The IEEE Standard for Software Verification and Validation Plans 1012-1986 (R1992) spells out exactly how a third-party contractor will look over your shoulder while your crew tries to bang out code as fast as they can.

The objective of an IV&V (Independent Verification and Validation) effort is to develop an independent assessment of the software quality and to determine if the software satisfies critical systems requirements. In an effort to meet this objective, IV&V projects often seek to analyze the software using methods, tools, and processes that are complementary to but distinct from those used by the developer. The complementary viewpoints utilized by IV&V include efforts to determine conditions that might not have been tested by the developing organization, including boundary constraints, off-nominal conditions, error paths, and user scenarios. These viewpoints enable the IV&V team to have a different perspective of the software from that of the development team.

Who is watching over sites like Excite and Epicurious to insure they are keeping this side of those boundary constraints, avoiding the off-nominal conditions, and aren't straying onto those error paths?

Software Voyeurs

If you trust them to do it for themselves, they have to invest in some software. That takes us right back to the Log Analysis tools at Yahoo!. They can pick from Accrue Software, WebTrends, net.Analysis, NetTracker, NetIntellect, or dozens of others. Some people in Redmond, Washington thought this was an important enough feature in their Web server that they went out, bought one, and redubbed it "The Microsoft Site Server Usage Analyst feature" (**www.interse.com**) (see Figure 5.11).

I/Pro (**www.ipro.com**) was the first on the block to offer such a program. NetLine is a measurement and analysis system with a twist. Taking the stand that running analysis after analysis on your own computer bogs down its ability to quickly serve Web pages, NetLine grabs your logs and securely transmits them to I/Pro. There, they are crunched and returned in the form of daily, weekly, and monthly reports. "They are pre-formatted for printing, look good in black and white or color, and are in shades that can be faxed. You'll be proud to present them internally and externally.

But some people felt this didn't go far enough. If you're spending good money, you want to be certain the reports aren't cooked. In response, I/Pro went to a service model.

Report Verification

I/Pro decided to provide audits. In their parlance, "An audit is a report produced by an independent third party, which uses industry standard measures to verify the level of activity a site generates over a specified time period."

A couple of problems pop up. First, they are auditing the log files. Log files can be fudged. Next, it is often contended that the entity collecting the information should not be charged with auditing that information. Finally, there are no industry standard measures. If you want standard measures you have to look to the old media, like magazines.

FreeWheel, Ex. 1157, Part 2 of 2

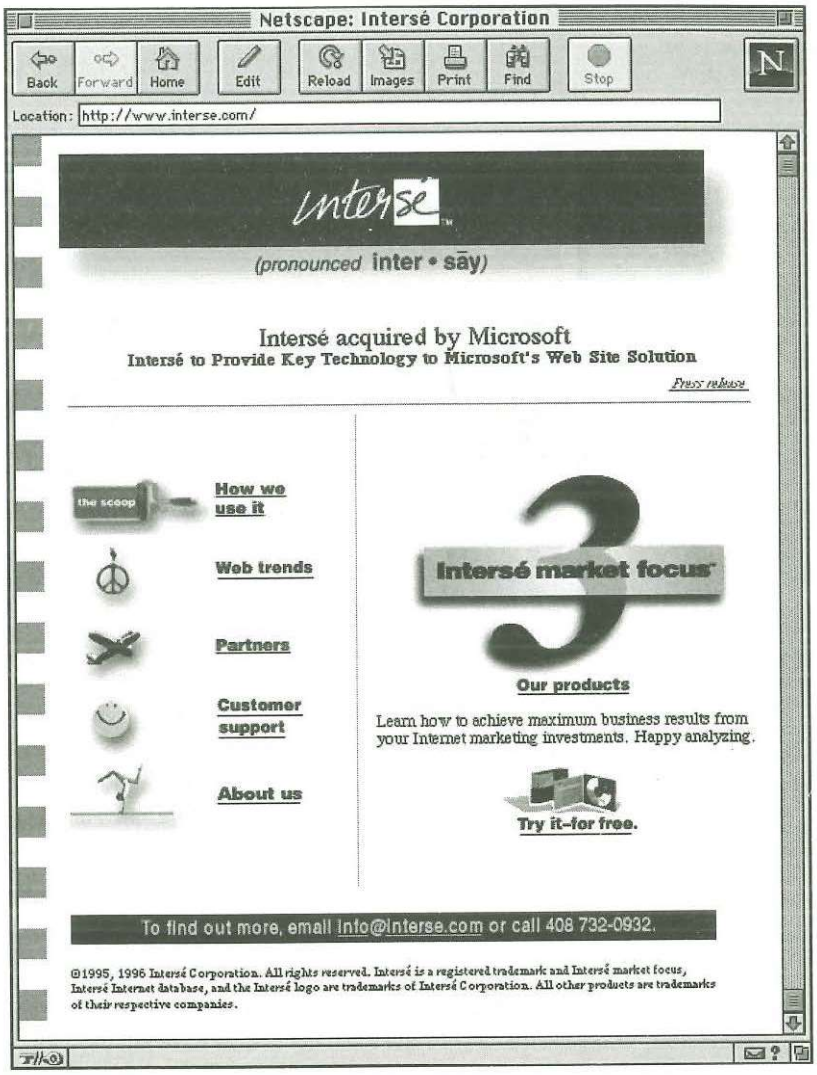


FIG. 5.11
Intersé's tools were valuable enough to be gobbled up by Microsoft.

In the world of magazine circulation audits, BPA International is one of the top contenders. If you sell magazines, they will audit the number you sell. If you have a controlled subscription magazine, they verify and validate that you really have 25,000 senior level managers in companies with revenue over one billion dollars and responsible for the purchase of fleets of trucks. They've been at it since 1931. They've audited the circulation of 1,756 publications. They now do Web sites as well (**www.bpai.com**) (see Figure 5.12).

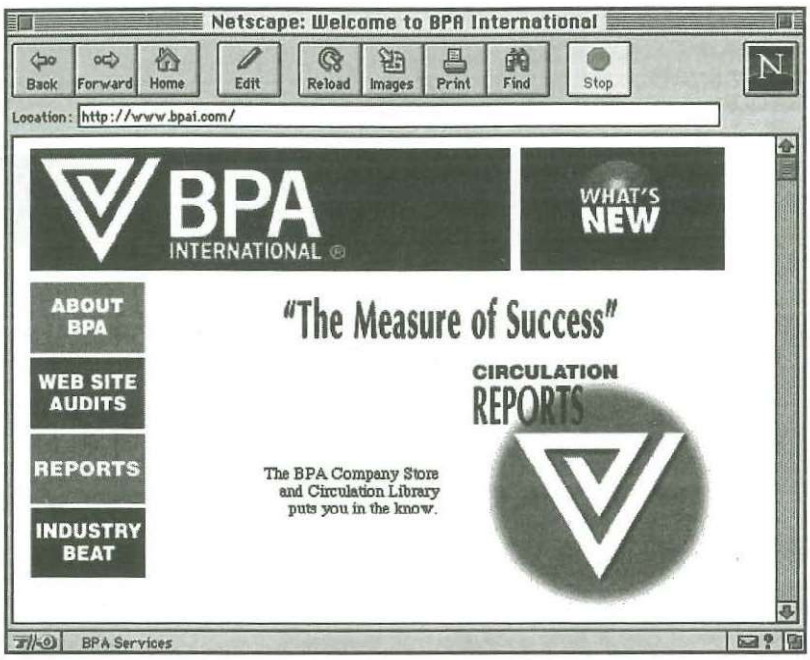


FIG. 5.12
BPA International has turned its magazine auditing experience toward the Web.

BPA publishes the reports they create. You can go to **www.bpai.com/audits/reports** and download Acrobat versions of the reports they've done for CIO and WebMaster Online, and a slew of "World" magazines like *Computer World*, *Java World*, *Netscape World*, *Network World*, *PC World*, and *Sun World OnLine*. If you're looking to buy an ad on these sites, you can see who visits at what time of day, and so on.

The Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) has been up to the same thing since 1914. In 1996, they spun off a subsidiary called Audit Bureau of Verification Services (ABVS Interactive) to handle the interactive side of things (**www.accessabvs.com/webaudit**) (see Figure 5.13).

Michael J. Lavery, President of ABVS, says that there are three ways an audit protects an advertiser: to assure that a Web site's activity counts have not been either misrepresented (counted incorrectly), manipulated (counts don't reflect actual activity), or reported in an unfamiliar format. Because the ABC has been formatting reports since 1914, they should know what's familiar.

But what these companies do not do is look under the covers. It's not how high you count that counts, it's how you count high.

How You Count High

In a press release dated April 8, 1997, Yahoo! announced that they had selected ABVS and Ernst & Young LLP to provide third-party validation and certification. Was there something ABVS couldn't handle? Yes.

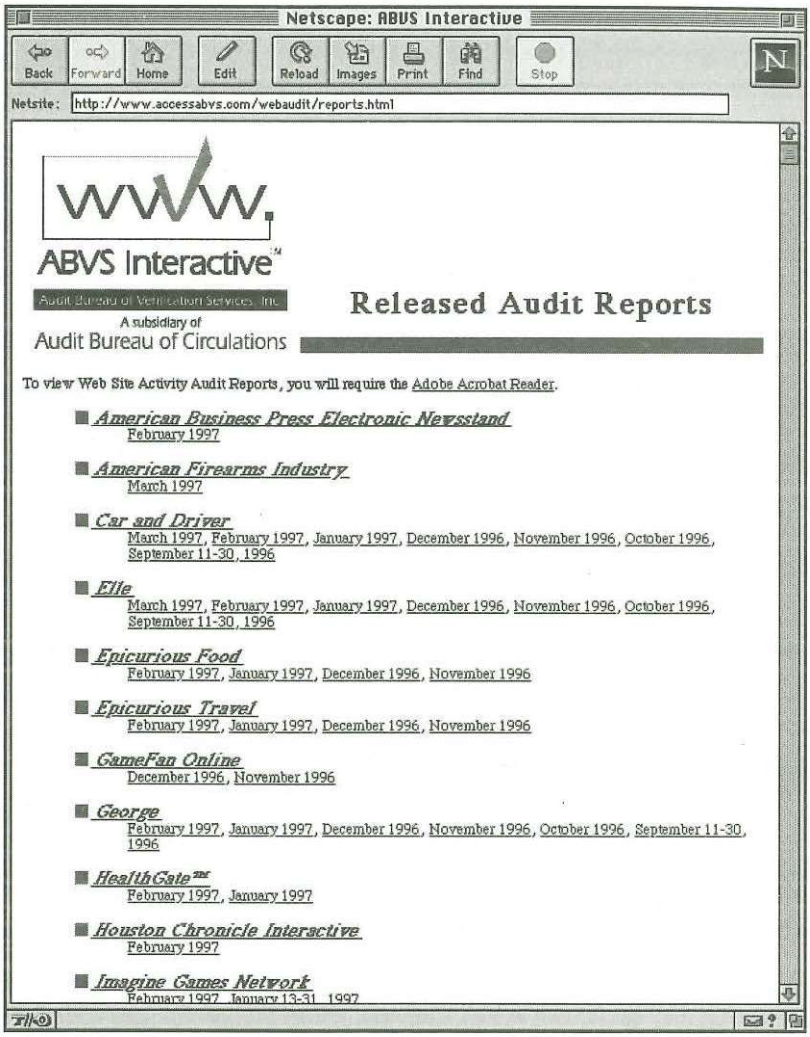


FIG. 5.13
The ABC formed ABVS to verify and validate Web sites selling ads.

"ABVS Interactive will provide its expertise in interactive auditing, verification, and industry-developed standards to independently validate figures in Yahoo!'s site usage reports." But first, "Ernst & Young will provide third party certification of Yahoo!'s audience measurement software system and controls."

It's all well and good to say, "Yep, that sure is a five alight. Sure is. That's a five if ever I saw one." It's another thing to snoop around long enough to realize there's another question here. "Just how did you arrive at the five, given that you had two twos to start with?"

According to the release: "Ernst & Young is currently evaluating and documenting Yahoo!'s reporting software, processes, and procedures, and will recommend changes to incorporate

established industry standards for controlling the information and the content of information to be provided prior to certification of the system. Ernst & Young will also recommend controls to monitor changes to Yahoo!'s system to certify ongoing systems integrity."

Even the IEEE would approve.

Serve Yourself

If you're a well-heeled advertiser and feel it's necessary to wrest control away from those untrustworthy content sites, you could insist that you serve your own ads. That's what General Motors did in April of 1997.

If you served your own ads onto the content creator's site, you know how many banners were served. Sort of. You still face all of the problems previously stated. The only discrepant element you remove from the mix is dishonesty. What you lose is the value of aggregated information that the content site can analyze and report. Who is visiting this site? What sort of subject matter and creative do they respond to the most?

Over time, General Motors and its followers will lose. The sites that sell ads can't afford to rely on sponsors to serve up banners fast enough to satisfy the need for speed felt by the ravening hordes of surfers. Debra Aho Williams at *Advertising Age* summed it up: "Marketers will push for this because they can. And because they hold the purse strings, some of them probably will get their way. But like so many things on the Net, just because you can, doesn't mean you should."

Measuring Behavior—Before and After

It's nice to know how many times there was an opportunity to see your banner. It's nice to know how many people clicked your banner. It's even nice to know that the numbers you've been given resemble what is happening on planet Earth. But what about the people behind those numbers? What are they up to? Really?

Looking Over Their Shoulders The NPD Group (**www.npd.com**) measures what people do (see Figure 5.14). They'll take a panel of 2,000 households and make them keep diaries on what they eat for two weeks. They analyze and report back on their findings across each of 53 categories of foods and beverages by meal occasion, day of week, appliance used, cooking method, composition of the dish, gender, age, region...well, you get the idea. Oh, it's not just for food. They also track apparel, athletic footwear, beauty trends, cosmetics, fragrances, gasoline, home appliances...well, you get the picture.

They also run a service called PC-Meter. PC Meter Interactive Media Metrics provides statistics on:

Estimated number of different people who visit Web sites

Frequency of visits

Length of visits

Comparative data across sites

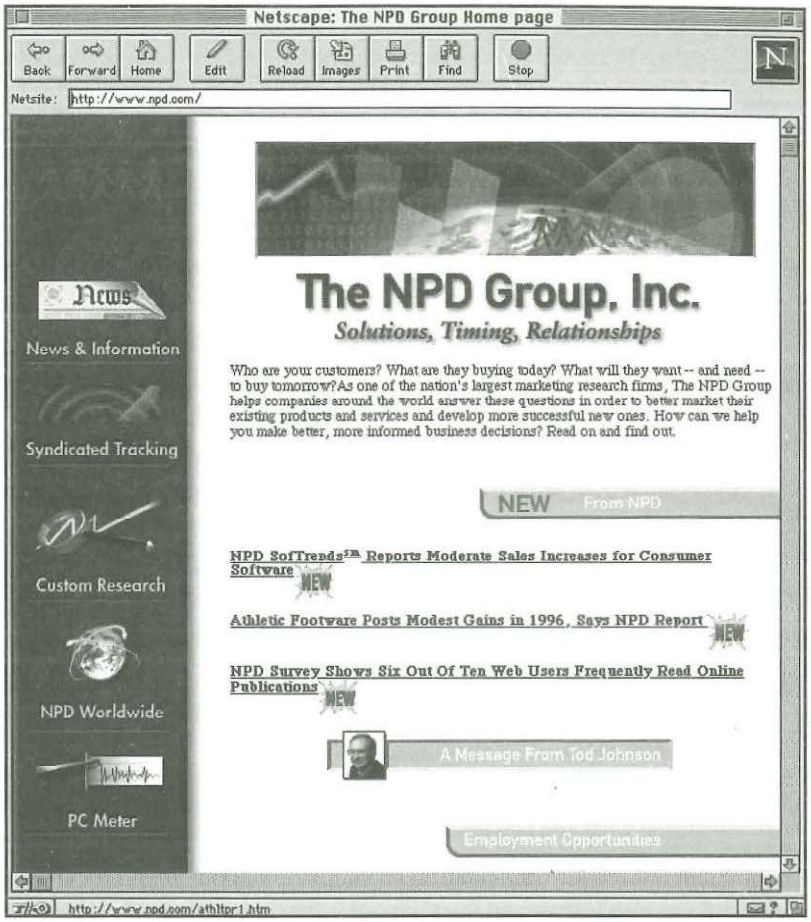


FIG. 5.14
NPD wants to watch your every click.

This is not hits, logs, or averages. This is hard data collected firsthand. They wired up a panel of 10,000 households demographically balanced to represent the population of U.S. PC owners. With software installed on home computers, they are not keeping diaries. They're surfing. Their surfing is recorded.

In 1996, PC-Meter found some interesting things—such as the fact that the top ten Web sites were search engines and sites that serve as default home pages for commercial online services, browsers, and Internet Service Providers (ISPs). A handful of content-driven sites made it into the list in the beginning part of the year, including the University of Michigan (**ww.umich.edu**), which (coincidentally?) ran a very popular poll on Web usage; the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign (**www.uiuc.edu**) (home of the NCSA's Mosaic); and Playboy (**www.playboy.com**) (no comment necessary).

MSNBC (**www.msnbc.com**) enjoyed the steepest audience growth when its cable TV show went on the air. Walt Disney (**www.disney.com**) got a giant shot in the arm by buying log-on promotional space on AOL in January and February.

But then there was NBC (**www.nbc.com**) that found out advertising on TV wasn't a bad way to go either. In a press release dated March 10, 1997, PC Meter revealed that the NBC Web site had done well while the Olympics were on the air. "NBC's Web server logs confirmed the impact of its televised promotions, as sharp increases in Web traffic occurred within minutes of many TV promos."

It's good to know that there are companies out there looking over the shoulders of Web surfers so you can figure out who's out there. You, on the other hand, can get a look at those people from the other side of the screen. You can record what those people are doing once they hit your site.

Your Own, Personal Yardstick Did they click? You own them. Just as sure as if they had filled out a business reply form and mailed it back to you. It's now up to you to get to know them in all the ways possible. How do we measure them? Let me count the ways.

From where did they come? Your referrer logs will tell you that. But what different actions do they take if they came from ESPNet Sportszone as opposed to Epicurious? How are these leads different?

One of the easiest methods is to set up duplicate sets of pages. This is the home page and site they reach when they click a banner from Yahoo!, and that is the home page and site they reach when they click a banner at Riddler. Web site too big? Use cookies.

Do the people from this site stay long? Come back often? Do the people from that site tend to look at the whitepapers or go right for the product? Was that creative better as a tool for raising brand awareness or for direct response?

