MUDs and

MOOs, Internet Relay Chat), the World Wide Web, custom software applications, database access, online forums and bulletin boards, talk radio and call-in TV shows. They might point to conventional TV and radio, long before those systems upgrade to digital networking technology.²

Mix too many of these media and you diffuse the message, lose the audience and ruin the zine. Do just one and you're one of the traditional media. Different audiences will tolerate different levels of exploration. The zine creator has to use the right tools for the job. The environment has to suit the author.

Oh, no!

Imagine the Rush Limbaugh Zine. It's pretty easy to envision. (We promise, we have no inside scoop on whether he's launching one. It just makes a vivid example.) Rush might start with a Web site that contains his latest flame about the Clintons, excerpts from his books (and order forms, of course), a bibliography of citations and pointers to other conservative sites, including the Hoover Institute and the Progress and Freedom Foundation.

Rush might also link to conservative talk shows and mailing lists. He would, of course, include his own radio and TV shows. He might include a bulletin-board feature, perhaps on a single online service or as a Usenet group or mailing list. He may link to a filter site that offers a family-oriented view of the Net (see page 22). Like Phil of 3P, Rush would likely charge a fee to subscribe to his zine, or perhaps just to exclusive sections.

Not really Rush

Rush isn't the only one who might talk about Rush online. Several people have put Unofficial Rush Pages on the Web. WTAW, a Bryan, TX-based talk-radio station that broadcasts Rush's show, has one that includes a FAQ (frequently asked questions) file, Rush's "35 undeniable truths" and assorted other statements, a way to e-mail Rush on CompuServe, digitized sound clips from his shows, a fact-checking zinger by Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR), pointers to the alt.fan.rush-limbaugh newsgroup and more. All without Rush's help. Someone in Seattle runs another Unofficial Rush Page; a Web text search will turn up many other Rush-related pages. There's also at least one anti-Rush page (for the pointers, see Resources, page 23).

2 For example, an enterprising programmer could hack home entertainment centers. If you peek in the drawer of the Sony Magic Link's desktop, you'll find a software infrared remote-control unit. The remote allows the Magic Link to drive any recent Sony infrared-equipped gear, including TVs, VCRs, stereos, CDs and boom boxes. Since the Magic Link is a great e-mail machine, a zine could send it programming via e-mail. So every week, zine hosts could easily send their viewing selections to their subscribers.

For example, Rush (see box) is great when he gets to talk and others listen, or when he can control callers and get rid of them whenever he wants. He's not good at more equal, interactive formats. Rush apparently filmed a pilot Donahue-style talk show that didn't go well. So Rush and his producers might downplay real-time, highly interactive forums in favor of broadcast or deferred, highly edited two-way media.

The key is to find the technology infrastructure that fits a zine owner's personality, skills, intentions and approach. Although it will take some time for developers to integrate all the available tools, they will eventually get easier and smoother.

Context with an attitude

Zoe, Phil and Rush's zines are examples of the ways some people might combine technologies to deliver their point of view most effectively. Zines have many other attributes. They are personal (though not necessarily personalized; see page 13). Whether they are content-oriented or community- and discussion-oriented, they are vehicles for somebody's personality to express itself for others' benefit.

Some zines are free, others are paid. Some publish new issues on a set schedule, others just grow the body of work, adding chunks and links many places at once. Some are private or secret. All of them exist over time, which is the way they earn others' trust and gain an audience. Since access to the medium is relatively easy and inexpensive, just about anyone can start a zine, build relationships and try to gain attention. Many such efforts fail, but some people who were previously unknown can become stars in their own right. If, over time, they can be entertaining, insightful, objective or otherwise attractive, they might give Dave Letterman, Diane Sawyer, Robin McNeil and Rush Limbaugh some serious competition. Note that some TV shows have begun to take questions and letters over e-mail.

Links, pointers and references

Interesting zines include plenty of pointers outside their own materials. Practically anything can be included by reference, which affects both the authoring process and the participants' perceptions of the zine (see box). Several zines might cover the same ground, but from different perspectives (novice or expert, youngster or geezer, techie or manager). They might have competing views (the Shana Alexander and James Kilpatrick zine? Zine-counterzine?), and the tension may be part of the attraction.

When zines point to other zines, the boundaries between them can blur. This can be fine, or the boundaries may be points of contention. The desire to include by reference may only apply in one direction. Zoe wants to point to Phil's section on growing plants for your pets, but Phil may not want her to, or he may not want to point to her zine, out of fear that his subscribers will leave his zine and not return.

Over time, the publishing/communication environment will settle into a new equilibrium. The thrill of early exploration and discovery will wane. Centralized directories such as Yahoo will matter less. At some point, you'll find a zine you love and make it your default home page. Your company may create a corporate zine and mandate its use (though that may in-

hibit its being a zine at all). You will use it as your launching pad for activity, a way of viewing the world that works for you. As you participate in the zine, you may find things it doesn't mention, and submit them to the zine producer for inclusion, enriching the zine for everyone. Zines can offer powerful centers for group-work and community activity (see Release 1.0, 6-93 and 7-93).

A new form of authoring; a new kind of content

There's a big difference between a monolithic piece of content (say a book or newsletter) and a web of related materials, richly woven into the surrounding context and ongoing conversations. Writing the traditional way produces linear content that stands by itself. The rhetoric of hypermedia is different in a way that nobody's quite figured out yet. It certainly creates a different user experience.

Creating a standalone written work is like growing a potted plant. You water it. It flourishes, branches out, develops shape and becomes mature. When it's done, though, it's pretty easy to take away. Creating the heavily linked work is more like growing one of those massive fungal organisms that live in the tundra. In fact, it's more like tending to the entire ecosystem that surrounds the fungus, with lots of symbiotic organisms. Note that an ecosystem is hard to move, especially when it involves interactions between people. The more a work is woven into its context (within limits, of course), the harder it is to uproot and move elsewhere, for better or worse.

It's bigger than a breadbox...

A zine is not as big as an online service, nor is it as small as a personal home page with someone's list of hot links. It has far more personality than the average corporate Web site, though such sites could be zines. An automatically personalized daily newspaper service isn't a zine -- it's the opposite of a zine. The WELL isn't a zine, though it does have an attitude. The WELL is starting to host zines.

This is a growing trend. It began with services offering their subscribers the opportunity to create and post their own Web pages, as the WELL does, and as Prodigy and AOL have announced they will shortly. Recently, AOL upped the ante by announcing that it will offer sophisticated Web authoring tools. Eventually, some services will design their offerings to attract zine owners, rather like business incubators. The zines will be entities somewhere between columnists and information or application providers.

The online services that pursue this strategy will create platforms that are great places for people to run small businesses. The host platforms can then offer (or link to) additional services such as bookkeeping, accounting, tax advice, transaction services and so forth, keeping a portion of all the fees. In this way, there will be zine hosts, sponsored zines and independent zines.

Pushing the technology

HotWired is a great example of the use of zine technology, though it's more of a zine host than a zine itself. It has attitude, but not a person's voice. Some disembodied entity directs the activity, not Chip Bayers, HotWired's managing editor, Barbara Kuhr, its principal designer, or any other staff member.

At the bottom of many articles in HotWired is a link that allows readers to post their thoughts to Web-readable pages. These threaded conversations are quite popular and will continue to grow in expressive power. For example, people posting notes this way can embed HTML code and images in their messages. They have to know the technology, but the resulting messages are more visually interesting than plain-text ones. Bayers would like to offer easier, richer multimedia experiences. To that end, he and his staff are experimenting with HotJava, RealAudio and other technologies.

Dig he must!

One of the zines that HotWired hosts is Dave Winer's DaveNet (see Release 1.0, 12-94). Winer, a restless and creative soul, is rolling his own zine. His tools are products he designed himself. In 1981 Winer founded Living Videotext, which created the popular outlining and presentation package MORE (previously ThinkTank; we were addicts ourselves). He sold the company to Symantec in 1987, then founded UserLand, which created Frontier, a Macintosh application-scripting environment (see Release 1.0, 5-91). A couple of months ago, Winer decided to give Frontier away for free, hoping it would become a standard so that UserLand could make money in the after-market. Outlines and scripts are recurring themes in Winer's life.

Winer started DaveNet less than a year ago, when out of frustration he decided to start sending an occasional e-mail message to a long list of influential people he had met over the years. He took his rolodex, scripting language and Qualcomm's Eudora (which is highly scriptable) and wrote a mailing list server.³

Through DaveNet, Winer unabashedly writes what's on his mind and heart once or twice a week. His comments range from worship of Aretha Franklin (what's the word? r-e-s-p-e-c-t) to the state of the software industry, gender issues, local weather conditions and the mood he's in. Winer often wears his heart on his sleeve; he's also not afraid to be politically incorrect, which makes his pieces lively and provokes responses which he selectively republishes in subsequent letters to the list.

Recently Winer created a Web site on HotWired, where people can read all the old DaveNet postings, as well as other things Dave finds interesting

³ Winer's mailing list server has a nice feature that distinguishes it from others. It sends messages to ten people at a time, chosen at random. Each message has in its header nine other people on the big list. This is more intimate than an ordinary mailing list, where you usually see only the sender's name, and less messy than the carbon-copy nightmare that happens when you don't use a mailing list.

and useful. In his quest to create a great interactive Web site, Winer is developing new applications using Frontier and C, which include Clay Basket, an outline-based Web bookmark utility, and AutoWeb, an automated Web-generation tool. (To see a great personal site, check out Winer's friend Barton, whom he points to on his Web site; see Resources, page 23.)

DaveNet has given Winer visibility and access he previously didn't have, including some ink in Wired and a selection as Cool Site of the Day. "There's a lot of power in DaveNet," says Winer. "It solved a lot of problems for me and allowed me to move on. Before, all the things I said had to be filtered by other people. I couldn't do what I wanted to do. With DaveNet, I was able to go around the industry trade publications -- and Apple." Winer is happy at HotWired, but would consider joining a larger host service that needs a personality with attitude. Let the courting begin.

Who else is doin' it

Writer Howard Rheingold, author of *The Virtual Community* and *Virtual Reality*, longtime editor of the *Whole Earth Review* and founding editor of *HotWired*, has begun to use his Web site as a hub for all his activities and has invested considerable effort into it. He is as taken by the Web as a medium for communication as he was by the WELL when he discovered it years ago. Says Rheingold, "Now I'm not just a name in a book; I'm someone you can communicate with. This [the Web site] may just be a hobby, or it may end up being everything."

Zines are going electronic all the time, though it's rare to find ones that combine technological innovation or payment schemes with great content. Several zines are available for purchase on First Virtual's Infohaus, including *ThoughtWare Press*, the *Do You Know* newsletter of helpful household hints and *The Literate Element*.

On the techno-innovation front, New York University's Interactive Telecommunications Program (ITP) runs a weekly program called The Electronic Neighborhood (aka YORB) on Manhattan public-access TV. The YORB is a multimedia-fusion extravaganza that includes a hostess, Shannon, who guides callers around the various rooms and compartments in the virtual environment. Callers navigate the world using touch-tones. Up to four may be online at a time, one of whom is in control at any given time. They can all hear each other, as can the TV audience.

 "Zine writers need to hear from their audience.
 A zine without feedback dies."

-- Jerod Pore, Factsheet Five

THE BUSINESS OF ZINES

This zine stuff may sound clunky now, but the tools are just being invented. The fact is, people have never had this kind of communication power available to them before. A decade from now, we may wonder how the shrink-wrapped software market ever worked. (Let's see...we sell a product once for \$49.95, then answer two customer support phone calls that cost us \$20 each....) Companies will get their principal revenues from ongoing services. They may charge premium rates for special content that goes to focused audiences, or small amounts for general content that appeals to many people. Either way, it translates into enviable cash flows over many years -- as long as the zine producers keep the quality of the content and the participants up.