Time to go back to Rick Stout's *Web Site Stats—Tracking Hits and Analyzing Traffic* for all the details on what you can glean from your site.

When you track what people do on your site, you can learn a lot about the power of your ads. But you also learn about the power of listing in search engines and directories and doing direct mail. You can also learn if it's worth your while to pay for leads rather than clicks.

Buying Leads

We're not quite to retail yet. We'll get there, just hang on. At the moment we're in that twilight between advertising and selling, which is lead brokering.

Instead of selling you an Opportunity To See, or a clickthrough, what if I sold you somebody that was pre-qualified?

There are lots of examples out there, but the first one I ever came across was FinanCenter (**www.financenter.com**) (see Figure 5.15).

FinanCenter is a great place to hang out if you're thinking about borrowing money. Buying a house? A car? Want to know how much you can borrow? What your payments will be? Just want to get a better credit card? This is the place.

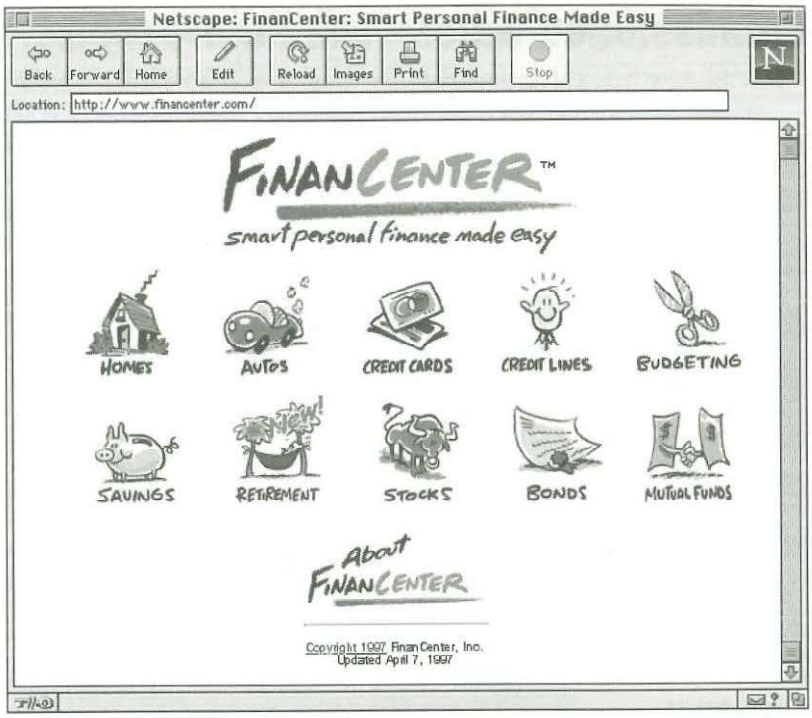


FIG. 5.15
FinanCenter offers free services to the public and passes the leads on to lenders—for a price.

Loaded with do-it-yourself calculators, this site assists borrowers by offering below-market prices, cash rebates, and low rate guarantees. Is it a bank? Is it a savings and loan? No, it's a software company.

Sherri Neasham runs the place and loves contributing her talents to those in need of financial guidance. She's also been profitable from the third month of operations.

The calculators allow borrowers to experiment objectively, without any pressure from loan agents or sales reps. They get to alter the down payment points, the term, the balloon payment. In other words, they do all the hard stuff, the time-consuming stuff. When they finally get a set of numbers that look good, it's time to apply for the loan.

You can apply for free. You can get an answer within 48 hours. You can lock in the lowest rate in America on a conforming loan. And when you do, FinanCenter's cash register rings.

On the lending side, American Finance and Investment gets a loan application from somebody who has already thought long and hard about how to structure the right loan. A loan they can afford. A loan they want to get an answer about within 48 hours. That's worth a great deal to American Finance and Investment and is cheaper than sending out thousands of direct mail pieces to apartment owners, hoping that some of them want to buy a house.

This isn't branding through impressions. It's not clickthrough based on curiosity. This is handing over a pre-qualified, interested, prospective buyer. The only thing better would be making the sale for you.

Commissioned Sales—The Final Frontier

You have heard of Amazon.com (**www.amazon.com**) dozens of times because theirs is a model that's working. People are willing to buy books over the Internet because they know what a book is and how it works. They can read excerpts of it online. They don't have to worry about whether it will fit, be the right color, or is compatible with their computer. It's a book. If you bought this one through Amazon.com, thank you. If you bought this one at Amazon.com by way of my Web site at **www.targeting.com**, then thank you very much! Here's why: I'm an Amazon Associate.

CEO and Founder Jeff Bezos isn't just smart, he's way smart. He'll be happy if you set up your own bookstore on the Web. You have a Web site about horses? Add a bookstore! He wants to be your fulfillment house.

You decide which of the eight hundred or so books about horses you like best and point people to them at Amazon.com. If they buy, Bezos will send you a commission. He's turned everybody on the Internet into a retail store for his back-end supply shop. Brilliant.

Mark Welch lists 34 sites that promise to pay commissions on his massively useful Web Site Banner Advertising: Banner Ad Networks & Brokers page (**www.markwelch.com/bannerad.htm**) (see Figure 5.16).

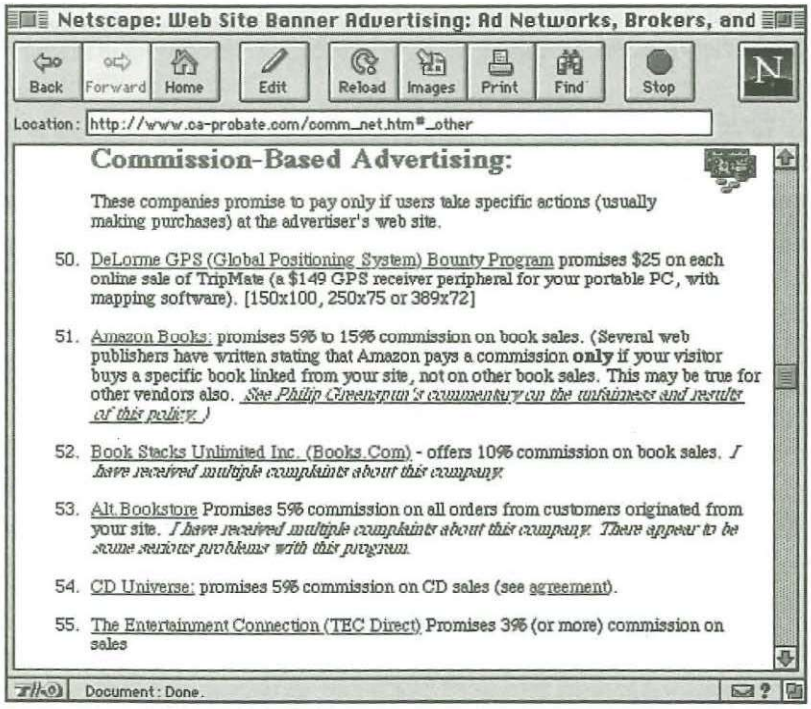


FIG. 5.16
Mark Welch lists 34 commission-based sites the last time I looked.

Where, Oh Where, Does that Banner Belong?

You know what they are. You know what they do. You know how to count the results. Now where are you going to place that banner so it can do the most good? That's a whole 'nother kettle of fish and a whole 'nother chapter. ●

CHAPTER 6

Looking for Space In All the Right Places

"I always wanted to be somebody, but I should have been more specific."

Lily Tomlin

What do you look for when you place TV commercials? The right audience. If you're selling beer, it's unlikely that you're going to find a decent demographic audience on Masterpiece Theatre. If you're selling Grey Poupon, it wouldn't be wise to spend a lot of money for ads on Demolition Derby.

What do you look for when you place ads in magazines? The right audience. Fishing tackle probably won't move well in Architectural Digest.

Newspapers? First, you choose the geography, then you pick the section, then you pick the right days. You're after the right audience. Why should it be any different on the World Wide Web?

You're taking the time and going to the trouble of getting oriented (hey, you're taking the time to read this, right?). You're going to do your best to create captivating ads. And, while you're not spending a million dollars for thirty seconds of the Superbowl, you *are* committing some of your hard-fought budget on this electronic experiment. It would be a shame if all that time, effort, and money were spent to put your message in front of people who won't get

it, won't like it, and—most important of all—won't buy it. You'll be wasting your budget. You'll be wasting your time. Your boss won't be very happy, either.

The trick to banner placement on the Web is part context, part unconventional thinking, part competitive penetration, and a healthy dose of technology. The Web comes complete with new ways and new means of reaching would-be buyers. There are new tactics. There are also some tried and true techniques that will come as no surprise to anyone. It's the combination that can make your Web advertising campaign pay off. ■

Join the Crowd

Unless you're trying to sell something to everybody and your name is Honda, Coke, or Nike, one of the first things you should do is buy banners on sites that attract your kind of people. If your name is Honda, Coke, or Nike, you already know that Netscape has enough daily visitors to earn big bucks selling ad space. You may want to avail yourself of their venue. If a couple million people drive the same freeway day after day, it makes sense to put up a billboard. If a couple of million people end up at the Netscape site every day, it makes sense to put up a banner.

There's No Escape from Netscape

One of the single most visited sites on the Internet is Netscape. It gets visited because that's where you are taken when you fire up your Netscape browser. Even if you were nerdly enough to change the Netscape browser options so your home page is now some other Net destination (Options, General Preferences), Netscape still hooks the masses with its directory buttons. At the top of the browser window, just above the site being visited and just below the Location box showing the current URL, are the Directory buttons:

1. What's New?
2. What's Cool?
3. Destinations
4. Net Search
5. People
6. Software

Those buttons are in your face and hard to ignore. Microsoft Explorer may have a Search button and a Favorites list of built-in bookmarks, but the Netscape mystique is still working in their favor for now.

Netscape earned $53 million in 1997 putting Excite, Infoseek, Lycos, and Yahoo! on their Net Search page. They'll earn more and more as the major brand names decide they want to be where all the people are. You can pay big bucks to put your logo in lights at Times Square, Picadilly Circus, or on the road into town from the Hong Kong airport. Netscape isn't much different. It's for great awareness and recognition—branding.

How many millions of people visit Netscape every day? Lots. According to the claim on the Netscape Web site, it is "the most often visited site on the Web according to Netscape's latest I/Pro Audit." It's certainly a number that grows day-by-day.

What kind of people visit the Netscape site? In April of 1996, Netscapians got Griggs-Anderson Research to conduct a survey of almost 20,000 Netscape Navigator users. Their results give you a snapshot:

68% have a household income more than $50,000.

48% are between 26 and 45 years old.

84% are male.

57% have completed four years or more of college.

18% are in the computer industry.

77% are employed full-time.

22% are students (half of them are employed).

12% work from their homes.

39% have used their credit card number to make a Web purchase.

If you're thinking that this is just the type of person you're trying to reach, you're not very particular. You're not thinking in the broad sense of a brand maker or the narrow sense of an Internet direct marketer. These are *averages*. This is the result of a general sifting through Netscape server statistics. If you're selling fishing tackle, you need to tie your flies a little tighter. If you're Visa, maybe it makes sense to tackle the world from this direction.

Visa is going after people who eat out. At least, people who are interested in wandering the Web to read about eating out. They spent most of 1997 and into 1998 pushing a "Cities To Dine For" campaign on Epicurious Food and Travel (**www.epicurious.com**). Restaurant reviews for cities like London, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, and Tokyo will be festooned with encouragement to use your Visa card when the bill comes. Visa is also sponsoring GeoCities' NapaValley (**www.geocities.com/NapaValley**) (see Figure 6.1), which zeros in on gourmet food and wine. If you eat and can afford a credit card, Visa figures that's good enough for them.

This kind of thinking belongs to those who deal in broad brush strokes and aggregate information. You should only be looking at the big pull sites like Netscape or the search engines if your goal is global domination and your name is Microsoft. The numbers from LinkExchange (**www.linkexchange.com**) suggest that the more focused the site, the higher the clickthrough.

Ali Partovi, founder of LinkExchange, rattles off the numbers by heart. "The sites we looked at came up with pretty consistent results. If you show over a million impressions per day, the clickthrough is about two percent. Ten thousand to a hundred thousand impressions a day yields about two and a half percent. One thousand to ten thousand a day gets about two and two-thirds clicks and the site with less than a thousand impressions a day continually gets over three percent impressions to clicks. It's no secret. It's just that the smaller sites cater to more specific visitors whose interests are more obvious."



FIG. 6.1
Visa is looking for hungry people to use plastic money.

Bob Ivans is Vice President of market research at I/PRO, which creates software to analyze what visitors look at on a Web site and audit the claims made by those who would sell ads on their sites. Ivans agrees with Partovi, as seen in this quote from the October 21, 1996 issue of *Webweek*: "When the ad is consistent with content, the response rates are better. When it's not,

the results can be disastrous—like putting a yellow pages ad for telephones in a section of the book devoted to auto repair."

Men

Call it contextual placement. Are you after males, 18–34? How about ESPN Sportszone (**http://espnet.sportszone.com**) (see Figure 6.2)? If you like the sports angle, you could try SportsLine USA (**www.sportsline.com**), @Bat (**www.majorleaguebaseball.com**), NBA.com (**www.nba.com**), or Team NFL (**http://nflhome.com**).

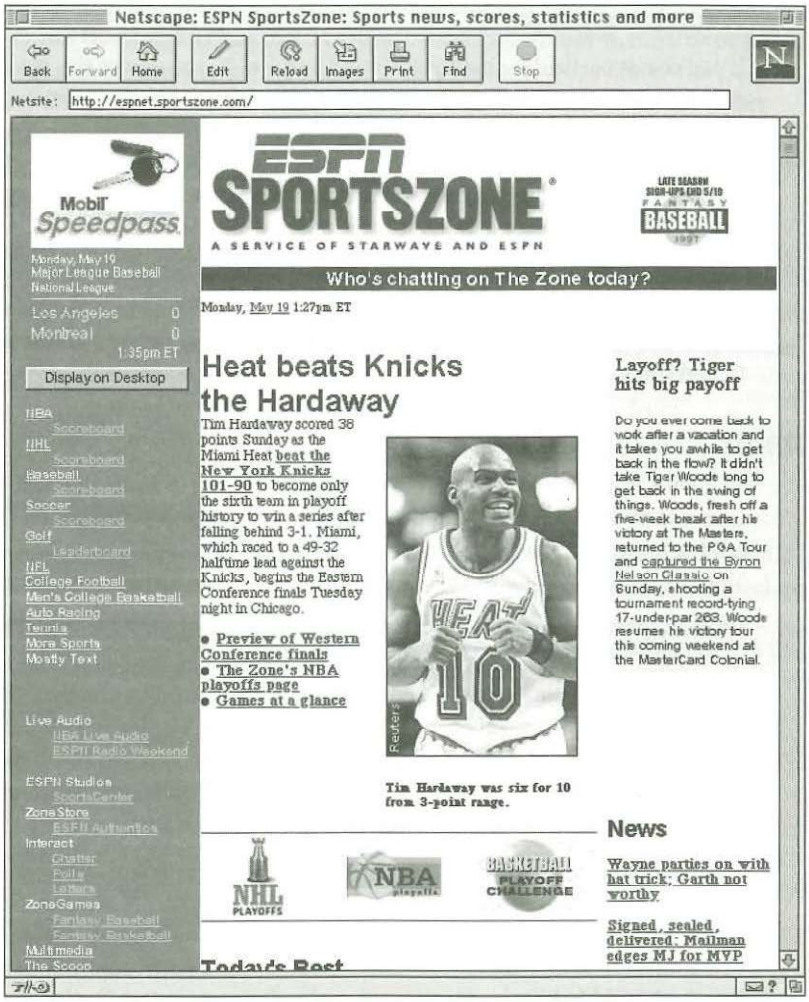


FIG. 6.2
Looking for men? Try sports, like ESPNet.

The SportZone's scoreboard in the upper-left corner flashes new scores every few seconds. One of the most often visited sites, I vote this one most likely to sit on an 18- to 34-year-old's

screen for most of the day. Mobile wants them. Ford wants them. Pizza Hut wants them. Jupiter Communications says the SportZone billed $6.5 million in 1996. That sounds like the right place to sell trucks, beer, and pizza. It's a pretty good place to sell flowers, too.

But Bill Tobin at PC Flowers and Gifts isn't looking at men in general. He's looking at men in particular, as well. He was thrilled at the chance to advertise on a site with far less traffic and that is limited to specific membership. However, as he told Kate Maddox at *Ad Age*'s *NET Marketing* magazine (January/February, 1997), "Any college-educated male who makes $50,000 above the average income is going to buy flowers. I think an ad on Counsel Connect is a laser beam into our exact demographic." Counsel Connect can be found at **www.counselconnect.com**

If you're not particular about your brand and feel it can survive the association, adult sites are doing a land-office business on the Net and are happy to sell advertising. It's really no surprise when you consider the VCR/movie rental industry. It was floundering until adult titles made it possible for people to enjoy mature subjects in the privacy of their own homes. Now, one needn't even suffer the embarrassment of walking into a rental shop and having the teenager behind the counter wonder about your moral turpitude.

Adult sites have truly been the cutting edge when it comes to online transactions and advertising. There are plenty of sites and a lot of options. You can learn about them at such sites as The Adult Money Report (**www.alexas.com/advert**). If you're looking for men, you know where to find them.

Women

Women's Wire (**www.women.com**) decided early on to make the best use of the communication side of the Web. Over and over again, women on the Net say their favorite thing about it is talking to people. Over and over again, their favorite people to talk to are women. Women's Wire decided to facilitate.

Women's Wire describes itself as "the premier destination for women on the Web. Advertising on Women's Wire allows you to reach the affluent, educated, and professional online woman in a unique, high-quality environment. The site is organized by channel: News, Style, Work, Body, Buzz, Cash, and Shop. All channels are listed on The Women's Wire Guide Page. Feature articles are listed on each Channel Home Page. You may elect to associate with specific features in the channel of your choice, buy a broad Site Rotation, or we'll work with you to develop compelling editorial to surround your advertising message."

Want to get more specific? You want women who are building families? How about Parent Soup (**www.parentsoup.com**)? By the end of 1997's first quarter, women visited Parent Soup a quarter of a million times each month. Sixty-three percent were between the ages of 30 and 44, had a median income of $57,333, and almost 85% had spent some time in college. On average they had 1.9 kids (they never do seem to be all there, do they?) who, on average, were eight years old. More than 85% were married.

College Students

Banks like to get their hooks into college students and make them customers for life. Companies selling music know their efforts will not be wasted on the college crowd. If that's who you're after, there are some sites you should know about.