If people are the killer app, this is how they can make a living.

Platforms for microbusiness

It's one thing to have a virtual company with a front door on the Web and fulfill your work through e-mail attachments. It's quite another to use the Net as the foundation of your business, to publish and communicate through it, to explore its essence and exploit its power. Attitudes and points of view don't have to be literary or funky. They can have a clear business purpose, and zines can help the people behind the attitudes generate and fulfill their business. The points of view they create can help others navigate through complex domains and find their way to the right resources, whether they are local to the zine or across the world.

Add a payment mechanism (see Release 1.0, 1-95) to a zine or charge a sponsor, and you can begin to make money with it. Zines are relatively inexpensive to set up and have no marginal costs of holding inventory. Zine owners can experiment with demand curves and pitch the same information to different markets (if you're a telecom expert, [click here](#); if you're a project manager, [click here](#)).

People who have an avocation can test the waters easily to see if it can become their vocation. Those who find an audience for their work may be able to charge for it. Others may wish to continue posting materials for free, but they may get consulting or speaking engagements as a result of their work (see Release 1.0, 12-94). Or they may make excellent hosts of places online, and make a living from membership fees.

Our friend Pam knows everything there is to know about frequent-flyer programs. She may decide to start a paid frequent-flyer advice zine. She could have access to subscribers' mileage information. When specials come up, she could send e-mail to subscribers whom she knows might be interested and in a position to use the specials. She may even audit subscribers' travel plans to see if they can travel less expensively or add upgrades or hotel and car bonuses. Pam might charge \$300 per person per year and manage 500 people's accounts personally, working from home several hours each evening to deal with the day's messages.

Networks of businesses

Link a few similar zines together and soon you have an informal business network. As an example, picture the Internet Concierge Service, for people

who like to travel in style. When you join, you fill out a form that states your preferences, much as you would if you changed travel agents so they know that you prefer vegetarian meals, aisle seats on short flights and window seats on long ones. Concierges can't have special knowledge about every place someone might want to go, which is where the Net comes in. Concierges communicate with each other to share information and tailor it to individual client's needs. They have economic incentives to do so (see "referrals," page 21).

There might be niche markets: a Green Concierge, who recommends ecologically conscious places, goods and services, or a Rose Concierge, who provides escort and entertainment that skirts the law. Regardless what your choice is, your communications with your concierge are personal and confidential. It's a relationship that improves over time with a person who learns your likes and dislikes and acts as your broker. Two things have to work well for the service to succeed: the personality fit and the referral mechanism that finds domain experts efficiently.

Re-, not dis-

It's easy to view electronic commerce as an inevitable push to disintermediation, the making of direct buyer-seller connections. If one can buy Reeboks directly from Reebok's Web site, why go to the Foot Locker? Certainly there will be lots of direct business on the Net, but there are also many markets that need to be made. More importantly, there's a strong need for objective advice.

Do a search for graphics converters or screen savers on the Web, or go to one of the electronic malls and shop for a large-capacity hard disk. You'll get responses, but too many of them, and seldom with the details you need. One thing that might help is to read a review in a trusted publication, which is what AT&T Interchange does with the Ziff publications it offers, and what Consumer Reports provides. But that doesn't always suit your particular situation. What you want is a friend or trusted party to recommend a solution for you.

Making markets, offering advice and creating points of view all require new entities to exist between buyers and sellers. This is a process of re-intermediation, not disintermediation. The new middlemen are advisors, brokers, finders, raters, qualifiers and market-makers, not inventory poolers and distribution hubs. They represent the buyer more than the seller. The old intermediaries offered value based on physical properties: distribution, storage and selection. Those things matter less in an electronic market, where the value is from judgment and communication.

Of course, many things still require fitting and hefting. We're not convinced that texture-mapping a virtual model of the prospective buyer is a satisfying experience. There are still plenty of reasons to trot down to the store.

A frequent (and wealthy) traveler might wish to buy a service package that includes the concierge service, a travel agent, smart travel-agent software

such as News Electronic Data's Marilyn system (to hit the market late this year), electronic access to the OAG (still gotta check if there's a better deal), Pam the frequent-flyer advisor and even an on-the-road babysitting service. Complex constellations of independent contractors may benefit from a trusted certification authority -- not the digital signature type; the Underwriter's Laboratories or Bar Association type. This entity would certify that professionals meet certain criteria.

Marketing, brands and zines

How do you get people to stay and return? Convenience, service, selection and price are always critical, but beyond that, one way to generate repeat business is to make the experience personal, not just personalized.

Technology makes it possible to customize things automatically. Companies can do all the 1:1 marketing, database lookups and statistical processing they want, but it's not likely to be as interesting and engaging (or potentially frustrating, if done wrong) as a personal interaction. Perhaps in the future expert systems will pass a Turing test on fashion advice, but we don't see it happening anytime soon. As we mentioned earlier, labor, applied intelligently, can make all the difference.

The fact that zines are personal doesn't mean that zine owners must deal with each subscriber individually. First of all, there will still be many broadcast-only zines in the traditional publishing model, and quiet readers/lurkers. More interestingly, the new technology allows one person to deal with many others at once in a variety of ways (see "push-pull," page 19, and section three, page 15). The zine owner doesn't have to do everything. Some readers will inevitably play moderator or adopt other useful roles. In fact, in a healthy community, members tend to take care of each other.

Zines may be great vehicles to alter the power balance between brands. If fashion designer Adrienne Vittadini launches a fashion zine, there is no reason why she has to refer to or rely on retail stores, which have their own businesses and brand images to defend. Vittadini could eliminate most of her inventory woes, push wares onto FedEx's conveyor belts from a warehouse in Memphis and so on. She could represent more types of merchandise, offering advice (but not wares) in furnishings, houses and cars. She might also avoid certain brand names and offer better quality stuff herself. Whose brand survives is at issue here.

How do stores fight back? People won't go to a store Bergdorf Goodman might open on the Web to comparison-shop; they'll go there because they like the merchandise selection and especially because they've found a salesperson who understands their special needs and contacts them ahead of time when the good stuff comes in, or when the outfit they love but can't afford goes on sale. Service sells; so does judgment.

Malls are a different story; electronic ones are probably doomed. Real-life malls are designed to bring a wide variety of physical goods together at one spot, made convenient to the automobile. Some social activity takes place in them, but malls are not inherently interesting places to shop and hang out in. What they lack in flavor or personality they make up for in safety and convenience, neither of which holds true in cyberspace. Unless

there are other people around to interact with, electronic malls aren't performing any function you can't do with comparison-shopping software that goes directly to several suppliers or an agent that does the same.

Many of the zine traits and trends described above -- especially re-intermediation, low costs and barriers to entry and the need for human judgment -- put owners of great zines in a sweet position. The best will be able to choose to become brands themselves. They can choose whether to accept advertising or sponsorships, but will not be forced to. In some markets, sponsors will fund zine activities; in others, subscribers will.

New job categories

Zines present new job opportunities, just as the step from silent movies to talkies shifted the skills mix for actors (how many times have you heard that analogy already?). Some of the key zine skills are editing, moderating, hosting and gardening. Editing is more than creation and selection; it adds texture and context.

Moderators have more interactive roles; they edit conversations that occur on mailing lists or similar media. They filter incoming messages in the interest of keeping the list useful. Hosts tackle the social side of the interaction. They participate in discussions, tending to group dynamics at least as much as the content at hand.

Corporations will find that they need excellent hosts and moderators for the newsgroups, Lotus Notes databases, Web sites and mailing lists they will increasingly use to share information both in- and outside their companies. These professional hosts and moderators need not be full-time employees of the companies they serve. In fact, it may help them to be outside the spheres of political influence. They will be armed with gentle guidelines for nurturing discussions and dealing with difficult personalities. Companies might hire specialists to stimulate groups to finish tasks quickly. They may be great at assessing poor group process and suggesting remedies. This sounds like an important set of skills for all future managers.

Gardening is maintenance after the fact, to make a zine more comprehensible. It's the fight against entropy, and includes weeding, feeding and seeding. A good gardener makes the material she tends more valuable over time. Perhaps she separates the really interesting stuff into archives or abstracts it. She also adds links to older materials so they point to appropriate places. The gardener's links of course, are marked as such and don't appear as original content.

CHOOSE YOUR TOPOLOGY

One of the most fascinating aspects of activity on the Internet is the way it's making available more ways for people to publish and communicate. In fact, the experiments occurring on the Internet are breaking down the distinction between publishing and communication. Traditional electronic media and zines will change, too. Here's one way to view what's going on.

Two ways to communicate

Until recently, there have been only two topologies for electronic communication in general use, and the average person has send-access to only one.

The first topology is point-to-point; the primary example is the phone system, through which practically anyone can call anyone. Callers are peers. Three-party calls aren't that common, and it's cumbersome and expensive to include more than three people on a call. The phone system has some subsidies (e.g., urban/rural and business/residential) and takes no advertising.⁴ The medium is also not conducive to browsing. With very few exceptions, participants create all the content when they're on the phone and can't be influenced by third parties.

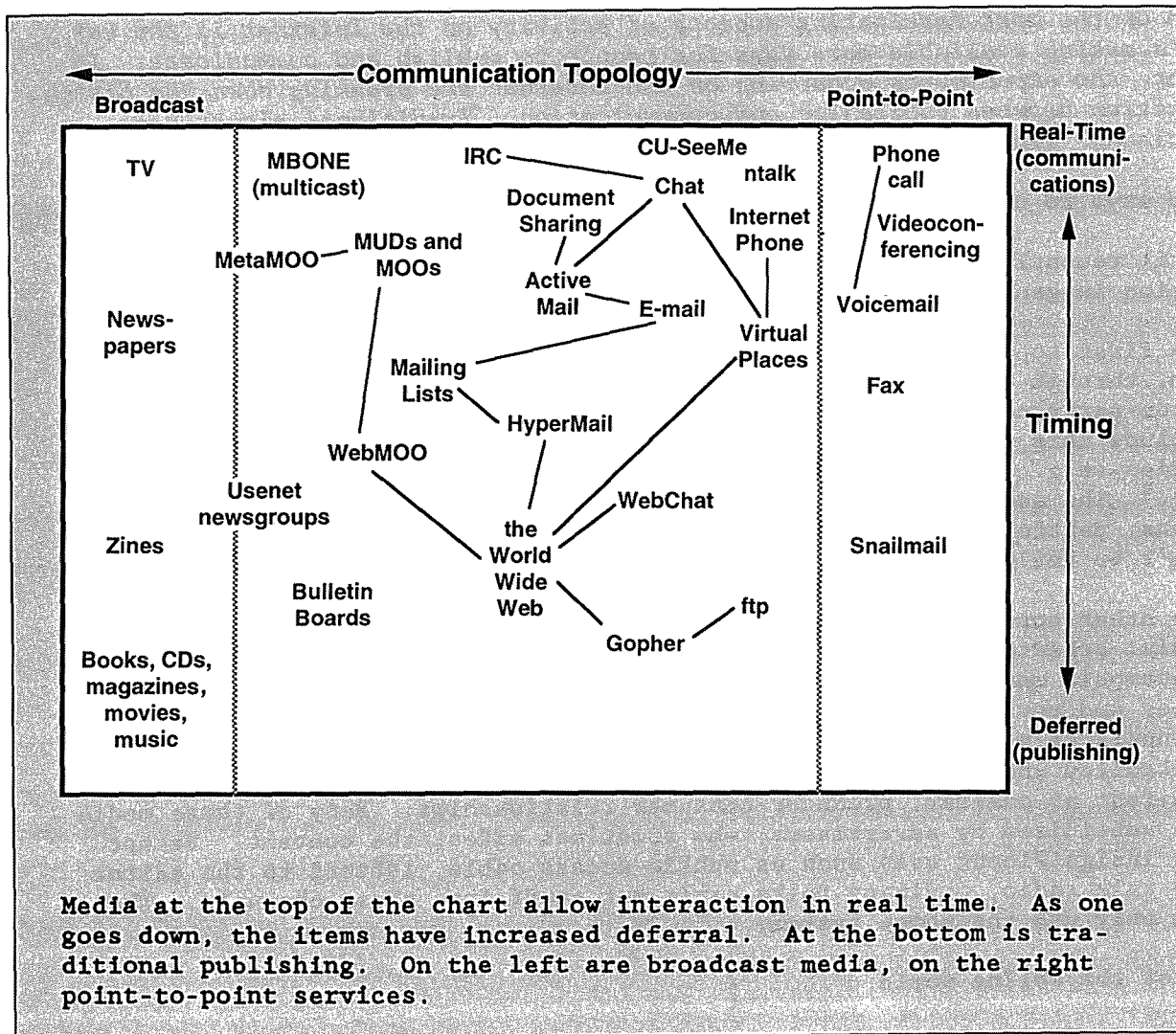
The other topology is broadcast, and it covers all other commonly used media: broadcast TV, cable TV, radio, CD-ROMs and CD-audio, as well as non-electronic media such as newspapers, magazines, paper zines, books, videotapes and movies. Broadcast production costs are high; the distribution channels (e.g., cable TV, radio spectrum, retail store chains) are tightly controlled and expensive to use. There's an imbalance of power that is manifest as one-way, producer-consumer relationships. Many of these media are subsidized by advertisers, who sometimes affect the content. Except for insignificant uses such as public-access cable, letters to the editor and talk radio, ordinary folks can't put stuff into these channels. They can only use the phone system.