For reaching those looking forward to the university life, there are a number of targeted sites which post differing descriptions on their respective Web sites. There's College Edge (**www.collegeedge.com**), which "eases the transition from [high school] to college." Fastweb (**www.fastweb.com**) is "the Internet's largest free scholarship search site." The Princeton Review (**www.review.com**) is "the nation's most popular standardized test preparation company." *U.S. News and World Report* has their .EDU section (**www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/home.htm**), an all-around guide to higher education. If your targets are those who have worked their way through the system, there's Tripod (**www.tripod.com**), which "offers streetsmart strategies for work, life, and everything else."

Corporate Target

If a large part of your business comes from a handful of large companies, you can cater to them. It's not hard to see if a surfer is coming from General Motors, General Electric, or General Mills. Then it's a simple matter to show the right banner. Of course, if these Generals are visiting your Web site from home in the evening using their AOL accounts, you might miss an opportunity here and there to target them. But generally speaking, a visitor from **firewall.gm.com** is a better prospect for your coiling wire than somebody from **www.walgreens.com**.

Will It Play In Poughkeepsie?

JM Lexus wanted to use the Internet to sell more cars out of their lot in Margate, Florida, just north of Miami. They put up no less than three home pages. There's **www.sun-sentinel.com/vroom/d1jmle1.htm** hosted by Sun Sentinel, there's **www.dealernet.com/dealers/j/jmlexus/jmlexus.htm** on the DealerNet site, and there's good old **www.jmlexus.com** that they put up on their own. But that wasn't enough for General Manager David W. Mullen, Jr. He wanted to advertise.

Not to the whole world, mind you. He had no doubt people could find him on the World Wide Web. He just wanted to be sure that folks in the greater Miami area knew he was selling $45,000 cars. So he bought an ad on PointCast's *Miami Herald* channel. He paid $700 per month to place the ad, and created two ads at $1,000 each. The results were 240 e-mails to the dealership, which turned into 48 test drives and sixteen Lexus's out the door. The final tally? $169 per lead for each car sold.

IP Address Identification Like the game of corporate targeting, there's geographic targeting, as well. Is the site visitor coming from a domain that ends in .fr? Give them a banner in French.

Leonid Delitsin, at the Sputnik Advertising Network (in Madison, Wisconsin), goes after Russians and when he places ads, he notices a big difference if they are in Russian. One banner on an English site was placed in English. But when the server detected the visitor was from .ru, another banner, in Russian, took its place. The results were a jump from 3.3% clickthrough to 5%. Delitsin is happy.

Content Sites Play Around From the Yahoo! home page you can click a button that says "More Yahoos." Among other options are a plethora of parochial Yahoo!s. The various localizations include:

Yahoo! Atlanta
Yahoo! Austin
Yahoo! Boston
Yahoo! Chicago
Yahoo! Dallas/Ft Worth
Yahoo! Los Angeles
Yahoo! New York
Yahoo! San Francisco
Yahoo! Seattle
Yahoo! Washington D.C.
Yahoo! Canada
Yahoo! France
Yahoo! Germany
Yahoo! Japan
Yahoo! U.K. & Ireland

You best believe the advertising is different on each. If you want to get down to cases, Yahoo! lets you type in a zip code and creates a page for your town.

Microsoft hasn't been shy about trying out different content on the Web. In the spring of 1997, they're trying their hand at the local Web content game with Sidewalk (**www.sidewalk.com**) (see Figure 6.3).

Always savvy, Microsoft is starting out close to home and will expand from there. The home page looks a little forlorn at the moment, with boston.sidewalk, sanfrancisco.sidewalk, and twincities.sidewalk in black—unlinked—waiting for life to be breathed into them by the Webmaster. But the "sponsored in part by" section is riveting. Logo after logo of major brand names blinks by, and you know the people with the big budgets recognize the power of a local Web site: Visa, Holland America, Club Med, Bank of America, Citibank, Prudential, United Airlines. They know something.

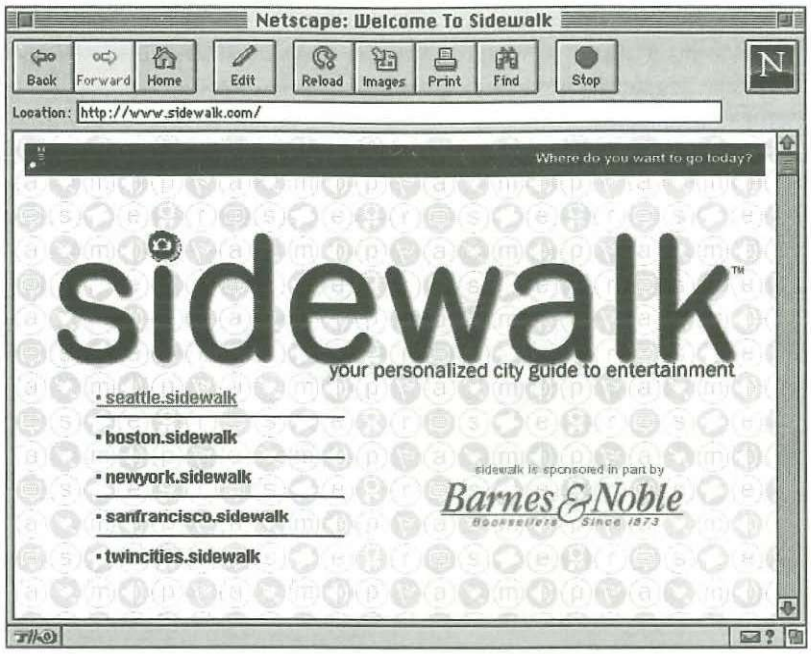


FIG. 6.3
Microsoft tackles the local-Web game with Seattle-specific content as their first effort.

Newspapers Deliver Just about every newspaper in the world has pulled their hair, bitten their nails, and built some kind of Web site. Then they discovered there was value in being local on the global Internet. The Newspaper Association of America created a book and video combination called *Winning the Digital Ad Wars: A Guide to Web Advertising*. It's directed at newspaper publishers and includes case studies, such as one from *Kansas City Star* marketing diva Candy Thompson.

The Kansas City Star Web site proudly proclaims that "It is our goal to make kansascity.com the key Web site for Kansas City. Anyone or anything you need to know about Kansas City, you'll find here." The paper itself provided the backbone for the site—the computers, the phone lines, the programmers, and designers. It then selected media partners who best represented the "essence" of Kansas City: the four local network TV affiliates, the local PBS station, the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Council, three radio stations that reach the same demographics as the Internet, the public library, the Kansas City Royals baseball team, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and well-known local entertainment attractions. Each were committed to having great content on their sites, and pledged to promote it.

You have to admit that this is a great start. You want to promote your site? You get local TV and radio stations to commit to blowing your horn every night on the 5, 6, and 10 o'clock news. It's nice that they can run their own ads in the paper. It's nice that they get signage at The Royals and other entertainment facilities. But then they got creative. Every piece of paper mailed from the Chamber, the Council, and the Bureau includes the URL. But wait, it gets better! The Web address is printed on every library card issued in town. In October 1996, a survey of Kansas City residents revealed name recognition among 60% of those queried.

So if you were promoting your KC real estate firm, your local career consultancy, or your city-wide chain of auto parts stores, it seems there could be no better choice than **www.kansascity.com** (see Figure 6.4).



FIG. 6.4
Although it may be available on a global basis, kansascity.com is selling lots of local advertising.

Push-Pin-Pointing Your Target Audience You're going on a trip. You're going to San Francisco. You need a map of San Francisco. You go to Mapquest (**www.mapquest.com**). You look at the map and decide you need a place to stay. You click Lodging and select Radisson hotels. After updating the map, you not only see the hotel location, but a banner ad for it as well (see Figure 6.5). What's this? A special offer? Now tell me, what's the likelihood that you're going to click there? I thought so.

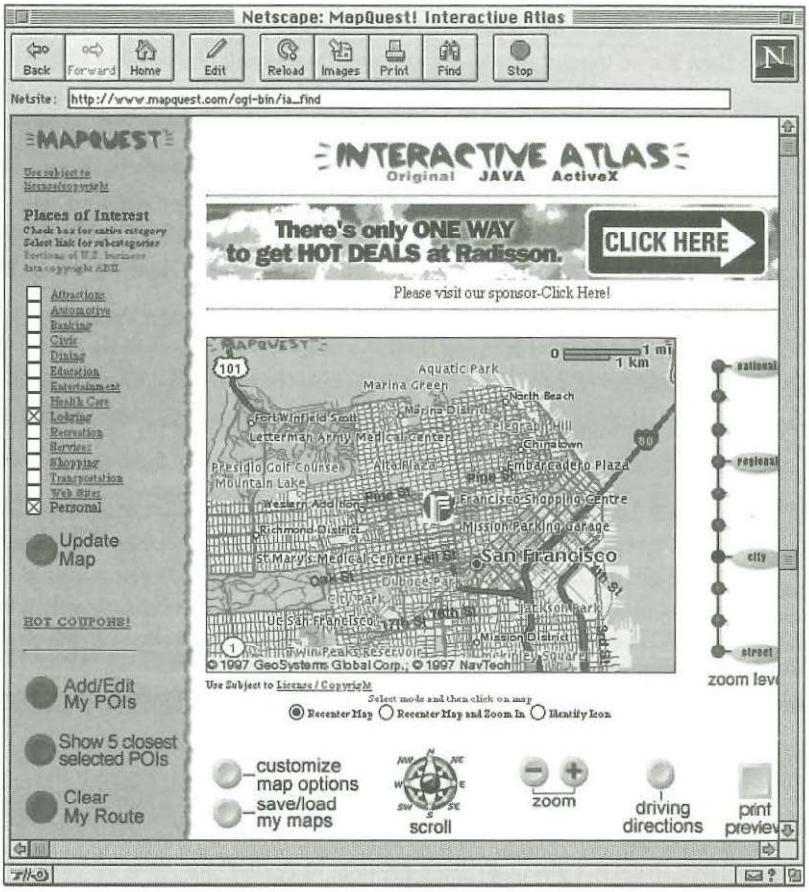


FIG. 6.5
Radisson ads pay attention to where you might want to go.

Bill Sedgwick, Advertising Manager at Mapquest, says they're getting a lot of attention. "This type of advertising works and is excellent for national advertisers who have locations in select markets like hotels and retailers. It's also great for regional advertisers who might have a multi-state area to cover, but don't want to waste banners on a larger audience, like cable companies and phone companies. And local advertisers, of course."

Mapquest geocoded almost two hundred Radisson hotels across the country. They have over twelve million businesses in their database from American Business Information and code them for longitude and latitude. Looking for a company? You can find it. What to advertise to

people looking for geographic information? No problem. And when you look for anything within a five mile radius of a Radisson, lo and behold, there's a little Radisson logo where the hotel is. For the privilege, Radisson paid a premium. While untargeted ads on Mapquest cost $25 per thousand, geocentric ads run at a CPM of $40.

"The whole point is to make the site more useful," enthuses Sedgwick. "If you're looking at a map of Berlin and there's an add for Gateway Computers, you have to wonder how many impressions it takes to get a click. But the real issue, is that the site user looks at it as a waste of space. If there's an ad for a Berlin hotel, or 'Click Here for a guided tour of Checkpoint Charlie,' then it's no longer an ad—it's content. People will like our site better because it has such great content. They'll come back more so we'll be a more valuable site for advertisers." In the middle of 1997, they were getting twenty page views a month and it doesn't take much for them to tell you about pageviews per city.

If maps are good, how about the weather? The Weather Channel (**www.weather.com**) (see Figure 6.6) is happy to sell you a city-specific banner slot. They have 1,600 to choose from. Look at their home page and you might find an ad for Audi. Dig deeper and the picture changes.

If you're interested in the weather in a variety of towns in Pennsylvania, there's a page that lists all the cities they're keeping their eyes on—29 in all (see Figure 6.7). If you're looking at this page and wondering who on earth Lowe's Home Improvement is, then you live west of Texas.

Lowe's has more than 400 stores in the eastern part of the country. Eighteen of them are in Pennsylvania. You won't see their ads if you're looking for the weather in Bakersfield.

Internet Local Advertising & Commerce Association Local advertising isn't just a good idea, it's a movement. The Internet Local Advertising & Commerce Association (ILAC) (**www.kelseygroup.com/ilac/index.html**) "is a not-for-profit organization designed to promote and facilitate local advertising and commerce between buyers and sellers on the Internet. The goal of ILAC is to help accelerate the development of the technology, the standards and the practices that will make the Internet local advertising medium more valuable to advertisers and consumers."

The organizers are from companies like Microsoft, The Kelsey Group (a national yellow pages company), BigBook (an online yellow pages company), Vicinity Corporation (an online mapping firm like Mapquest), GTE Directories, Times Mirror, and Reuben H. Donnelley.

Their purposes are all globally focused to support the local ad buyer. They want banner size and placement reporting standards to make it easy for advertisers to make buys across multiple sites. They want to promote the value of local advertising and facilitate advertising placement. They want to create common advertising categories and search criteria/methodology among advertisers. But primarily, they want to find a way to be a one-stop-shop for companies to place local ads.

In real life, most of the member firms do just that for a living. You can place your ad in a hundred newspapers or twenty yellowpage books with one phone call. These firms want you to be able to do the same thing with Internet advertising. But unless there are standards, they face an uphill battle.

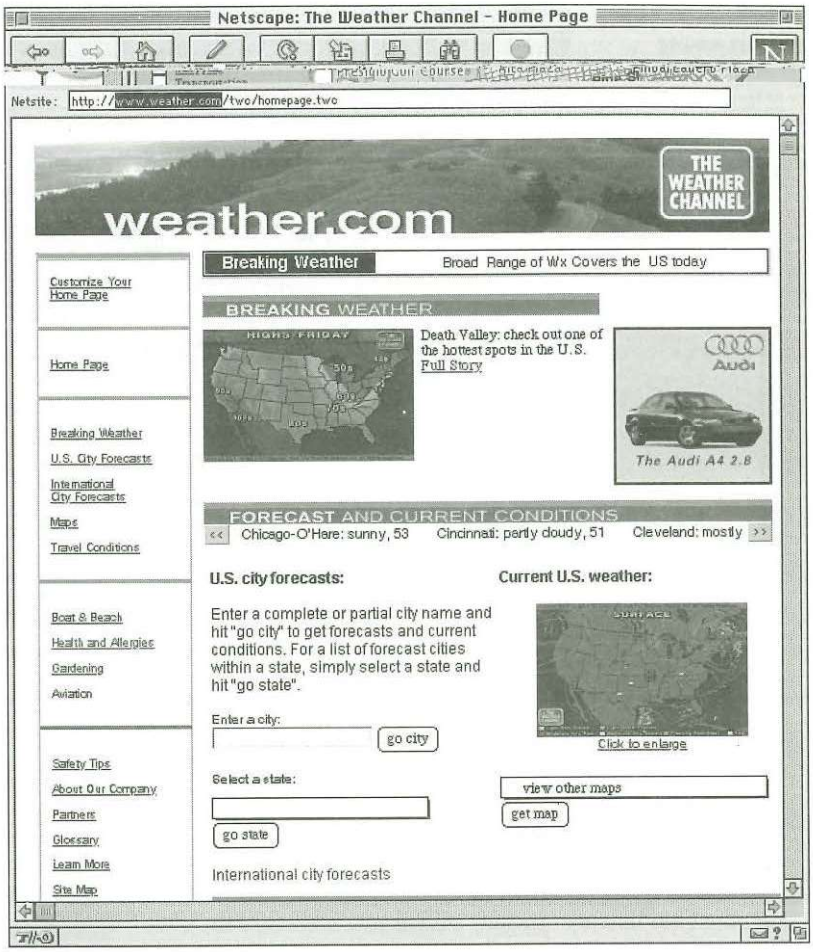


FIG. 6.6
Audi is willing to sell to anybody, anywhere.

Some Out-of-the-Way Places

It's not a stretch to look at some sites less traveled and make the kind of choices you do when perusing magazines. Most of them have fairly small audiences, but they're fairly well identified. Despite this age of electronic communication, the magazine industry continues to blossom. Ink-on-paper has never had it so good. There are enough titles on the newsstands to cater to the most finely tuned interest.

Picture the modern newsstand with its thousand of titles. Imagine that the rack is a handful of sand. Each grain is unique. Each is a slightly different color. Each takes up its own space and each sells advertising. Now look up and admire the beach.

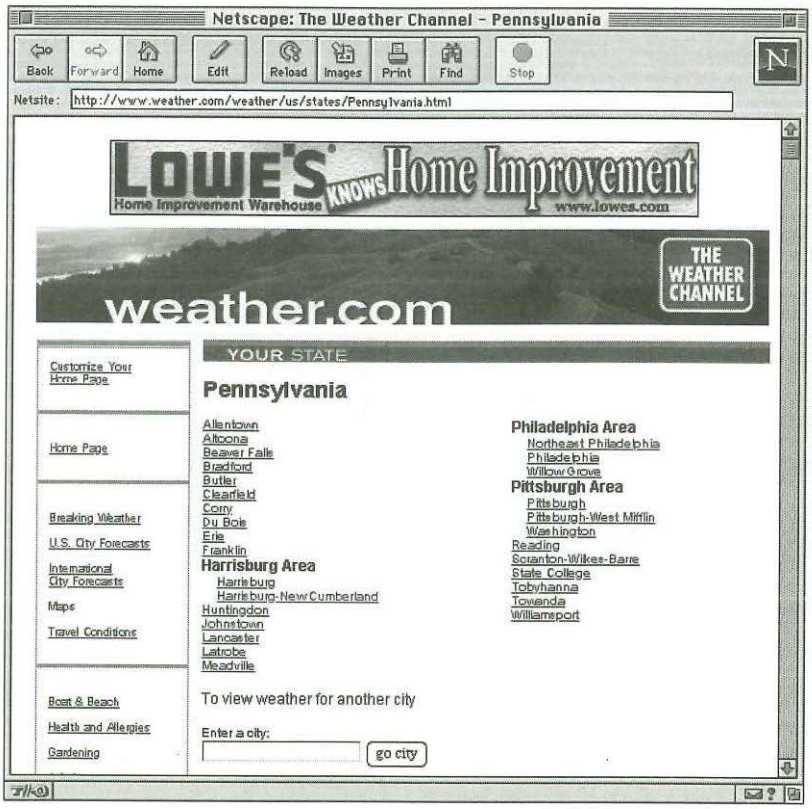


FIG. 6.7
Lowe's isn't wasting impressions on people west of Texas.

In April of 1997, it was announced that the one millionth .com had been registered. In the same month, *Advertising Age* put the number of sites selling ads at 1,000. Bear in mind that those are the ones that are officially selling ads. Those are the ones that showed up on *Ad Age*'s radar. Did they count Kim Baynes' site (**www.wolfbayne.com**), which is shown in Figure 6.8? It's the home of the High Tech Marketing Communicators List and wolfBayne Communications.

Baynes sold me a banner ad on her site in 1995, not too long after Hotwired showed how to do it. I put up a banner for my first book, *World Wide Web Marketing*. She isn't trying to make a living selling ad space, she just saw an opportunity.

Why would I pay for a banner on a site that only gets a handful of visitors a day? Because they are the kind of people I want to reach. They are my context. I doubt *Ad Age* has www.wolfbayne.com in its database. Their loss.

So who are you trying to reach?

If your tastes are more, shall we say, eclectic, you may want to look out on the fringes of the Internet. No, you don't need to go all the way to the Interspecies Telepathic Communication site (**www.cyberark.com/animal/telepath.htm**). Unless, of course, you feel that people who believe they can communicate with their pets via ESP are just the sort of clients you've been

looking for. But there are some interesting alternatives for finding just the right sets of eyeballs.

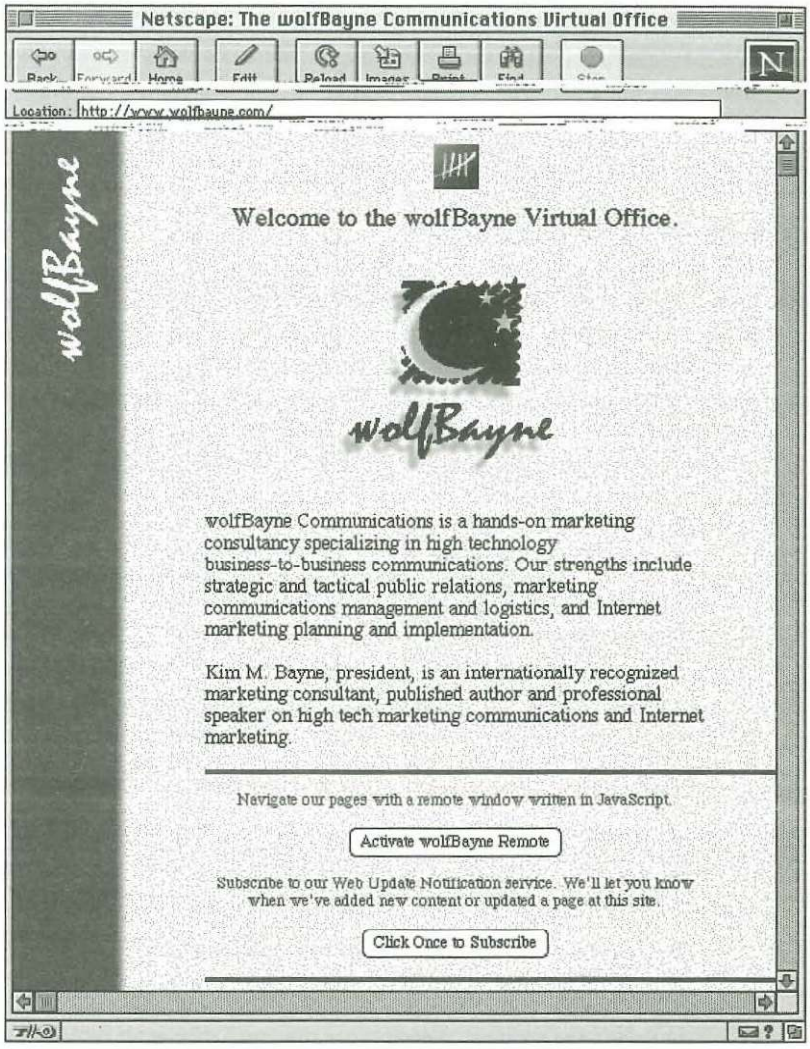


FIG. 6.8
The wolfBayne Communications site will sell you an ad if you feel your target audience frequents it sufficiently.

Bull Feathers

The people at the BAR-G Feedyard are proud of their custom cattle feeding services. They can feed up to 75,000 head of your finest and even have financing available. But they're in Hereford, Texas. Where are they going to advertise on the Internet?

Elliott Cox, Jimmy Barton, and Tommy Craver know just about everything there is to know about farm and ranch truck needs. They work at Wilson Motors in Snyder, Texas, and they're not set up to deliver trucks to Trinidad. They want to attract local attention.

Down in San Angelo, Texas is that state's largest cattle market. It's the Producers Livestock Auction. They'd be pleased if somebody from Singapore came to bid on their stock, but they know better than to spend any money trying. They want to advertise locally as well.

And all of them want to find the cattle growers in their neck of the woods. That's why they all bought space in the online version of *Livestock Weekly* (**www.livestockweekly.com**). 'Tain't a purdy site, but's got a mess a' stuff that's custom made for the cowboy. This newspaper keeps up on the price of cattle in different markets, the public health of the livestock in the area and legislative moves. Perfect for BAR-G, Wilson Motors, and Producers Livestock Auction.

Cleaning Up Online

If you sell brushes, brooms, carpet chemicals, dusters, dust mops, environmental supplies, floor finish concentrates, floor pads, hand cleaners and soaps, matting, mops, safety supplies, soaps and soap dispensers, sponges, trash can liners, washroom/restroom accessories, waste receptacles, or wet mops, you should consider picking up some ad space on Jansan Online (**www.jansan.com**), which is shown in Figure 6.9. It has everything for the man who wants to clean up at work. If this is your target audience, they'll serve up thousands of impressions a day on their home page for only $1,500 a month, or $800 a month for internal pages.

Going Places

If you specialize in European tourism you need to look into the official World Wide Web site of the French Government Tourist Office (**www.fgtousa.org**). As stated on their site, "The FGTO World Wide Web site is the authority in providing timely and in-depth news and information about tourism in France. It is the essential resource for millions of visitors planning to travel to France each year. FGTO travel experts offer immediate and timely insight into the best ways to travel to France. Users around the world have instant access to the latest standings, news and professionals on France such as meetings and incentives planners, tour operators, travel agents, hotel representatives, rental agencies..."

Foreign Affairs at Home

Where do you go to advertise the first juried exhibition solely dedicated to representing Iranian and Iranian-American artists residing in the United States? It's a wonderful idea. First and second generation Americans from Iran explore their heritage and their newfound lives through art. The Evolving Perceptions 1997 exhibit in Washington, D.C. (to be held late fall of this year) wanted to let these artists know that there is a public place for their work to be seen. They turned to The Iranian, where their work can be seen at **www.iranian.com/Feb97/Sponsors/EvolvingPerceptions.html** (see Figure 6.10). With 3,000 visitors a week, The Iranian is the right spot for a fledgling art show.

Et Cetera

If you want to reach Macintosh users in London, there's Mac Online (**uk.macworld.com**). For an entrée into the pulp and paper industry, **www.pulpandpaper.com** sells ads on their site full

of news, archives, and links to the industry. Well, you get the idea. You can find a match between your product offering and your target audience and a Web site for both. Start surfing.



FIG. 6.9
Janitors will be attracted to this page like dirt to a freshly mopped floor.

Are You Ready for the Intranet?

On the edges of experimentation is a concept I find puzzling: intranet advertising.

Toward the end of 1996, the entire Internet industry switched gears in mid-click and started to dig into intranets. Why this narcissistic turn? Why this shift away from welcoming the world with open arms to contemplating the corporate navel? Because customers were getting demanding.

Customers saw the home page and the company brochure and they wanted more. They wanted access to the company. They wanted access to the people, the processes, and the data sequestered deep in the bowels of the corporate beast. Unfortunately, the beast wasn't endowed with decent access to its own people, processes, and data. How could they provide for the clamoring hoards when they, themselves were trapped in a Dilbertian nightmare?

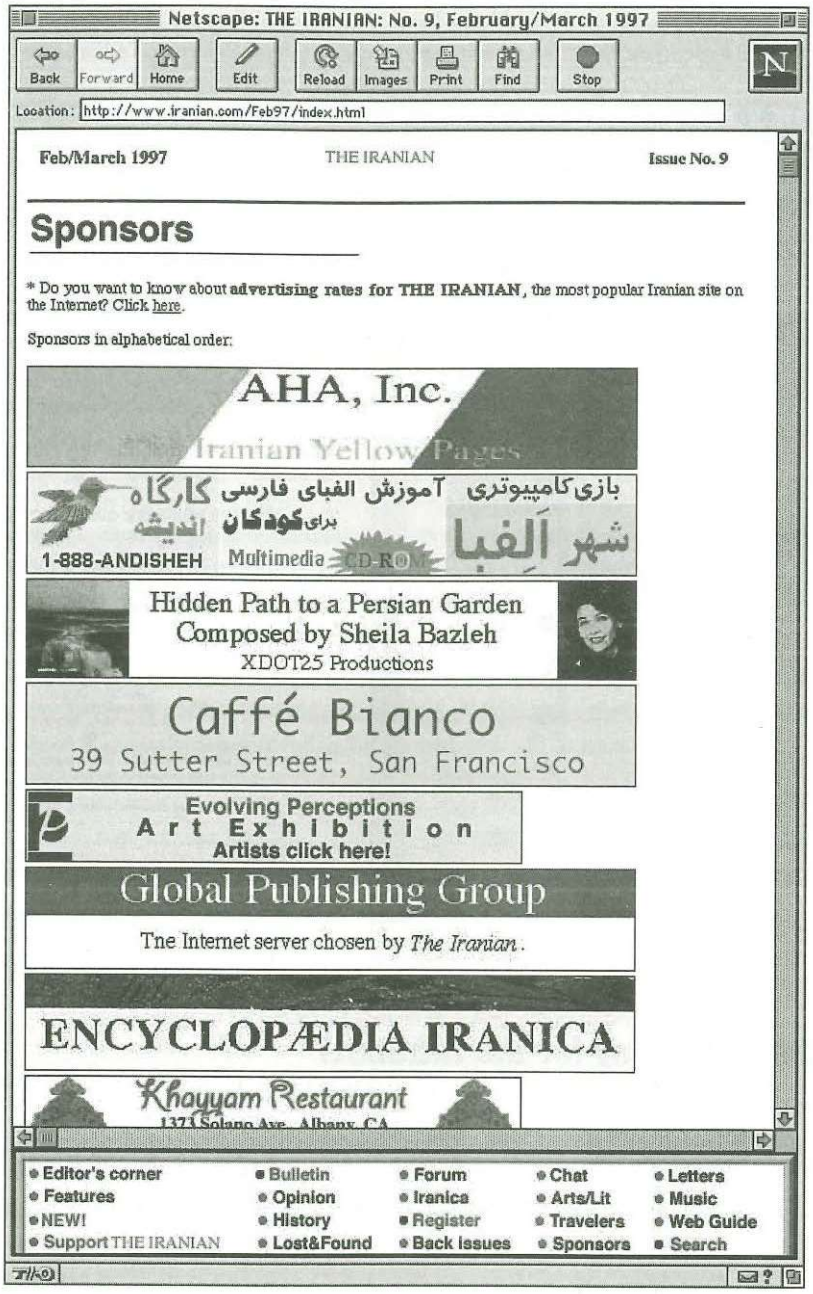


FIG. 6.10
Reaching Iranians in America just got easier.

Turning the power of the Internet inward seemed like a potential solution. Taking advantage of Web tools and instant communication sounded like the right approach. Hundreds of success stories later, Forrester Research declared the end of the search for intranet project ROI. After

interviewing dozens of project leaders, they determined that the average return on intranet investment was around 1000%. Within a few months. Mellanie Hills, author of *Intranet Business Strategies* and *Intranet As Groupware* (John Wiley & Sons), puts it flat on the table: "You can do business without an intranet, but for how long, and why would you want to? It's easy, cheap, and the returns are so great."

But advertising?

Okay, let's start with the view from the advertiser's side of the table. You start with a captive audience. They're attached to the intranet all day long to get their e-mail and go look at whatever needs looking at from time to time. They have their internal home page up on their screen most of the time. They all need screen savers so they can use something like the PointCast server internally. These people can be well identified as to department, position, income, gender, family status. Man! This is sounding good. I can target my low-cost checking account services to new hires, my home equity lines of credit to those with kids in college, and my super annuities package to senior management. I'm stoked!

Now let's take a look across the mahogany plane to the face of the intranet owner. She's the one who has to make it all work. The queen of infrastructure. What's her problem? Resources. Where is she going to get them? She's going to stay later, get in earlier in the morning, and dial in from home just before going to bed...just to make sure. She figures a handful of hot advertisers, rightly controlled, of course, would put several thousand dollars *back* in her budget every month. This could be good. This could spell more head count. Maybe even a handful of interns and hire somebody to manage them. This could be really good.

But now I put on my corporate management hat. The black one. The one that says "We're Number One!" on the outside and "fire the bastards" on the inside. Okay, maybe it only says "productivity über alles." My beef is crystal clear. I don't want my employees distracted. I know they need access to information. That's why I'm happy to buy video courses and lectures and seminars for viewing in the conference room but will not approve television to the desktop anytime in this millennium.

If I run a law firm, it's going to be hard to turn down a large pile of cash from West Publishing, which wants to promote its legal publications, its online legal research service, its CD-ROM libraries, its law-related news services, and its online legal directory.

ComputerWorld ran a quick poll that turned up 4% of infrastructure gurus saying they were already selling ads and another 10% saying they would consider it.

When companies work together to create a special offer for their employees, it makes sense to let those employees know about the benefits that await them. My local Big Brand Tire Company sent me six plastic cards for 10%. Permanent, reusable, and good on all items and services. They targeted my company as a potential hotbed of customers. If I had an intranet, I might have agreed to publish their largess and offer these cards on a first-come, first-served basis. I didn't have the heart to call and tell them I run a one-man shop.

So the issue isn't as clear and my hat turns from black to gray.

If your local travel agency wants to offer your entire company great discounts on last minute airfares...If you can manage your profiling so that only those people who travel will see the promotion...If the travel agency is willing to bear the cost of creating the ads and managing the customer service portion of the arrangement . . . If the savings are truly substantial . . . you'd be a fool not to remind your employees to lower the cost of their travel.

The inside of the hat now says, "And we can charge them for the privilege!"

Where Does Your Competition Hang Out?

You keep track of how much money your competitors spend on marketing, don't you? You keep track of where they place their magazine and television ads, don't you? Then how about the Web? That lets you know where you stand in the branding wars and it may provide some insight into where else you should be placing banners.

Maybe your competition is going for the tried and true. Maybe they're pouring big bucks into Yahoo! or Netscape. Maybe they're finding small, out of the way places you should know about. Why? Because it's a good indication of where they think their market is. That might give you a pointer as to where they think they're headed.

Not as Easy as It Might Seem

Tracking your competitors should be straightforward. This is the Internet, right? You can search for anything, right? Not quite.

You could do a search engine like AltaVista to search for links to your competitors pages. Type in link:www.toyota.com and you get about 6,000 matches. Why? Well, Toyota has a lot of pages that link to their home page. Toyota has a lot of dealers that point to Toyota's home page. There are lots of car enthusiasts who think the Toyota site is swell, and there are a lot of Web enthusiasts who think so, too.

Then, of course, there's the problem of dynamic Web pages. When you did your first search for links to Toyota on AltaVista, you got an ad for Isuzu (those sneaky guys—there are more on keywords in "The Search Engine Connection" section of this chapter). If you hit the Reload button, you might end up with an ad for the AutoVantage New Car buying program. Now how on earth do you track the number of pages Toyota is advertising on when banners are served dynamically? You get help.

Hired Help

There are several companies that can keep an eye on your competition for you. Lycos (**www.lycos.com**) offers Link Alert. Besides being valuable for finding holes in your own chain of links to drive more traffic to your own site, Link Alert can keep you posted on your competitors' efforts. "Monitor your competitors links and who is linking to them. View the competitive roadmap to easily identify where you and your competition have similar links and where they have links that you do not have. Develop marketing programs to contact

these sites to establish links to your site and/or 'float' your link to the top of the list ahead of your competitors."

Digital Vision (**www.digitalvision.net**) has a service called Net AdTracker. Net AdTracker reports:

- How much your competitor is spending on the Internet
- Where your competitor is placing banner advertising
- What your competitor's banner and creative look like
- How much traffic their site is receiving
- When their Web site URL appears in television or radio commercials
- On what TV or radio stations their Web site URL appears
- Where your competitor is located in the search engines

The Search Engine Connection

The most often visited type of site on the Internet are the search engines. The first thing everybody wants to know about search engines is, "How can I get my company listed first?"

When you're searching for luggage on AltaVista, the first thing you see is:

> *Mori Luggage & Gifts*
>
> *Thanks for visiting our new web site!! Established in Atlanta, Georgia in 1971, Mori operates 26 retail stores in the Southeast U.S. and offers full . . .*
>
> *http://moriluggage.com/—size 4K—5 Feb 97*

On Lycos your first option is:

> *FixNet home page luggage luggage luggage luggage discount discount luggage luggage*
>
> *http://www.linkstar.com/h [100%]*

On Infoseek:

> *HandiLinks To Luggage & Accessories HandiLinks To Luggage & Accessories HandiLinks To Luggage & Accessories HandiLinks To Luggage & Accessories HandiLinks To Luggage & Accessories HandiLinks To Luggage & 63%*
> *http://ahandyguide.com/cat1/l/l47.htm (Size 7.1K)*

AltaVista seems to be the most helpful. The others have fallen victim to keyword abuse.

You can load your home page with spider food: text for search engine agents and robots to find and catalog. The problem is, you devastate the value of the search tool. But there are some tricks that will help.

Learning to Work with Search Engines

There is a great deal of technically-specific knowledge required to get placed just so in the search engines of the world. This is a book on advertising. If you want to dig into all the best ways there are to get into search engines, you might look at some of these:

1. The Webmaster Guide to Search Engines and Directories
   By Danny Sullivan, Calafia Consulting
   http://calafia.com/webmasters
2. Creating Web Sites For The Search Engines
   www.digital-cafe.com/~webmaster/set01.html
3. META Tagging for Search Engines
   www.Stars.com/Search/Meta.html
4. A Practical Guide to Announcing Your World Wide Web Page
   www.toltbbs.com/~cmaher/cmsubmit.htm
5. FAQ: How To Announce Your New Web Site
   http://ep.com/faq/webannounce.html

The listed pointers were gleaned off a great page at the Netpost site (**www.netpost.com/wa97**). Netpost is run by Eric Ward and the /wa97 page is based on his presentation, "Publicizing Your Web Site: Getting Free Publicity on the Internet..." given at the Web Advertising 97 conference (**www.thunderlizard.com**).