Enter the online world

Those are the two topologies. Until the advent of online services and the Internet, which aren't mass media quite yet, there hasn't been much else. CB radio, maybe. Big deal. The figure on the next page places these technologies (except CB) in a landscape that maps topologies to time lag. Point-to-point and broadcast are the extreme topologies. The former is almost perfectly symmetrical; the latter is completely asymmetrical, with limited or nonexistent feedback loops (e.g., letters to the editor).

In the center, the chart also includes a large number of capabilities available in the online world, which offers many different topologies. Instant messages and an Internet application called ntalk offer two-person real-time contact. So does VocalTec's Internet Phone, which sends live

⁴ There have been a few attempts to offer subsidized phone service if callers would listen to an ad before calling (even during calls!). These efforts have failed.



audio over the Internet. The live text chat extends to multiple parties far more easily than phone calls do, through chat rooms on commercial services or Internet Relay Chat. There are also MUDs and MOOs, which offer live multi-player interaction in a persistent environment. When a phone call is over, there is nothing left of it. When people leave a MOO, they can leave behind a document, robot or other object for others to see, play with or use.

Moving down the chart, E-mail is a deferred form of person-to-person communications. Again, it's easier to carbon-copy people on e-mail than on voicemail, especially if they're outside your company. Not only that, but when carbon-copy lists get too long, you can send e-mail to mailing lists or Usenet newsgroups, each of which offers a different kind of communication pattern. These simple tools are the workhorses of the online world.

Out in the middle is the World Wide Web, which is easy to view as a publishing medium -- perhaps a misleading assumption, as we will see in a moment. The Web has created a new form of navigation and communication that

involves browsing or surfing and sharing lists of links (never mind what it does for multimedia). Practically anyone can put content on the Web. The Web is also a meta-tool, which means it can run other applications, such as FTP (the file transfer protocol) and Gopher. This is a key attribute.

As many people are finding out, the online world is difficult, if not impossible, to control. It features more equal power relationships than traditional electronic media. There is some subsidy by the government and advertisers, but the government has practically withdrawn its funding and advertisers haven't quite gotten a secure foothold. Part of the problem for advertisers is that the online channel is fundamentally more open and less expensive than broadcast channels. If they care to, participants can even build their own pieces of the Internet, a strategy that's completely unheard of in the phone or cable-TV systems. On the Net, participants are co-producers of the environment, not merely producers and consumers.

Weaving the Web

That's not all. Clever innovators are weaving together the various tools on the Net, using the Web as the sticky center. For example, HyperMail links e-mail to the Web by automatically turning mailing-list archives into threaded Web pages. It was created as an experiment by two people at Enterprise Integration Technologies in Menlo Park, CA; now it's at work in many places on the Internet. What's especially interesting is that HyperMail links e-mail -- a communication medium -- to the Web -- which is a publishing medium. Or is it?

Similarly, an application called WebChat uses the Web's forms and screen-reload capabilities to create threaded messages. It was created by Michael Fremont of the Internet Roundtable Society. While these threads are in many ways inferior to real threaded conferencing systems, they do offer some fabulous innovations. People can submit messages with embedded images or HTML tags, making their posts much more visual.

The Virtual Places system from a startup called Ubique tackles a different dimension of communication. Instead of extending a single protocol such as the Web's HTML and HTTP, it coordinates multiple protocols to support a unique kind of multi-user environment that uses the Web as a backdrop (see Release 1.0, 2-95). Ubique's system has been used to create virtual trade shows where visitors can engage people in virtual booths (on Web pages) in live audio and typed conversations. Participants can invite one another on guided tours where one person leads the way across the Web and the others follow automatically, without having to touch their keyboards or mice.

Experimenters are trying various ways to link the Web to MUDs and MOOs. RiverMOO uses Web pages to display the MOO's text, then offers a one-line form field for the participant to enter their next command. Others are linking out to the Web from within MOOs. Some of the more interesting testbeds include ChibaMOO (where Web + MOO = WOO) and WaxWeb (or, The Discovery of Television Among the Bees). The Virtual Reality Modeling Language (see Release 1.0, 7-94) lets people build rendered 3D spaces that contain objects that link out to the World Wide Web. Who knows what someone will invent with upcoming power tools, such as Sun's Java, or with custom applications?