This page is the epitome of the gift-giving cultural imperative on the Net. Ward is one of those rare resources on the Internet. He knows about search engines, lists, directories, the Internet industry press, and all of the intricacies of netiquette. Ward gets it. Ward gives it away.

His presentation and, by definition, the /wa97 page, are no less than Ward explaining what he does for a living, telling you how to do it, and showing you where all the resources are that you might need. He is a master mentor. He is the journeyman and the world is his apprentice.

What's that? You say you don't have the time or the experience to pull it all off? That's okay, Netpost can do it for you for a modest fee.

So, if you want to know how to do Internet marketing using the search engines, you can do no better than starting with Eric Ward. (Of course, it wouldn't hurt you to read my first book first.)

General Banner Rotation

A Web site that gets multiple millions clicking through it on a daily basis is nothing to sneeze at. That much traffic means that some number of them are sure to be interested in your offer. Just put up a banner in front of enough of them and—presto!—you get clicks.

Rick Rickling was my very first sales teacher. The first day on the job, when he realized I knew just about nothing about selling, he told me there were two ways to make a sale. "You can stand

in the middle of the freeway and wait for a car to run you over that happens to have a purchase order in the trunk, or you can use your head."

If you're into branding and branding only, there's nothing wrong with a billboard on the highway. There's nothing wrong with showing your message to everybody with a mouse and a browser. You can buy general rotation ads on search engines pretty cheaply.

General rotation means that your banner will be shown over and over again to whomever passes by until your money runs out. Hit the Reload button and up pops another general rotation banner. If you have a budget of $10,000 and you're paying $25 CPM, you can blow through 400,000 impressions in a day. Your ability to test different creative in a short period of time is wonderful. Your ability to zero in on your target audience is more wonderful.

Search Engine Segmentation

For a little bit higher CPM, you can specify where you'd like your ad to show up. You can buy categories from the sites that include directories like Yahoo!, Infoseek, and Lycos. The Lycos home page sports eighteen different category buttons. News, Sports, Money, Travel, Technology, Health, Science, and so on. If you click Business, you find that Charles Schwab & Company have staked this page out as their own private domain (see Figure 6.11).

To split hairs, Charles Schwab has split this page with the PC Financial Network. Hit the Reload button and half the time you get a Schwab banner and half the time you get a PCFN banner. PCFN seems to be a direct competitor. Lycos is happy to support them both.

AltaVista lets you segment geographically, by domain name, by computer or browser type, by SIC code, or even company size. They do it by performing IP (Internet Protocol) look-ups. Let's say you visit AltaVista from **www.ibm.com**. AltaVista sees the request as coming from an IP address such as 129.34.139.2, 192.35.232.34, 198.4.83.35, or 194.196.0.201, because the computer side of things is always numbers. Then it can look these numbers up and determine that they are either **watson.ibm.com**, **austin.ibm.com**, **almaden.ibm.com**, or **uk.ibm.com**. As a result, if you wanted to show a different banner to IBM in Texas as the one you show to London, the choice is yours. For smaller companies, AltaVista can look up the firm's physical address and SIC code.

Keyword Referred

Search engines shine where they match up what the visitor is looking for with the ad banner at the top of the results page. Knowing that on-topic ads are seen as content, the search folks are happy to charge almost double for the privilege. The resulting response makes the expenditure worth while.

If you're ham-fisted and type "cras" into the text box at Infoseek you end up with 1,456 pages found, including a bibliography of works by Patrick Cras, a list of the California Restaurant Association's publications, and the Centre for Remote Area Studies. You also get an ad for Infoseek's software and services—a general rotation ad.

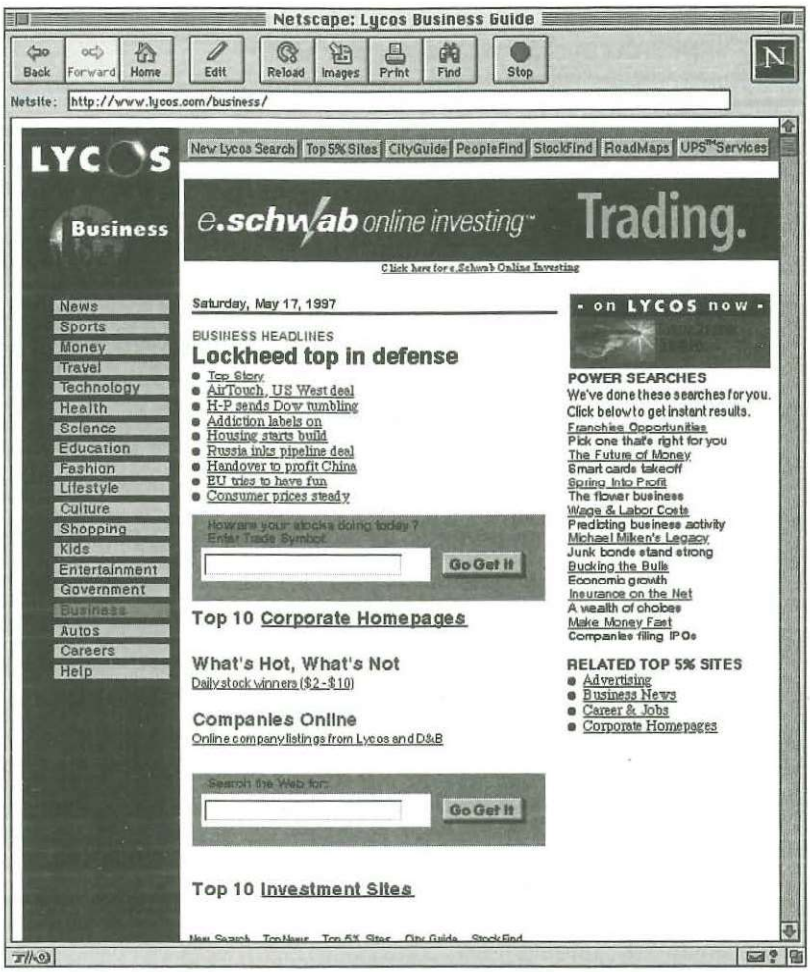


FIG. 6.11
Schwab figures a Lycos visitor interested in Business will be interested in online trading.

When you slow your typing a tad and manage to spell "cars" correctly, you end up with 773,676 matches and an ad for Lexus, Isuzu, AutoAdvantage, or Acura. Type in "Toyota" and end up with an ad offering "Virtually Everything @Toyota But That New Car Smell." If you're looking for them, they want to help.

Most Frequently Asked Searches So how about going after the *most* people? You type in "flowers" and instead of getting the FlowerNet banner like you'd expect, what if Proctor & Gamble bought the word? You'd end up with a banner for Tide. Looking for "candy?" Tide. "Baseball?" Tide. If that were P&G's plan, what words should they pick up? The most commonly searched for terms are not the ones that are likely to make P&G execs in Cincinnati very happy. Often touted as more button down than IBM, these squeaky cleans are going to balk when they see the list.

http://www.quecorp.com

Mark Grimes decided the list was worth publishing. He got the Yahoo! Top 200 list from a banner placement company and proudly displays it at **www.eyescream.com/yahootop200.html**. It's an eye opener. Table 6.1 shows (with a few deletions) a few of the search topics that made it into the top 25 ranked with the number of searches in October, 1996.

Table 6.1 Top 25 Searches in October 1996

Rank	Search Topic	Number Search Requests
1	sex	1,553,420
2	chat	414,320
3	XXX	397,640
4	Playboy	390,920
5	netscape software	350,320
6	nude	292,560
7	porno	257,860
8	games	217,440
9	porn	199,180
10	weather	190,900
11	Penthouse	186,980
12	Pamela Anderson	172,760
13	pornography	172,260
14	(even this word makes me blush)	169,840
15	persian kitty	163,620
16	maps	163,360
17	Halloween	155,680 (it *was* October, after all)
18	music	151,780
19	adult	148,960
20	chat rooms	139,960

Clearly, the value of spending the money on keywords is to match the expressed interests of the surfer to the message in your ad.

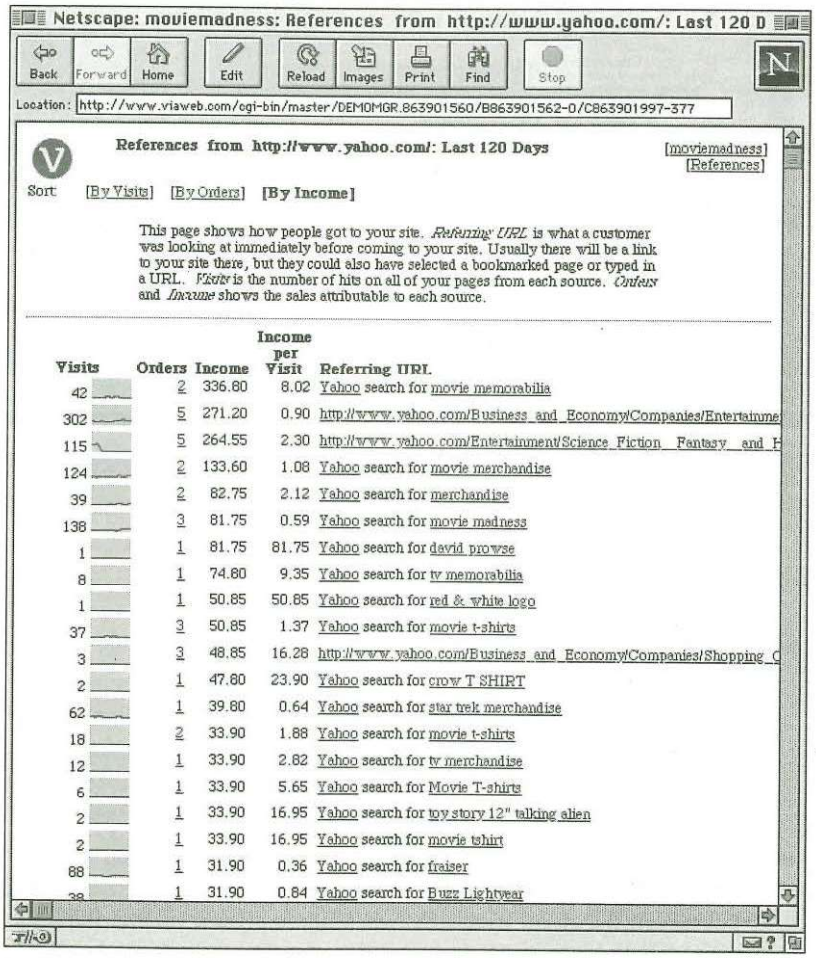
Choose Your Words Carefully Tracking what comes after the click can make the buy even more valuable. John Wells of Movie Madness (**www.moviemadness.com**) sells movie and TV merchandise. Movie Madness is set up as a LiveStore hosted at ViaWeb (**www.viaweb.com**).

One of the tools LiveStore offers is the tracking of people on your site and a comparison against the search terms they used to get there. In a testimonial on the ViaWeb site, Wells signs its praises: "ViaWeb can show where every visitor came from and how much money visitors from each source spent. We can even show what they were searching for in search engines, and how much people searching for each phrase spent."

Those results are very interesting. ViaWeb lets you look at those reports for Movie Madness (**www.viaweb.com/cgi-bin/master/DEMOMGR**). John Wells is a happy store owner.

Wells could tell, for instance, that people coming to his site after searching for *Star Trek* spent far more than those searching for *Frasier*. Are Trekkie devotees more rabid about their collectibles than Frasier fanatics? Maybe. Doesn't matter. What does matter is that knowing which search terms bring in the most money (see Figure 6.12) and what the path through his store was (see Figure 6.13), means Wells can now plan his ad buys accordingly.

FIG. 6.12
How did they get there and what did they spend? Don't you wish you had reports like these?



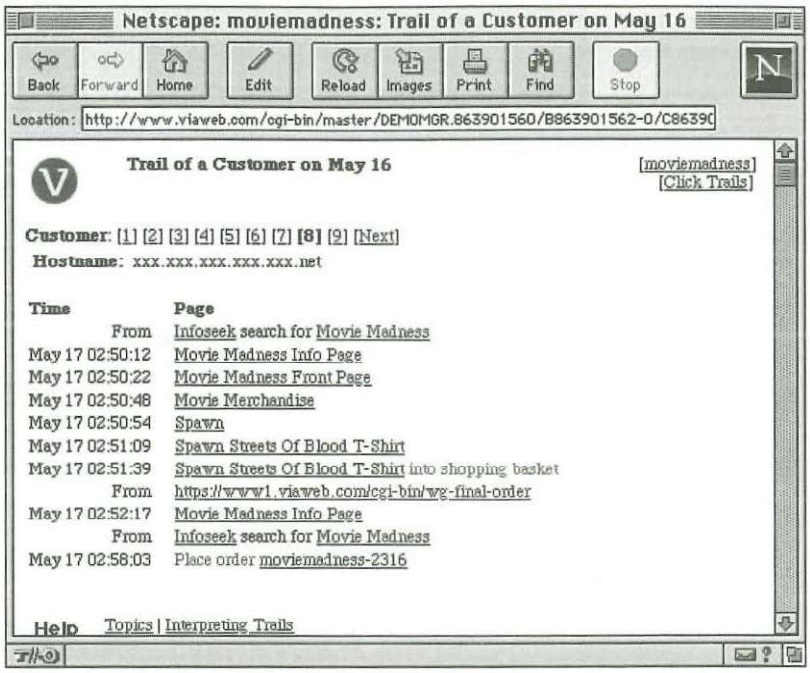


FIG. 6.13
Where did they wander once they arrived?

The Reference Oblique On the brand-building side of the fence, there is a desire to move beyond the one-to-one correlation between what is being sought and what is being sold.

Search for "Toyota" at Infoseek and you get a Toyota banner. Sure. But Saatchi & Saatchi helped Toyota play the word association game. They picked up "cigar." Cigar? What do cigars have to do with cars? Were they looking for more bad typists? No, they were looking for lifestyle connections. Cigar hounds were shown an ad for Supras, the more upscale Toyota. Somebody searching for "baby carriages" found themselves looking at a banner for Corollas. Toyotas database showed 60% of Corolla owners have kids. Seemed like a good match.

Unfortunately for Toyota, they missed a beat at AltaVista.

Competitive Name Dropping A search at AltaVista for "Toyota" turns up almost 150,000 page references. But it also turns up an animated banner (see Figure 6.14).

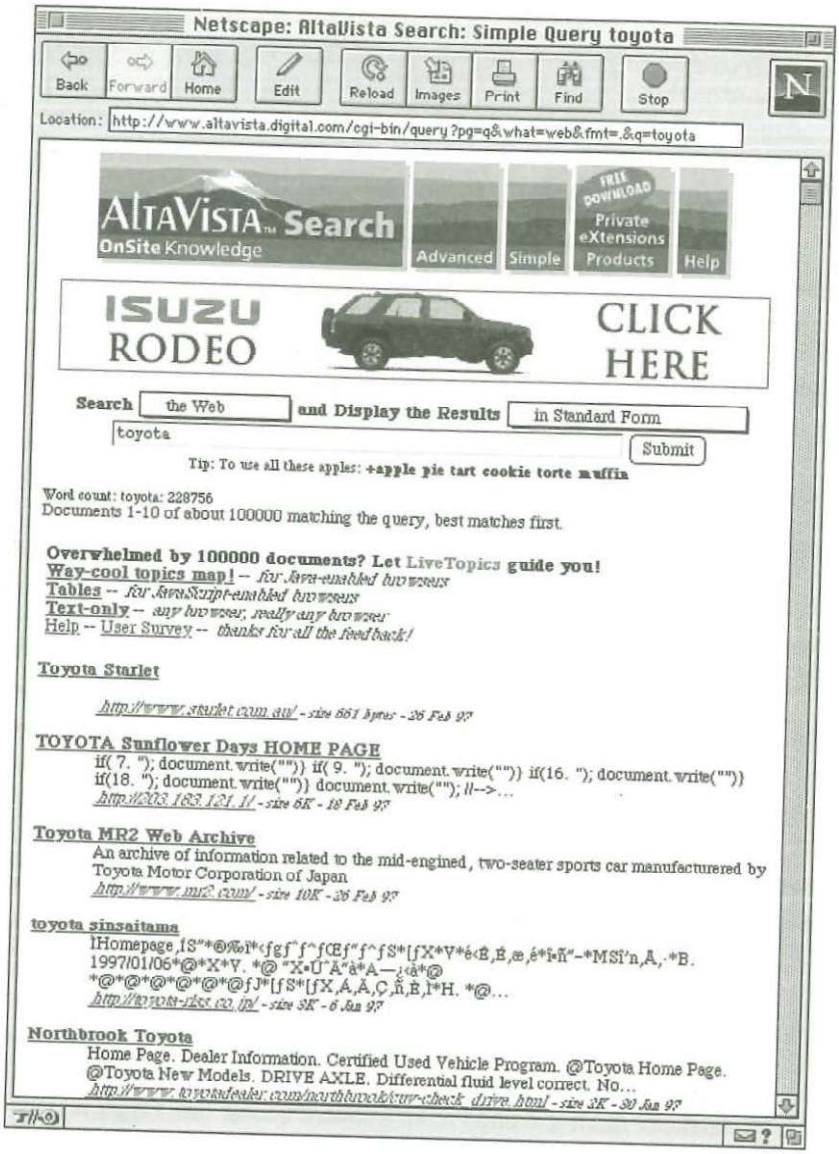
Panel #1: Looking for some fun?

Panel #2: A good time?

Panel #3: No, Not That . . . Try this:

Panel #4: Isuzu Rodeo—Click Here

FIG. 6.14
Isuzu bought Toyota from AltaVista.



Is it a trademark infringement? Is it ethical? Is it right? Robert Bethge, at Venture Forward (**www.bethge.com**), took the competitive high ground in a post to the Online Advertising list:

```
Date:    Fri, 14 Mar 1997 01:17:40 -0800 (PST)
To:      online-ads@o-a.com
From:    R.O.B. Bethge (rob@bethge.com)
Subject: ONLINE-ADS>> Searching for St. Pete
```

One of the coups that made so much sense, and has since directed much of the advertising dollars I control, was when IBM and OS/2 bought the words "Microsoft" and "Windows" for a search

engine. So, when a person types WINDOWS they get an OS/2 ad. The highest CTR's I enjoy (usually 11% or so) are when I buy a competitors name. And I feel good about it.

a) the customer gets some competitive education (an educated consumer and all that

b) My competitor didn't bother to get their name, so I might as well benefit.

Incidentally, I get _substantially_ lower CTR's on my client's name. Obviously they already know who we are, and they are looking for information ABOUT us. Great, an educated consumer and all that, again. They don't need to see our ad, or click on it, they already know more than the person I was trying to reach.