Reach outside!

Some of these examples are clever hacks, but they offer valuable new ways to communicate. And why stop at the Net's boundaries? Why struggle to transmit high-quality live audio with the Internet Phone if the phone system does it extremely well? Companies are working on computer-telephone integration solutions that can link Internet tools to other media.

The same will happen elsewhere, helping to weave the communication fabric ever more tightly together. Long term, the underlying transport pipes will shift around. Cable and phone companies will merge or compete, wireless access will make it or fail. But the services on top can come together without waiting for fiber to be pulled to everyone's desk and fridge.

Think of the Internet as a signaling system.⁵ Communication software will fulfill user service requests with whatever is available that meets the user's price and service requirements, whether it's a phone message or an audio clip sent over the Net. Forget intelligent TV and smart phones: You'll be able to channel-surf, order goods or launch phone calls over the Internet. To avoid losing all control, smart cable-TV carriers will make this capability available over their networks by offering open TCP/IP access and decent software platforms.

More effects

The Internet also changes one's sense of connection to the rest of the world. There's an important perceptual difference between having a dialup account and a full-time Net connection. In one case you feel the meter ticking all the time; in the other you assume the service is always available. For a glimpse of how this works, visit companies like Sun Microsystems, which have always known this but have never communicated it properly. Even an ISDN line that connects a small business to the Net during work hours offers this effect.

In five years, half of US businesses may well be connected full-time to the Internet, which means their employees will be able to use it all the time without thinking about the connection.⁶ If they feel like keeping an audio

5 ISDN, the digital phone service that's finally coming into its own, is composed of high-capacity bearer channels (the 64 kilobit-per-second "B" channels) and one signaling channel (the 16-Kbps data or "D" channel). The language that datagrams use across the phone system is called Signaling System 7, and it's specifically designed to do one thing well. It's also nearly impossible to extend. Doing so would mean changing the software in every switch in the network, a gigantic task. The Internet is far more extensible, but is nowhere near as robust as the phone system. It's useful to think of the Internet as a more useful signaling system than the phone system's D channel.

6 Of course, there may be radical changes in the way the Internet is funded over that time period. In an ideal world, narrowband bits anywhere in the world would be extremely inexpensive. Consumers and businesses would pay extra for luxury bits, whether that means isochronous (real-time links), video, secure (isolated transport) or guaranteed delivery.

link open all day, it'll be no big deal. Or they may prefer to use a MOO to hang out all day with their favorite friends and colleagues worldwide. Although MOOs are hard to take seriously, they can serve serious business purposes (see Release 1.0, 7-94).

Everything we've described in this section helps blur the distinction between communications and publishing. Zines can be active, communicating documents. Clicking on a byline or bibliographic reference in the document's text can launch an e-mail message, an Internet Phone session or a real phone call. Different topologies are always available, always mutable. Without some great interface design, it can get pretty messy, pretty fast.

Playing with push-pull

The new functions and topologies allow publishers to play with how hard they push -- or users have to pull -- their publications. E-mailing an entire issue of a newsletter to subscribers is a hard push. Sending an e-mail note that a new issue is available on the Web is a soft push. Asking people to put your site on their hot list and hoping they return is a soft pull. Forcing people interested in your publication to hunt for it when they want it is a hard pull.

Mailing lists are a hard push. Often they completely overwhelm subscribers, who receive all the messages and have to deal with them. With a HyperMail archive, mailing lists are less obtrusive. People can unsubscribe and visit the archive when they have time. With software agents or text triggers, they could be notified when it's worth making a visit. The notification messages could include a button that takes the person straight to the right spot on the Net. Many combinations are possible.

TECHNOLOGIES WANTED

The experiments we have just described are in their early stages. There are also many pieces missing from the new communication/publishing fabric, many of which are relatively straightforward to do. This section describes applications or services that we're surprised aren't commonplace yet, as well as some we hope someone creates.

Enhanced e-mail

E-mail has grown spectacularly, but e-mail enhancements that work across all systems have been slow to make it to market. Transparent encryption is one example; MIME attachments are another.⁷ Now it would be useful to be able to enclose pointers to Web sites in e-mail messages, preferably as buttons. The Microsoft Network will include such a feature, as will some other mail systems, but it won't all happen in a standard fashion across all systems.

Subscribing (and unsubscribing)

Mailing lists are among the most useful tools on the Internet today, but using them is way too difficult. To subscribe, you typically have to get two e-mail addresses for the list: one is administrative, one is the list address that reflects messages to all the list's subscribers. Often people accidentally post administrative messages to the entire list. Sending commands to the administrative address can be difficult, because different list servers use different protocols.

Good lists spew many messages. If you want to handle them without going crazy, it's a good idea to create a mail filter. In newer e-mail client packages this can be relatively simple, though it's not yet automatic when you subscribe to a list. In older mail systems, such as the popular elm program on Unix machines, this means editing a file called "filter-rules." Then you have to set up folders for incoming messages to sort into, and perhaps a folder where you will save messages you want to keep. At this point you're about ready to handle the inbound messages. You'd also better keep the subscription confirmation message handy because you'll need it desperately when you want to get off the list. If you want to stop the messages while you go on vacation, you have to sign off the list, then sign back on. Of course, then you miss the messages that flowed by while you were off. After signing up for a few lists, it becomes hard to know which ones you're on, and there's nothing (yet) to help track that.

AT&T's Interchange service makes one kind of subscribing simple, but it only works within the service. Interchange has a "keep updated" function where subscribers drag an item's icon into their in-box, which adds the item to the list of items their system checks when they log on. If the item requires payment, it's made automatically to your Interchange account.

 7 MIME (the Multipurpose Internet Messaging Extensions; see Release 1.0, 2-94) helps deliver complex binary objects intact over the Internet to viewer or helper applications at the destination machine. The transport technology can be e-mail, but MIME also makes the Web function.

Easily available mailing lists

This is the server side of the same issue. When you get press releases with fifty names in the header is when you wish mailing lists were cheap and easy. Or maybe you get an idea that you'd like to discuss with 50 people, but give it up because it would be too time-consuming to coordinate all the messages or get them all to a private online conference.

If subscribing to mailing lists is cumbersome, setting them up is a royal pain. Collabra has built a business offering a custom version of mailing list software (see Release 1.0, 3-94); in a way, Lotus Notes offers an industrial version of the same thing. But for both solutions, participants must use a specific piece of client software, not their own e-mail package.

There is likely to be a large business outsourcing mailing lists. Service providers will keep them running all the time. They may even offer professional moderators for hire.

Graphics, maps, concept diagrams

The world of object graphics is lagging most others in Net-based communication. HTML is being enhanced to offer richer text features. Various kinds of graphic standards are in use, including JPEG and GIF, as well as page-description languages such as Adobe's PDF. Yet simple object graphics lie orphaned. Sharing resizable graphics primitives is still not common. Of many possible solutions, one appealing one is to adapt the object graphics native to the OpenDoc component software system to life on the Net (see Release 1.0, 5-94).

Once primitive objects work, there's a need for higher-level tools that use these objects to represent concept diagrams, timelines, project plans and more. Good ways to visualize information are sorely missing on the Net. One example of such software is Libertech's V-Search, but the system is not yet Net-aware (see Release 1.0, 5-95).

Royalties and referrals

For over a decade, Ted Nelson has been trying to bring Project Xanadu to market. One of its primary goals is to provide a standard, efficient way for people to cite works and for the authors to receive the appropriate royalties automatically. Although Xanadu is stalled, much of what it proposed is occurring on the Internet today. However, no single, simple royalty scheme has emerged.

The Internet Concierge Service (page 11) would work more effectively if it included an economic mechanism that motivated participants to move service opportunities to the most appropriate servers (here we mean humans, not database servers). If a request comes in for a vacation in Mexico that doesn't involve tourist traps, the agent handling that client should be rewarded for passing the request to another agent who knows Mexico and can advise appropriately.

Guest passes

Some of the things a zine owner might want to point to may exist inside private, commercial services. Today there's no easy method to point to

these conversations, and each subscriber would also have to subscribe to the service in question. A guest-pass protocol would allow zine owners and others to offer a broader perspective without requiring that each person get an account on each service. They could point to the best discussions about a given topic, say the economics of the Internet, and have it all in one place, by reference. Guest passes would also make the commercial on-line services more permeable, which might make them more competitive.

Here's how it might work. Zoe offers her subscribers a guest pass to visit a pet-care discussion group on Prodigy. One of her subscribers presents the electronic token at the Prodigy login prompt. She is given a temporary user ID, software if it's needed, and then she has access to specific forums to read only or read and post. (She would need to download the software only once for each service. Besides, many computers are now sold with several online service packages pre-loaded.) The services could charge a premium over their usual hourly rate. They could offer read-only or read-write access at different rates, or charge by the posting.

Filter Web sites

Finally (and this is by no means an exhaustive list), there's a need for technology that supports organizations that want to rate other services and make that information available to their audiences. For example, the 700 Club might put up a rating site. People would connect their browsers to those sites, which would then prevent them from getting to sites with materials deemed objectionable. There might be several such filter services, each catering to a different audience.

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GLOSSARY

Chat is a multi-party, real-time text conversation. The Internet's most popular version is known as **Internet Relay Chat**. The **World Wide Web** is a subset of the Internet that forms a network of multimedia document servers. Web browsers (client software) such as Netscape request documents from Web servers, which then send them. The documents are usually marked up in the **HyperText Markup Language (HTML)**, which the browsers interpret. **WebChat** is free software that uses Web forms and document-refresh capabilities to emulate chat using the Web. The Internet's multicast backbone (the **MBONE**) allows for high-performance communications such as distributed video feeds.

On MUDs, MOOs and MUSEs: **MUD** = Multi-User Dungeon (or Dimension); **MUSH** = Multi-User Shared Hallucination; **MUSE** = Multi-User Simulation Environment; and **MOO** = MUD, Object-Oriented. Mostly used for online gaming, these systems are all genetically related and vary in their programmability and object-orientedness. Typically, only wizards (system administrators) can create new objects in a MUD; anyone can create objects in MUSHes, MUSEs and MOOs. MOOs are written in a more structured way and offer a more powerful and complex programming language than the other systems. We occasionally use the terms "MUD" or "MOO" to refer generically to the entire category. See Release 1.0, 6-94 and 7/8-94 on multi-user virtual environments and 6-93 and 7-93 on community.

COMING SOON

- *Links, filters and navigation.*
- *Advanced user interfaces.*
- *A PDI update.*
- *The economics of the Internet.*
- *The analog world.*
- *And much more... (If you know of any good examples of the categories listed above, please let us know.)*

WEB RESOURCES

Barton	http://www.phantom.com/barton/
DaveNet	http://www.hotwired.com/Staff/userland/
Depth Probe	http://www.atdesign.com:80/ake/cgi/reel/base/Studios/Eyzaguirre
Factsheet Five	http://kzsu.stanford.edu/uwl/f5e/f5e.html
First Virtual's Infohaus	http://www.fv.com/infohaus/index.html
geekgirl	http://www.next.com.au/spyfood/geekgirl/
HotWired	http://www.hotwired.com
Intrrr Nrrrd	http://www.geko.com.au/zines/Intrrrr.Nrrrd/intrrrr.html
Justin's Links from the Underground	http://www.links.net/
John Labovitz's e-zine list	http://www.meer.net/johnl/e-zine-list/
The Morpo Review	http://morpo.novia.net/morpo/
Ooze	http://www.io.com/ooze/
Howard Rheingold	http://www.well.com/hlr/
The Unofficial Rush Page	http://www.rtis.com/nat/pol/rush/
Another Rush Page	http://www.eskimo.com/jeremyps/rush/
WaxWeb	http://bug.village.virginia.edu/
WebChat	http://irsociety.com/webchat/webchat.html
The WELL	http://www.well.com

Author Paul Krassner and Factsheet Five's Jerod Pore have published a great piece on the history of zines, especially Web zines, that is currently on HotWired. Among other things, Pore describes metazines, zines that point to other zines, and traces a chain of links from an anarcho-leftist publication to one by the Christian Coalition. The article is on HotWired at <http://www.hotwired.com/Eyewit/I-Agnt/>.