And I just feel so good about being one up on the competition.

-Robert Bethge
Venture Forward

It's Not Foolproof No, it's not perfect. Ask Yahoo! for something about the Grateful Dead and no banner shows up at all. Seems there are enough corporate types who chose not to include that term in their general rotation pages.

Try "sport utility vehicle" at Infoseek and you are more likely to get the ad for the CBS SportsLine Web site than a rugged 4×4.

Narrowing the Search Next to insufficient bandwidth, finding anything on the Internet is its most frustrating feature. Looking for something about a general subject and you're overwhelmed. Looking for a particular fact and you'd better have a fresh cup of Starbucks at hand.

In an attempt to solve this dilemma, new subject-specific search engines are showing up. Selecting a search tool in which to look saves the looker a great deal of time and trouble and offers more opportunities to more finely target your message. You probably want to send a different message to somebody at Yobes Chess Search Engine (**www.gams.at/~saj/chess**) looking up Deep Blue, versus somebody at MusicSearch (**www.musicsearch.com**) looking for Deep Purple.

Here's a handful of examples and how they describe themselves:

80s Search (**www.80s.com/Search**)

Having trouble finding certain 1980s-related information? Welcome to the first search engine that searches exclusively for 1980s information on the web! You can search just within The 80s Server or expand your search to include 80s-related websites worldwide!

@queous (**www.aqueous.com**)

You have found the only search engine dedicated to water related sites. Whether you are looking for a cruise ship, a master plumber, or a new bikini, this is the place to start.

Internet Legal Resource Guide (**www.ilrg.com**)

Welcome to the Internet Legal Resource Guide. A categorized index of 3100 select web sites in 238 nations, islands, and territories, as well as more than 850 locally stored web pages and other files, this site was established to serve as a comprehensive resource of the information available on the Internet concerning law and the legal profession, with an emphasis on the United States of America. Designed for everyone, lay persons and legal scholars alike, it

is quality controlled to include only the most substantive legal resources online. The selection criteria are predicated on two principles: the extent to which the resource is unique, as well as the relative value of the information it provides. More than 1,600 percent growth in usership since November 1996 and growing!

MusicSearch (**www.musicsearch.com**)

MusicSearch is many things but, above all, it's simply the fastest and most precise way of finding music-related sites and groups on the world-wide Internet. For some it is a quick stopping point to find the latest Music News; for others it is an irreplaceable wealth of resources available world-wide on the topic of music; still others are able to find their favorite artists' sites on the Internet. There's just too many ways to use MusicSearch to list them here. But as you start to surf your way through our site, the reasons to start all your music searching here will be clear.

Neuroscience Web Search (**www.acsiom.org/nsr/neuroadv.html**)

This site contains a full-text index of over 121,000 web pages related to neuroscience. The object of this site is to make it easier to find information on the structure and function of invertebrate and vertebrate nervous systems. Although you could use a general-purpose search engine like Alta Vista, you'll be likely to get many links to irrelevant pages. Here, EVERYTHING is relevant by pre-selection. So you can search on a word like 'mushroom' and find out all about the mushroom bodies (and read one bad mushroom joke—'You're a fungi!').

Yobes Chess Search Engine (**www.gams.at/~saj/chess**)

The underlying database contains a lot of information from several chess related WWW pages. If you want to add your site, then fill the registration form. Tell me, [sic]*what you think about this service! This Broker was built using the Harvest system. You may access help for formulating queries.*

You should also check out The Internet Sleuth (**www.isleuth.com**), shown in Figure 6.15. This site lists over 1,000 different search engines and directories by subject. "The Internet Sleuth is a bit different from the other search engines you might have used. While AltaVista or Lycos attempt to index the entire Web, The Sleuth maintains an index of searchable databases, most of which can be searched directly from The Sleuth, simplifying the search for information."

Don't Forget the Directories

There are lots of different kinds of directories out there. The Internet mall (**www.internetmall.com**) (see Figure 6.16) is a directory of places on the Internet that sells things. This is the oldest and largest site of its kind, boasting some 27,000-plus merchants and stores and a range of products that would put any yellow pages to shame—and the $24 per year price tag is enough to send the yellow pages people into hiding.

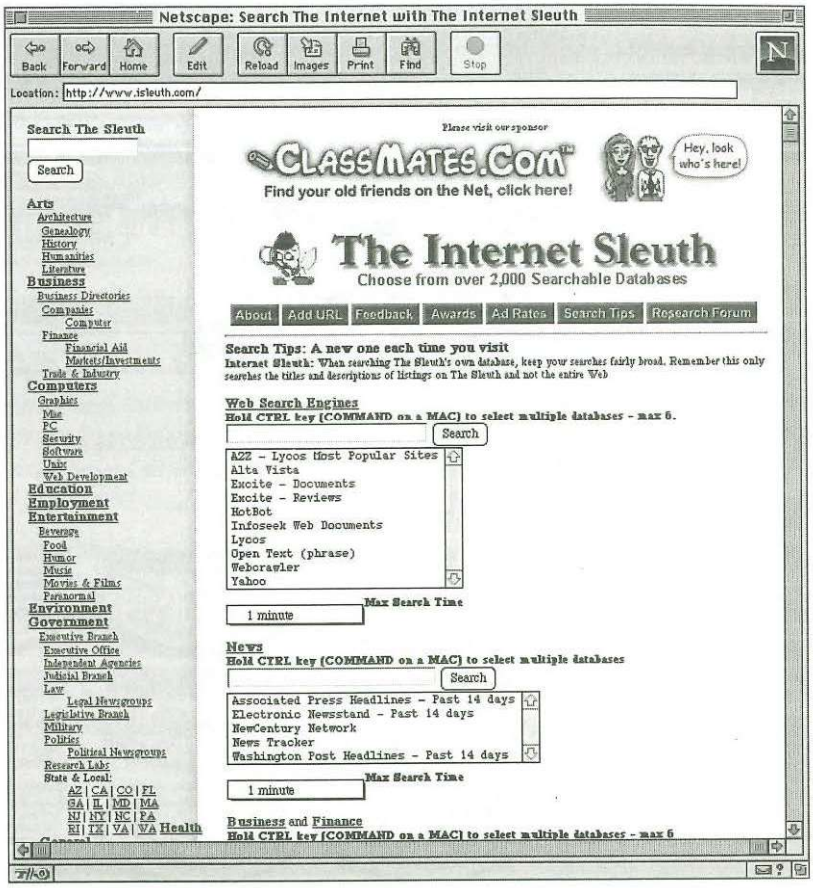


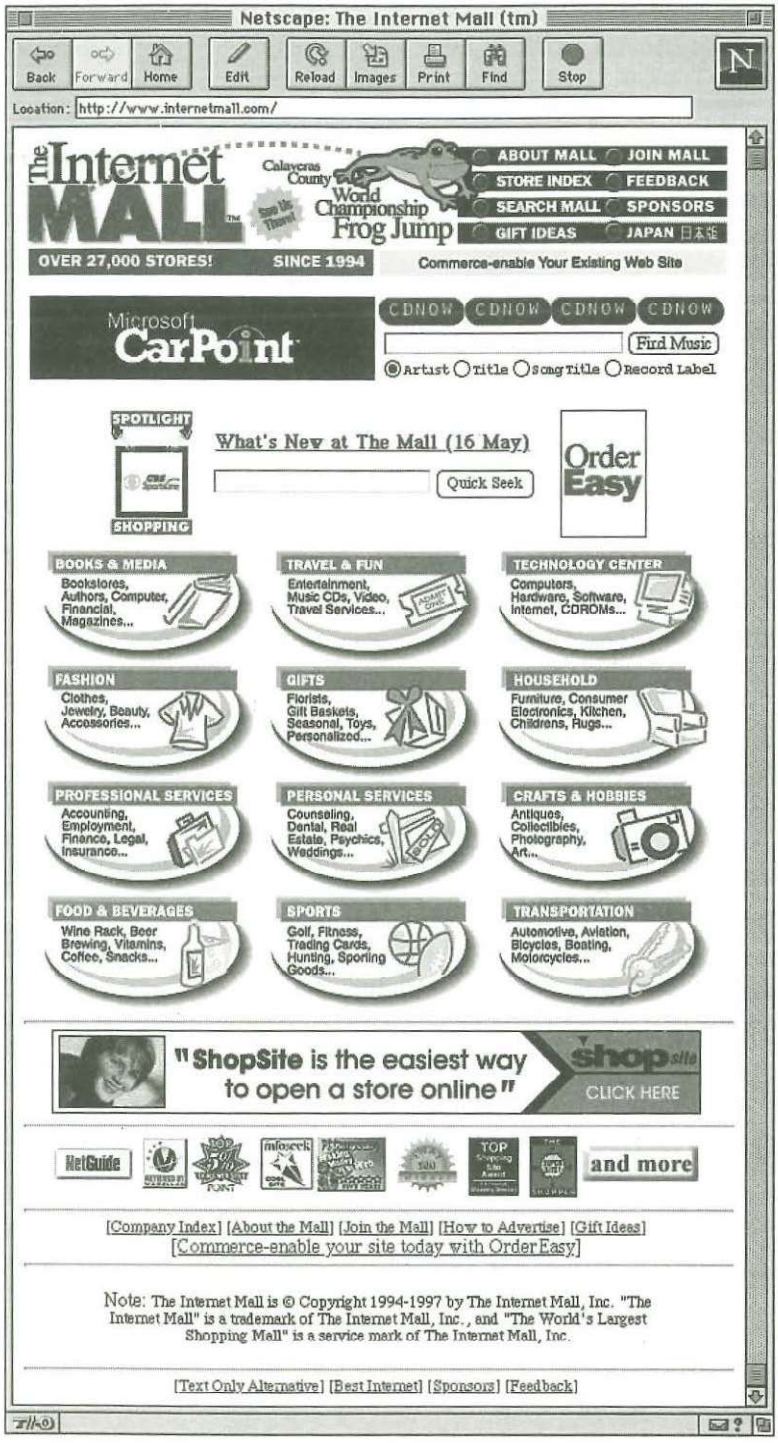
FIG. 6.15
Think of The Internet Sleuth as the Yahoo! of search engines.

Started in 1994 by Dave Taylor, the mall itself is a directory. As such, it attracts almost a million people a month. People who are looking for electronic stores. People who are actively shopping. Obviously, it looks like the right place for Microsoft to promote their CarPoint site and for CDNOW to attract your attention.

The Middle-Man—Web Ad Reps

Buying a bunch of banners from Yahoo! is pretty easy. Writing a check to Netscape isn't that hard. Sending an e-mail to CNET asking to buy some banner slots on their site is the work of a moment. But what if your goal is to strategically place your ads on the two or three dozen sites that cater to your specific demographic target?

FIG. 6.16
If you're trying to sell something, how about advertising where people are buying?



http://www.quecorp.com

If that's the case, get ready to buy a more ergonomically correct desk chair, a new wrist brace, and a new telephone headset. You're going to be at your keyboard for days looking for the right places to place your banners. You're going to be typing keywords over and over again at various search engines looking for those topic-specific sites that are most likely to draw your kind of audience. You're going to be on the phone to thirty or fifty sites trying to negotiate individual banner placement deals in order to find the fifteen or twenty that will work for you. Oh, and don't forget the cot for your office because it's going to take days on end and you have deadlines to meet. Sound like fun?

On the other hand, you could turn to banner advertising networks.

One Stop Shopping

More than just outsourcing, there are several other advantages of going to one place to do your ad shopping. For example, a content company running multiple sites is likely to have standardized their banner sizes across all sites. That means you can place the same ad format at a variety of sites.

Companies running multiple sites are probably using common ad server software. That means your ad goes into a database and is served in proper sequence to all of the sites under that content creator's control. As a result, you get one report detailing your ad activity at all of the sites.

But the real fun starts when you are able to take advantage of cross-site demographics. The power of targeting increases many fold when the information about people includes more and more Web sites. Before you get into that, you should look at the different kinds of networks out there.

Web Property Providers

This model began simply enough. It was a content-ownership thing. The people who run ESPN SportsZone also happen to run Outside Online, NFL.com, NASCAR Online, NBA.com, ABCNews.com, Mr. Showbiz, CelebSite, and Wall Of Sound. That means you could call one sales rep and make a buy across all of those sites. Simple. Time saving. Carpel tunnel syndrome-avoiding.

As Yahoo! creates regional properties and Infoseek and Excite branch out to add new titles to their stables of sites, they become another type of network. One placement purchase can put you on every MyYahoo!, on Yahooligans! made especially for kids, Yahoo! Net Events for Internet aficionados, all of the ten regional, and five national versions of Yahoo!

CNET has a variety of properties to attract surfers of all kinds and they describe them this way:

> *CNET.COM—the definitive online source for product reviews and information about computing and the Internet.*
>
> *NEWS.COM—the first, free 24-hour-a-day technology news service created exclusively for the Web.*

GAMECENTER.COM—the one-stop supersite for gaming news, reviews, tips, downloads, and more.

Mediadome℠—a joint-venture Web site from CNET and Intel that merges today's hottest media properties with cutting-edge technology to create a new form of Web-based entertainment.

CNET's Software Download Services SHAREWARE.COM and DOWNLOAD.COM—the Internet's leading sources for downloadable software.

ACTIVEX.COM—a library of downloadable ActiveX controls.

SEARCH.COM—the broadest selection of Internet search tools in one comprehensive environment.

As successful companies expand their purviews into more and more subject categories, they offer more and more venues for ad placement with one purchase.

Radio Content Provider

It is true that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Television and radio have had an advertising business model in place for decades that spawned the word "network" as it pertains to advertising. Call it the Sell-Local, Sell-Global approach.

The basic premise is for a content company to offer its programming to geographically disparate affiliates, include some nationally placed ads, and leave room for the affiliate to sell local ads—simple.

One of the most straightforward examples of this model is ElectricVillage (**www.electricvillage.com**). John Felt is responsible for signing up radio stations around the country. His job is to go into a territory and offer an exclusive to any of the several radio station types a particular city supports. Quoting directly from the ElectricVillage site, rock stations, jazz stations, and country stations can choose:

- *Crawl into the Web*

  Earwig is geared toward users who prefer a New Rock, Alternative and/or Indie format. Content slants toward the offbeat tastes, attitude and live-on-the-edge orientation of this group.

- *A Web Walk on the Wild Side*

  Rock Village reflects the interests of Classic Rock listeners. Content includes interviews, reviews and news on classic artists, along with other features and activities designed to appeal to this audience.

- *Country Music*

  CountrySpotlight reflects the interests of Country listeners. Content includes interviews, reviews and news on country artists, along with other features and activities designed to appeal to this audience.

What does ElectricVillage offer? Content. Lots of content. The kind of content a radio station fan would enjoy but which no radio station has the wherewithal to create. So ElectricVillage is

the creator, producer, publisher, and broadcaster on the Web for its affiliate stations. The station maintains its own site (see Figure 6.17), but that site includes a good-sized link to rich content including articles, interviews, reviews, polls, games, chat rooms, and more.



FIG. 6.17
ElectricVillage's Earwig lets radio stations expand their content and their identities.

While the content is plentiful, the local radio station's logo stays prominently displayed in the bottom center of the screen. Making use of HTML frames means visitors can participate in all the different Earwig offerings without losing site of who's paying for it.

The radio station gets to sell the ad space on the left of the logo and ElectricVillage gets to sell the space on the right. As a result, the actual cost to the station is negligible.

The Networks Try Their Hands at Networks

NBC and Time Warner are going to give it a go as well. But they add a new dimension to the fun. They can cut deals to promote their content on television as well.

NBC-IN (Interactive Neighborhood) will offer content to all their affiliates along the same lines as ElectricVillage: one ad for the network and one for the local station. The locals have the ability to sign up for a cut of the national advertising if they go for a long term contract. NBC is rounding up content from Microsoft's Sidewalk site and Infoseek. They're also looking at taking a cut of any transactions. Content providers such as Rent Net and Auto-By-Tel are out looking for online consumers. NBC wants a piece.

Warner Brothers announced CityWeb in January, 1997, saying it would include content from CNN Interactive and People Online. "CityWeb will allow each affiliate to offer its audience local, national and international news, local and national weather and sports, local and national television listings, local community affairs information, original programming for men, women, children and teens, local and national classified advertising, educational information and interactive educational support, as well as a special CityWeb version of the Lycos search engine—the Internet's only personal guide allowing multimedia searches."

Unlike NBC (or ABC and CBS, which have suggested they're going to follow suit), Warner Brothers isn't limited to just one television network to sell to. They can go out and compete directly with the big three.

Content Aggregators

What do you get when you cross the topic-specific directory concept with the advertising network concept? You get companies like Digital Music Network (DMN) (**www.dmnmedia.com**). DMN is on a mission to sign up as many music-oriented sites that sell advertising as they can, and represent them.

DMN is a classic ad-rep organization. Think of them as a banner space dealer. They can buy ads from a large number of sites and be the one stop shopping center for those selling punk rock CDs, classical concert tickets, or harmonicas. Why go to a consolidator in these times of disintermediation? Because they manage the relationship with the content sites. They managed the condensation of data from those sites into a comprehensible format so you can see whether your choices need tweaking.

Their business was born of necessity. Having created the popular Casbah site (**www.casbah.net**), they ran into the success trap. They oversold their available inventory of banner space. Desperate to keep their clients, they went out to find other music sites to host the over-sold ads. The first one they signed up was Pollstar, and a new income stream was born. Now the Digital Music Network includes:

IUMA (www.iuma.com) The Internet Underground Music Archive is "the premiere independent music site on the World Wide Web. IUMA's mission is to bring the music and merchandise of independent artists directly to music fans and the music industry worldwide. IUMA hosts five times more independent bands than any other site in existence and averages well over 300,000 hits per day. IUMA generates significant advertising and band submission revenues and has consistently attracted top notch press exposure since it was founded in 1993."

POLLSTAR (www.pollstar.com) "For over a decade, POLLSTAR has provided music concert industry professionals with the most reliable and accurate source of Route Book (concert tour schedules), box office results, industry directories, news and other industry-related data services."

Now, the tour concert information on the Web and is updated and verified every week. This U.K.-based site also offers mailing lists for purchases such as major concert venues, booking agents, record company executives and staff, not to mention a database of historical box office results.

Webnoize (www.webnoize.com) "Webnoize is a cultural congregation of music, technology, and new media information. This online publication ushers in a new age for music reporting, delivering quality editorial from experienced music writers who examine the state of today's music scene through the prism of emerging media, communications, and Internet technologies. Offering daily news, feature articles, interviews, in-depth special reports, site/music/technology reviews, and much more, Webnoize is the first publication to exclusively devote itself to such an editorial mission."