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- September 11-15** **Networld + Interop - Paris, France.** Sponsor: Seybold Seminars. Call Cristi Leer, (415) 578-6985 or (800) 488-2883; fax, (415) 525-0183.
- September 12-14** **Networks Expo '95 - Dallas.** Organized by Bruno Blenheim. Call Annie Scully, (800) 829-3976 or (201) 346-1400; fax, (201) 346-1532.
- September 19-21** **@Unix Expo - New York City.** Organized by Bruno Blenheim. Call Annie Scully, (800) 829-3976 or (201) 346-1400; fax, (201) 346-1532.
- September 20-22** **Virus Bulletin International Conference - Boston.** Sponsored by the Virus Bulletin. For registration call (203) 431-8720; fax, (203) 431-8165. For further information call Petra Duffield at 44 (1235) 555-139; fax, 44 (1235) 559-935.
- September 25-28** **Interactive Television Conference and Expo - San Jose, CA.** Produced by Mulichannel CommPerspectives and Microware. In case you still believe in ITV. Call Gary, (303) 393-7449 x225; fax, (303) 329-3453.
- September 25-29** **Networld + Interop - Atlanta.** Sponsor: Seybold Seminars. Call Cristi Leer, (415) 578-6985 or (800) 488-2883; fax, (415) 525-0183.
- September 26-30** **SPA Annual Conference - Boston.** Sponsored by the Software Publishers Association. Call Nadia Kader, (202) 452-1600 x339; fax, (202) 785-3649; e-mail, nkader@spa.org.
- September 27-29** **The Media Alliances Conference - La Jolla, CA.** Sponsored by The Kelsey Group. Come understand who's doing deals with whom. Call Natalie Kaye, (609) 921-7200; fax, (609) 921-2112.
- September 27-29** **Commercial Parallel Processing Conference - Chicago.** Organized by CMP Publications, Inc. and the Gartner Group. Attend with your twin! Call Johnathan Varman, (800) 808-3976 x6827 or (516) 733-6770; fax, (516) 733-6730; e-mail, con-freg@cmp.com.
- September 28-29** **Integrated Office Conference '95 - Del Mar, CA.** Organized by Multi-Function Peripheral Association. For registration questions call (800) 603-6372; fax, (619) 447-6872; e-mail, mfpa-

- request@cognisys.com with the subject "Send IOC 95 Info". For other questions call Bob McComiskie at (617) 229-7021.
- Sept 28-Oct 1** **PC Expo Home** - New York City. Organized by Bruno Blenheim. Call Annie Scully, (800) 829-3976 or (201) 346-1400; fax, (201) 346-1532.
- Sept 31-Oct 3** ***Agenda 96** - Scottsdale. Sponsor: InfoWorld Editorial Products. Stewart's look ahead. Call Lia Lorenzano, (415) 312-0545; fax, (415) 286-2750.
- October 3-5** **PC Expo** - Chicago. Organized by Bruno Blenheim. Call Annie Scully, (800) 829-3976 or (201) 346-1400; fax, (201) 346-1532.
- October 8-10** ***EuroChannels** - Paris. Sponsored by Global Touch, Inc.; Ingram Micro; Merisel; and Computer 2000. Call Josiane Emorine (510) 649-1100 x14; fax, (510) 649-1155; e-mail, globaltouch2@mcimail.com.
- October 8-10** **International Publishing Conference** - Frankfurt, Germany. Organized by AIC Conferences. Call Helen Fulda, 49 (69) 6091-9333; fax, 49 (69) 620-477.
- October 9-12** **Microprocessor Forum** - San Jose, CA. Sponsored by MicroDesign Resources. The high point of the circuit-maker circuit. Call Lynn Rodriguez, (800) 770-4006 or (707) 824-4006; fax, (707) 823-0504.
- October 15-18** ****East-West High-Tech Forum** - Bled, Slovenia. The sixth annual sponsored by EDventure Holdings. Call Daphne Kis, (212) 924-8800; fax, (212) 924-0240; e-mail, info@edventure.com.
- October 15-19** **OOPSLA-95** - Austin. Organized by OOPSLA-95 Conference Committee. Call Karen Breedlove, (503) 691-0890; fax, (503) 691-1821; e-mail, oopsla95@applelink.apple.com.
- October 16-20** **8th International Symposium on AI** - Monterrey, Mexico. Organized by ITESM. Call Jose Sanchez, 52 (8) 328-4197; fax, 52 (8) 328-4189.
- October 18-19** **SoftExpo-Europe '95** - Amsterdam. Sponsored by Software Publisher Magazine, the Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Netherlands, and the Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency. Call Barb Anderson, (303) 745-5711; fax (303) 745-5712.
- October 30-31** **International Conference on Electronic Commerce** - Austin, TX. Sponsors include the NSF, RGK Foundation, IC2 Institute, UT Austin and the University of Rochester. To register call the RGK Foundation, (512) 474-9298; fax (512) 499-0245. Questions? Call Andrew Whinston, (512) 471-8879; fax, (512) 471-0587; e-mail, abw@curly.cc.utexas.edu.

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- March 17-20** ****PC (Platforms for Communication) Forum** - Tucson, AZ. Sponsored by us: You read the newsletter; now meet the players. Call Daphne Kis, (212) 924-8800; fax, (212) 924-0240; e-mail, daphne@edventure.com.

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@ Events Jerry plans to attend.

Lack of a symbol is no indication of lack of merit.

Please let us know about other events we should include. -- Christina Koukkos

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Daphne Kis
Publisher