CD Universe (www.cduniverse.com) CD Universe is "the Internet's hottest online music store. Search our database of over 180,000 items and place your orders online. We offer fantastic service, low prices and carry a full line of Compact Discs, Cassette Tapes, CD Singles, Cassette Singles, VHS Music Videos, and Import CDs."

Adam Curry's The Metaverse (http://metaverse.com) The Metaverse "is the patriarch of music/entertainment sites on the Internet. Since 1993, The Metaverse has featured exclusive celebrity interviews, album and concert reviews, and four private chat rooms. A photo gallery of 2000+ rock stars, original internet radio programming, and the hottest gossip column on the net, CyberSleaze. The Metaverse is also home to the Cybercast. Whether it's backstage at The Grammy Awards, on the Polar Beach in Tuktoyaktuk, Canada for a Metallica show, the Meadowlands for a Blues Traveler concert, or on the set of *Melrose Place* for a cast party, The Metaverse lets you be a part of the action."

Casbah (www.casbah.net) Casbah "is a multi-faceted navigational directory and informational resource specifically structured as an open-architecture system to encourage traffic generation for music sites. Besides providing a standard URL-based directory, Casbah features a comprehensive music release and article index incorporating hyperlinks back to label and artist sites, specific release pages within those sites, to newsgroups, fan site and other related web locations."

Music Previews Network (www.previews.net) "Music Previews Network is always first with Music Previews from today's hottest new releases. Purchase CD's [*sic*] online. Weekly giveaways. Updated constantly with new RealAudio, WAV and MPEG sound files."

Musi-Cal (www.musi-cal.com) "Musi-Cal provides easy access to the most up-to-date worldwide live music information: concerts, festivals and other musical events."

Mass Music (www.mass-music.com) "Mass Music carries over 185,000 titles discounted everyday. A free weekly eZine, music chat room, spelling tolerant music search engine, charts, simple navigation, overnight shipping, and domestic shipping as low as $1.49."

Worldcast Internet (www.worldcast.net) "Worldcast Internet Music, books, health and more. Resources, information and shopping. Also featuring The Flow, a new listening experience featuring a tapestry of musical styles from many musical genres. The finest streaming audio content that can be found anywhere on the net, courtesy of Netscape LiveMedia."

MusicSearch (www.musicesearch.net), "MusicSearch, a focused-search site, contains one of the largest resources of music-related Internet sites on the Internet today and growing daily. Using our search engine and directory-style database visitors can freely find sites based on

over 200 topics covering all styles of music (genres, artists, groups, etc.), as well as music-related software, files, news, instruments, and by regional location. New features are built for the site weekly, which has been visited from over 90 different countries world-wide and gained over 14 Internet awards (including from NetGuide, Creative, and iWORLD) for design and use. Start MusicSearching today!"

TheDJ.com (www.thedj.com) "TheDJ.com delivers over 50 channels of non-stop music to your desktop using RealAudio. When you hear a song you like, click 'Buy This CD' to place that CD in your shopping cart. Enjoy the music."

LiveUpdate (www.liveupdate.com) "LiveUpdate is the web site for Crescendo, the leading MIDI music player on the Web. With Crescendo, LiveUpdate enables Web authors to add a new musical dimension to their sites. MIDI is extremely efficient—CD-quality music can be streamed using a 4800 bps connection. LiveUpdate invented technologies for streaming MIDI music on the Internet, and recently previewed tools for live MIDI concert broadcast."

EMusic (www.emusic.com) EMusic has "Super Low Discount Prices on Over 100,000 Titles!"

This is just the network to look to when you want to promote something that you know appeals to those who like a given musical genre.

Doing It for Free

Keeping track of the numbers at LinkExchange (**www.linkexchange.com**) (see Figure 6.18) is heady work. Started in March, 1996, this banner exchange program has swelled to over 100,000 sites collectively delivering more than 5 million banner impressions a day, and growing at a rate of nearly 800 Web sites every day. What is making this banner ad network so popular?

It's free. That's right—it costs nothing.

The LinkExchange network includes commercial and non-commercial sites, all of which are in the medium, to the small, to the tiny size range. Some sites are serious Web endeavors and some are personal home pages ("Hey! Look at me!"). Each creates a banner promoting its site or its products and gets them shown on the other 999,999 sites. For free. What's the catch? All members have to be willing to show other member banners on their sites.

Do The Math The math works like this—you put up a site and plug in the HTML that lets LinkExchange serve banners to your visitors. For every two banners that are served to your site, you get one of yours served somewhere on one of the other 999,999 sites. In other words, for every banner of yours LinkExchange serves on other sites, they get to put two on yours. One of them will be from the other 999,999, the other will be one that was paid for by an advertiser.

Why would you buy ads from a network that was free? Why would you buy ads from a network that includes college students' home pages and Web sites of companies that can't afford to buy banner space? One purchase order, 100,000 Web sites, 5 million impressions a day, and it's cheap. They like to be flexible about pricing, but you can expect to pay around $10 CPM.

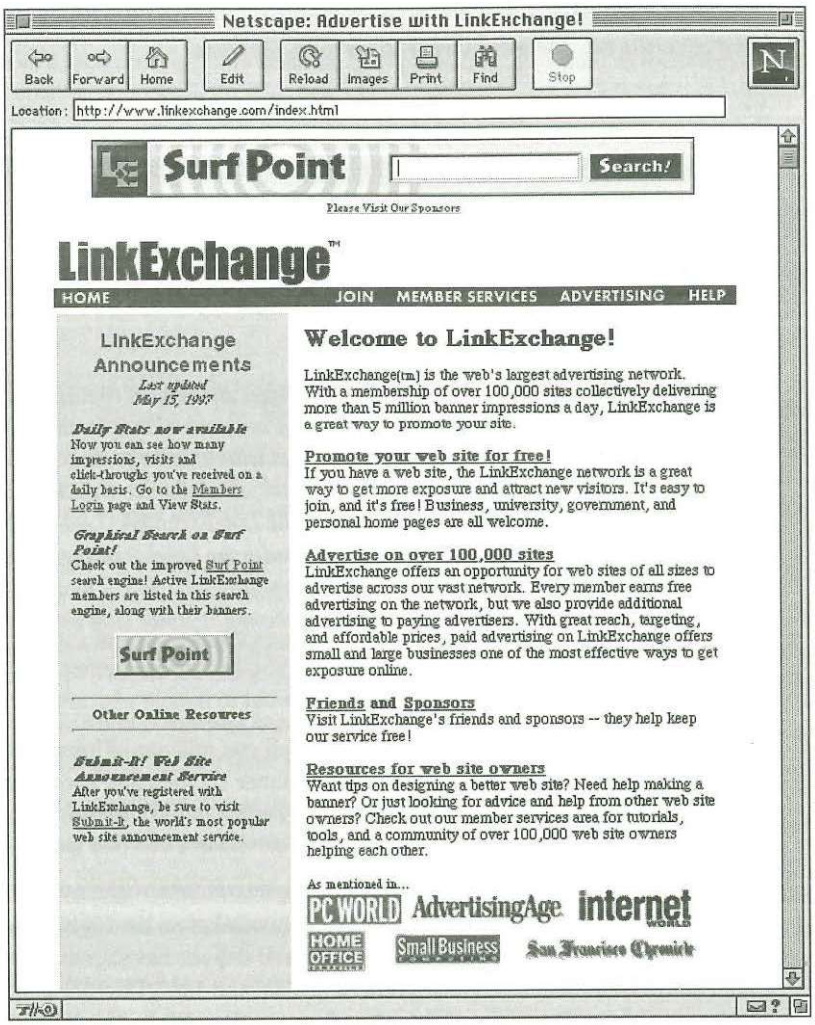


FIG. 6.18
The LinkExchange serves over five million impressions each day.

Where Have All the Banners Gone? They also let you make some decisions about where your ad gets shown. Some of your decisions concern targeting (entertainment sites, Internet-related sites, business, computers, people, recreation, arts, hobbies, culture and society, education, health, politics). Each of these has subcatagories with 50 specific subjects in all.

Some of your decisions are about the appropriateness of the sites on which your ads appear. LinkExchange explains it this way:

The ratings system is meant to give you a degree of control over the types of sites you advertise for and advertise on. There are three ratings to choose from:

Level 1

These are sites intended for children. We will examine all Level 1 sites thoroughly to make sure that they are appropriate for children. Please do not classify yourself as a Level 1 site unless your site is intended for children.

Level 2

These are sites of general interest. Most LinkExchange sites come under this rating which roughly corresponds to 'PG.'

Level 3

This is the most inclusive rating and includes sites which contain language or subject matter which may be considered inappropriate or controversial to certain members. This rating does NOT include pornographic sites, sites with links to pornographic sites, sites encouraging illegal activity, racism, or other sites the administrators deem to be inappropriate. Such sites are NOT allowed to participate in the LinkExchange. Level 3 sites are merely sites whose appeal is not as general as those under the Level 2 rating. This rating roughly corresponds to 'PG-13.' Examples of sites that would probably fall under the Level 3 rating: Sites with swimsuit pictures, Sites relating to alcohol, Humor sites using strong language, etc.

The control may not be surgical and the sites you end up on are not the cream of the crop, but consider what they do offer—incredible reach out to people who are not passing through.

The search engines and directories that can sell you millions of impressions (and can deliver them in days instead of months) place your banner on sites that people are going *through* rather than *to*. LinkExchange offers sites that people found through the search engines. They went through the search engines in order to find Asian Food Net (**www.afn.com**) and California Menus (**www.californiamenus.com**).

Because you're advertising at the destination instead of on the highway, people are going to spend more time on those pages and be exposed to your message a lot longer. In his presentations at the Web Advertising conferences in 1996 and 1997, David Yoder, Media Director at Anderson & Lembke, advises Web advertisers to "Buy Wide, Not Deep." This is the place to do it.

Roadblock Because LinkExchange includes 100,000 Web sites, it can perform one little trick that no one else can: the *roadblock*. It's a term derived from television and radio, where you buy up all of the available commercial slots for a given time period. ABC was the first client to put this model to the test for their May, 1997 Sweeps. LinkExchange was able to show the ABC banners for a U2 concert and *only* the ABC banners on all 100,000 sites for one hour prior to the airing of the concert on April 26, 1997.

Studies keep showing that people are taking time away from television in order to spend it online. We're still eating, we're still sleeping, and we're certainly working more now than before. But we're willing to give up a little TV time in order to be on the Internet. ABC decided it was the right tool for getting people back.

World Wide Reach Masters

You want massive exposure? You want millions of impressions? You want to deal with the cream-of-the-crop sites that get more than five million impressions a month? Time to talk to the big boys of Web sales.

Softbank Interactive Marketing (**www.simweb.com**) are the people who represent such megasites as Compuserve, Netscape, Playboy, TV Guide, and ZDNet. You would almost expect to see golden arches on the Softbank Web site because they claim to have sold over one billion Web advertising impressions in 1996. Judging by the numbers from Jupiter Communications and a Coopers & Lybrand study, Softbank also claims that they are responsible for 25% of the ads sold on the Web.

By definition, Softbank is a Web ad representative. Like their competitor, WebRep (**www.webrep.com**), Softbank is a broker. It makes deals on behalf of its clients. This sounds familiar to anybody who has done a large buy across a number of broadcasting firms. It's all a matter of representation. "You'll have to talk to our reps about that," say the sites, knowing that as a result, some or all of your advertising dollars will be spread to other sites represented by the reps.

WebRep has its own criteria to determine if a site is worthy of its representation:

Complimenting a site's unique, quality content and committed management, WebRep requires certain things from its Web site partners. Those sites must:

1. *offer at least 1,000,000 monthly page views/impressions*
2. *be up and running for at least three months*
3. *have the ability to serve or change banners within 24 hours of receiving notification*
4. *have a counting software package in place (such as Intersè, MarketWave, WebTrends)*
5. *offer real time, on-site confirmation of impressions and transfers per advertisement*
6. *have, although it is not required, an ad management system (such as AdServer from NetGravity, ClickWise from ClickOver, AdOptimizer by W3.com) or service (Focalink smartbanner, Globaltrack)*

WebRep offers one point of purchase, management of the relationships between the buyer and the seller, and consolidation of reporting from multiple sites. These are valuable services. Unless you have a large staff and want to do all of these non-core competency things yourself, ad representatives can be a good way to go. But these companies don't do something that a true ad network can: serve the ads themselves. Because of that, they can only provide for market segmentation, rather than real targeting.

Targeting

Besides being my domain name (**www.targeting.com**), targeting is today's tool for putting the right ad in front of the right person.

Targeting has to do with knowing who your site visitor is. So far, you've tried to match ads to eyeballs based on the type of computer and browser visitors use. You've tried to address them by company, by region, and by broad areas of interest. But you're still dealing with prevalent demographic guesswork.

The only way to get to know your audience on a more intimate basis is to get them to reveal themselves. If you can give them a reason to tell you a little about themselves, suddenly the sky's the limit and the 1:1 marketing relationship begins.

If you haven't read *The One To One Future* by Don Peppers and Martha Rogers (Doubleday, 1993), you should. If you haven't been to **www.1to1marketing.com**, make a point of it. The issue is dealing with your customers on an individual basis. I covered the relationship side of doing business on the Web extensively in *Customer Service on the Internet*. These days, that relationship is growing out of the customer realm and into the advertising world.

Getting to Know You

People tend to use the same search engines over and over again. Once you get to know how one works, you know how to get at the information you want as fast as possible. You go back. If that search engine starts asking questions about you and learning who you are, it can more tightly deliver banner ads you are more likely to click.

So how can a Web site in this stateless server world tell the difference between you and the next guy? If you're surfing the Web from your own private domain, then it's possible to say, "Ah, here's Fred! He's coming from the fred.com domain and he's the only one who ever does, so it *must* be Fred! Hi, Fred!" But so many people come from aol.com that we need some other way of knowing who's who.

Will Our Mystery Guest Log In, Please? Getting people to log into a site is okay in three circumstances: they paid a subscription fee to become a member; the site contains personal information such as their credit card number and billing address, or it's their online bank site; they know there's valuable information and they're willing to trade some information about themselves in order to get it.

I willingly let Amazon.com know who I am. That way I can buy books. I'm happy to log into **www.wellsfargo.com** and give them my password. Same with **www.schwab.com**. I don't want just anybody paying my bills and trading my investments.

But these are private services. They're not public Web sites where millions of people show up every day. Millions of people would not show up at Yahoo! if they had to log in. The solution, then, lies in the magic cookie.

Cookies Netscape created the cookie in order to get to know you better. The *cookie* is a text file on your hard drive that stores a server-given user identification number. Maybe it even adds some useful information, such as your name and address, if you happened to mention them. If the server doesn't recognize any of the cookies in your file, it gives you one. If it does, then it knows something about you. It knows that you are the same person that came to visit

three days ago. It can also look into its database to see what you told it on previous visits. You told it your name? "Hi, Fred!"

The wonderful thing about cookies is that they are unobtrusive. I don't have to log in. I don't have to identify myself. I don't have to have references. It's just like going to the same gas station for the past twelve years. "Hi, Jim!"

Cookies have a couple of problems. They're not infallible. If you're interested in the technical dissertation, head over to the Netscape site and enjoy. If you want to know the skinny without the dry technical jargon, wander over to Andy's Netscape HTTP Cookie Notes (**www.illuminatus.com/cookie.fcgi**). But if you're only interested in the practical side of the issue, it boils down to this:

> It's a text file. Anybody can find it on their PC and delete it—Personality Deficiency.
>
> It's browser-dependent. If you use Netscape and Internet Explorer, you end up with two different cookies—Schizophrenia.
>
> It's computer-dependent. If you use a desktop, a laptop, and you use Netscape and Internet Explorer, you have four cookies—Multiple Personality Disorder.
>
> It can't tell the difference between you and your spouse if you both use the same browser on the same computer—Ambidextrous.
>
> Not all browsers are able to accept a cookie—Catatonia.

Yahoo! uses the cookie to good advantage. They don't make you fill out a form and reveal your most secret predilections. Instead, they offer a service. Yahoo! will display a custom home page made just for you (see Figure 6.19).

You select what kind of news you want to get headlines on. You select your favorite Web sites. You select the cities in which you want to watch the weather. You get what you want. Yahoo! gets to know a little bit about you. When a search site knows a bit more about you, it can use that information to sell targeted ad space.

Getting to Know all About You *April 14, 1997—Framingham, Mass.—Lycos, Inc. (NASDAQ:LCOS) the premier navigation center on the Internet announced today it will soon have a new ability to dynamically target online ads and automate advertising management using AdManager, a highly sophisticated tool from Accipiter Inc., a provider of Internet advertising solutions.*

The move will greatly enhance Lycos' ability to provide highly sophisticated Internet target marketing benefits to the more than 300 companies that advertise on its site. Located at www.lycos.com, Lycos and its properties serve more than 6 million daily page viewings.

Dave Peterson, Vice President of Advertising Sales at Lycos, points out their targeting can include topic, keyword phrases, page specific, operating system, browser type, company, ISP, and more. Lycos automates the process of targeting, scheduling, rotating, and delivering ads on the Web. According to Peterson, "Advertisers get real-time on-line reporting enabling them to adjust their advertising campaigns in direct response to the activities and preferences of individual site visitors."

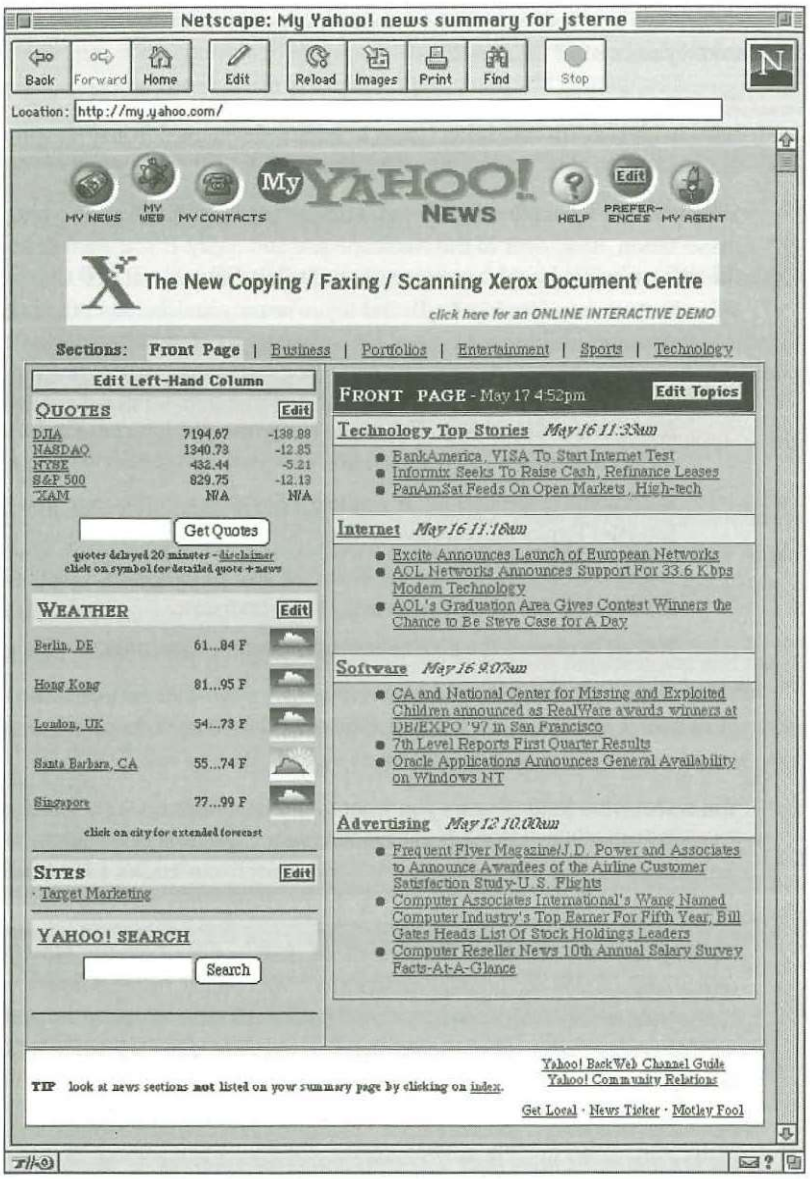


FIG. 6.19
Yahoo! learns about you by offering personalization.

Lycos will be able to use personal interests in conjunction with page classification, domain type (.edu, .gov, .fr), time of day, day of week, and selected keywords. If the personal information includes a postal zip code, then all kinds of demographic information gets stirred into the mix. If the personal information includes favorite cuisine, movie genre, sport, vacation spot, and so on, it starts to get interesting.

http://www.quecorp.com

I'm reminded of the ads IBM ran in computer journals for their technology to help you find women who like boating and science fiction; people who like seafood and motorbikes; and women who like classical music and home improvement projects. The first was accompanied by a photograph of a woman in a powerboat with four terrified extraterrestrials. The second showed a lobster riding a motorcycle. The third depicted a woman in an elegant evening dress playing a rather large chainsaw as if it were a bass cello.

We understand and have become used to database marketing. We just haven't gotten used to the idea that this data can be live, online, or real time. It can be information gathered at the moment the Web site visitor shows up and can be modified as he or she moves through the site.

The power of this kind of information is manifest. The task of managing an advertising campaign that takes this power into consideration can be daunting. There is help out there, however, in the form of ad networks.

From WebRep to Network

The DoubleClick (**www.doubleclick.com**) tag line is "Building one-to-one relationships, millions at a time." DoubleClick isn't kidding. Although it represents less than 100 sites, DoubleClick has something that other Web reps can't compete with. DoubleClick serves all of your banners itself.

All 70 of its client sites are set up to ask for a banner from DoubleClick whenever a page is requested. For example, the banner at the top of the AltaVista page does not come from the AltaVista server (see Figure 6.20).

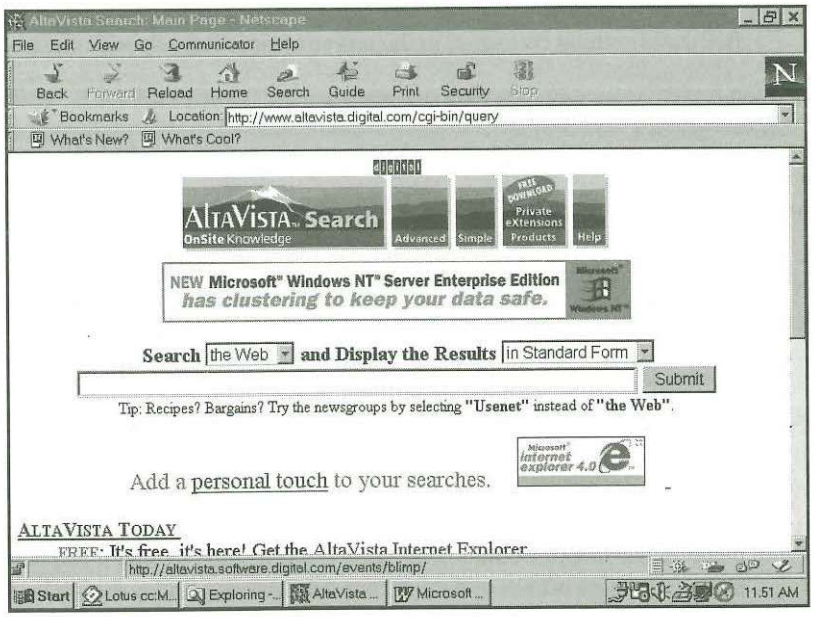


FIG. 6.20
AltaVista gets its ads from DoubleClick.

If you watch the "Connect:" comments at the bottom of your browser (and if you've had more than two cups of coffee—it goes by pretty quickly), you notice that the AltaVista page is coming from **altavista.digital.com**. Then you notice that the banner ad is being retrieved from **doubleclick.com**.

View the source and you see the HTML:

```
<center><a href="http://ad.doubleclick.net/jump/altavista.digital.com/">
<img ismap width=468 height=60 border=0
src="http://ad.doubleclick.net/ad/altavista.digital.com/"></a></center>
```

Not only is the banner coming from DoubleClick, but the link it takes you to if you click *goes* to DoubleClick. Shouldn't the link take you to the site being advertised? Well, it does. But it does so in a roundabout way. First, it sends a message to DoubleClick, which redirects the link to Web-Ignite (the "Targeted Internet Promotions" company).

In doing so, DoubleClick can keep absolute tabs on how many ads are being served on which sites.

In doing so, DoubleClick can keep absolute tabs on which ads should be served to which sites.

In doing so, DoubleClick can keep absolute tabs on which ads should be served to which people.

In doing so, DoubleClick can keep absolute tabs on which ads are being clicked.

It's nice to have all the reporting coming from the same server. If you select DoubleClick client's sites for your ads like Dilbert, Quicken, or IGolf, all of the stats about your impressions and clickthroughs are going to come hot off the press in the same format. You won't have to wait days or weeks for the Web Rep to consolidate the data and make it meaningful.

But that's nothing compared to the power of targeting a specific audience across multiple sites.

The Power of Network Targeting

Want to reach college kids in the Midwest between 6 and 10 P.M. the week before spring break?

Want to reach New York investment bankers who work Wall Street and are planning to travel?

From a DoubleClick magazine ad, May 1997

A network of sites multiplied by a database of demographic information, times a database of ads equals unprecedented advertising power. Let's take it one step at a time.

Time of Day/Day of Week What time of day are they coming to the site? That's a no-brainer. If there are different ads for different times of day, the database need only look at the system clock to determine which banner to bestow.

If you are advertising a television concert, you want to stop showing the banner after it's over. It would make no sense to display banners intended for small children after evening turns into night. According to DoubleClick, "This is particularly helpful if you only wish to reach business users (who have access to the Internet only Monday-Friday during business hours), or if your banner is linked to a telemarketing campaign which only operates during set hours."

Operating System Microsoft took advantage of the fact that all browsers report the operating system and version number when a surfer arrives at a site. They wanted to let Macintosh users know that a new version of Internet Explorer was available for them. If the surfer was using Windows 3.1, they have a different banner. Windows 95? Different again.

Anybody selling computer-related products or services would be wise to follow Microsoft's lead and pay attention to what sort of computer is on the other end of the modem. On their Web site, DoubleClick says it feels that "[e]ngineers, scientists and students tend to use UNIX systems. Creative, artists and graphic designers usually use Macintoshes. Software developers often use Microsoft NT. Professionals and business people tend to use Windows-based systems."

High Level Domain Surveys and focus groups may have told you that people at work react to different messages than people at home. You would have guessed yourself that college students and teachers live a slightly different lifestyle than the rest of us. Government employees have different interests and needs. Non-profit organizations respond to different stimuli.

Thus, with a handful of banners in an ad network database, the proper communication can be made depending on whether the page viewer is coming from a .com or from a general Internet Service Provider (ISP) such as America Online or Netcom. You can tailor your message depending on whether they're coming from an .edu, a .gov, or an .org.

Specific Company As mentioned, it's not too hard to keep a local database of IP addresses to determine exactly which company somebody is coming from if they're surfing from work. Cisco Systems, an Internet router manufacturer, uses this approach for recognizing anybody coming to Cisco customer service site from one of its competitors. If the server sees you're from Bay Networks, it hands back a picture of the customer service team smiling at you, with the words "Welcome to our Friends at Bay Networks!" If it works for them, it can work for banner ads as well.

Company Specifics Looking up the IP address leads to the name of the company. Looking up the company can lead to the SIC code. Now that you know what they do for a living, you can determine which of your products you'd like to promote.

There are lots of services which provide databases which can tell you company locations and sizes. Is it a small firm in the Midwest? They react to different material than a billion dollar corporation in the Northwest.

According to their Web site, DoubleClick has "compiled an extensive database of every company currently on the Internet. Using reliable third-party data, we have compiled financial and size information on the majority of these companies. Targeting by Size or Revenue can be particularly helpful if you are marketing a business product to organizations or if you are offering a human resource service."

Editorial Content There is also information to consider about the site on which your ad resides. You can catalog different content for each page if you like. That gives you a clue as to the viewers' interests.

At the moment, DoubleClick offers a number of "affinity groups":

Premium Sites (Quicken Financial Network, Dilbert, USA Today, Gamelan Java Directory, Travelocity)

Business and Finance

Entertainment

Sports, Travel & Leisure

Technology & The Internet

News/Information and Culture

Directories & Search Engines

In DoubleClick's own words, here's what happens when you click (**www.doubleclick.net/nf/adinfo/bandeset.htm**):

How Does DoubleClick Do It?

Since the inception and launch of DoubleClick's targeted advertising network, one question keeps coming up again, and again. Even our most enthusiastic clients and customers are not satisfied with knowing that it works wonders for them,—they all want to know HOW?

In brief, DoubleClick reads the User IP address, extracts the network address, identifies the company, and then selects and delivers a targeted ad. That's it. It's that simple.

Here, in more detail, is how . . .

A user enters the name (URL) of a DoubleClick Network web site they wish to visit, usually by clicking on an icon or link;

The selected Web page is delivered from that Web site to the User, and the User's browser loads the requested page. Embedded in the page are Image Tags that link the browser to the DoubleClick server in New York. The User's browser initiates the HTTP Get request from the DoubleClick server, establishing a connection between the two, and a graphic file is requested from DoubleClick to fill the ad banner space on the Web page being loaded on the User's screen. (In most cases near the top of the loading page.)

DoubleClick then performs the following . . . :

The User's Internet Protocol (IP address) is referenced, and the series of numbers that make up a User's network address (ex. 199.25.206.5), is noted. These network addresses are referenced against the DoubleClick database of more that 400,000 mapped networks.

Each mapped network reveals the User's Domain (at&t.net, microsoft.com, etc.), and the following information about that Domain:

*Country State Postal Code Area Code SIC**

*(*SIC codes identify an organization type. This information is gathered from independent third party sources, is matched with identified domains, and becomes part of the DoubleClick database.)*

DoubleClick assembles and reviews all the information it has collected to this point, including referencing the content (News, Sports, Weather, Financial . . .) of the DoubleClick Network site the User is visiting, and even pages within a site that contain words that an advertiser wishes to place

a banner near, (example: 'auto,' 'highways,' 'tires' for a car maker's ad). DoubleClick also notes the time of day, and day of week relative to the User.

The DoubleClick server reads the HTTP header from the User and notes the User's Browser Type (Netscape, Microsoft, etc.) and Version (2.0 3.1, etc), Operating System (Unix, Mac, etc.) and Version, and Service Provider (AOL, Netcom, Pipeline, etc.). This information is sometimes used in targeting ad banners. As the User's browser permits, a cookie identification number is assigned to the User. DoubleClick assigns each individual User its own unique user ID number, primarily to track the number of times a User has seen each banner in order to control frequency, or deliver sequential banners to the same User.

Then DoubleClick scans the more than 1,000 ad banners waiting for delivery at any time, matching the ad and its targeting criteria with the User, and the information gathered. The appropriate ad banner is selected and delivered to the User.

All of this, every bit, takes place in the blink of an eye, the snap of a finger, . . . less than 20 milliseconds.

Then What . . .? When the User sees a highly targeted ad banner, they are more likely to be interested and respond. When they do, when they 'click-through,' DoubleClick receives a Get request and redirects the User's browser to the URL of the site that placed the ad banner. The advertiser's server delivers the page content, and DoubleClick records another successful targeted click-through.

If the user is from a network not previously identified, it is tagged as 'new' and DoubleClick performs an automatic search looking for this new network by sending a query to Internic, the central repository for network identities on the Internet. Internic provides the Domain (and the associated information submitted at time of registration) and the data is incorporated into DoubleClick's database.

All the information collected to this point is part of a running process that continually updates itself 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

DoubleClick isn't the only one playing the network game. One contender, Matchlogic (**www.matchlogic.com**), uses their Web site to make a direct comparison between themselves and the senior DoubleClick:

> *MatchLogic is the only company providing advertisers with campaign management services across the entire Web with performance information available online within 60 seconds. This means that marketers can reliably compare performance of banners and sites, calculate their ROI, and make adjustments during the campaign to increase performance. Unlike DoubleClick and other networks, MatchLogic doesn't restrict marketers to specific sites. Instead, MatchLogic implements and manages campaigns across sites, including those within networks. And because the company serves ads across the breadth of the World Wide Web, MatchLogic provides the most comprehensive solution of any online advertising management service.*

Categorical Targeting

Petry Network is another DoubleClick competitor. They offer different types of targeting: Affinity; Geographic Location; High-Level Internet Domain Type; Internet Service Provider;

Operating System; Browser Type; Days and Times to Display Ad; and Demographic Profiling Targeting. In other words, pretty much what you'd expect. But then they get deep.

According to Mark Welch (more on Welch later in the section titled "Networks of the Future") in a presentation he gave at Web Advertising 97 (which has more information on ad networks than would fit in this book and is well worth your time. It's found at **www.ca-probate.com/webadv97.htm**, the Petry Network requires that each URL it places an ad on be assigned one sub-category from the following list:

General Art (All, Art History, Artists, Arts Therapy, Children, Companies, Countries and Cultures, Design Arts, Education, Events, Forums, Humanities, Institutes, Libraries, Magazines, Museums and Galleries, Organizations, Performing Arts, Pictures, Publications, Real-Time Chat, Television Shows, Thematic, Tour Operators, Visual Arts)

Business (All, Business Schools, Classifieds, Companies, Consortia, Consumer Economy, Conventions and Conferences, Courses, Economics, Education, Electronic Commerce, Employment, History, Intellectual Property, International Economy, Labor, Magazines, Management Information Systems, Marketing, Markets and Investments, Miscellaneous, News, Organizations, Products and Services, Real Estate, Small Business Information, Taxes, Technology Policy, Trade, Transportation)

Computers (All, Art, Communications and Networking, Companies, Computer Science, Contests, Conventions and Conferences, Cyberculture, Desktop Publishing, Games, Graphics, Hardware, History, Humor, Information and Documentation, Internet, Magazines, Mobile Computing, Multimedia, Music, Operating Systems, Organizations, Personal Computers, Programming Languages, Security and Encryption, Semiconductors, Software, Standards, Supercomputing and Parallel Computing Systems, Telecommunications, Training, User Groups, World Wide Web)

Education (All, Academic Competitions, Adult and Continuing Education, Art, Career and Vocational, Companies, Conferences, Distance Learning, Educational Standards and Testing, Educational Theory and Methods, Financial Aid, Government Agencies, Guidance, Higher Education, Institutes, Instructional Technology, Journals, Languages, Lectures, Literacy, Magazines, Math and Science Education, Music, News, Online Forums, Organizations, Products, Programs, Resources, Special Education, Teaching)

Entertainment (All, Amusement/Theme Parks, Audio/Visual Equipment, Books, Comics and Animation, Contests, Cool Links, Drinks and Drinking, Events, Food and Eating, Hard to Believe, Humor, Internet, Magazines, Miscellaneous, Movies and Films, Multimedia, Music, News, Organizations, Paranormal Phenomena, People, Radio, Real-Time Chat, Reviews, Science Fiction, Horror, Television, Theater, Trivia, Useless Pages)

Government (All, Agencies, Citizenship, Conventions and Conferences, Countries, Documents, Embassies and Consulates, Executive Branch, Federal Employees, Institutes, Intelligence, International Organizations, Judicial Branch, Law, Legislative Branch, Military, News, Politics, Real-Time Chat, Reengineering, Research Labs, Student Government, Technology Policy, U.S. Budget, U.S. States)

Health (All, Alternative Medicine, Career and Employment, Children's Health, Companies, Conferences, Death and Dying, Dentistry, Disabilities, Diseases and Conditions, Education,

Emergency Services, Environmental Health, Fitness, General Health, Geriatrics and Aging, Health Administration, Health Care, Health Sciences, Hospitals, Institutes, Journals, Law, Magazines, Medicine, Men's Health, Mental Health, Nursing, Nutrition, Organizations, Pharmacology, Public Health and Safety, Public Interest Groups, Radio Programs, Real-Time Chat, Reproductive Health, Sexuality, Travel, Weight Issues, Women's Health, Workplace)

Internet (All, Business and Economics, Chat, Commercial Services, Commercial Software, Communications and Networking, Conferences and Events, Connectivity, Directory Services, Domain Registration, Education, Electronic Mail, Entertainment, FTP Sites, Gopher, History, Indices to Web Documents, Information and Documentation, Internet Fax Server, Internet Phone, Intranet, Magazines, Mailing Lists, Maps, Network Topology, Newsletters, Organizations, Policies, Resources, Searching the Net, Software, Statistics and Demographics, Usenet, User Groups, World Wide Web, Usenet)

Investing (All, Bonds, Brokerages, Commercial Financial Services, Commercial Investment Services, Corporate Reports, Currencies, Economic Indicators, Exchanges, Forums and Chats, Futures and Options, Hard Assets, Initial Public Offerings, Mutual Funds, News, Organizations, Quotes, Real Estate, Reference and Guides, Socially Responsible Investments, SRI, Software Products, Trading Games and Simulations, FAQs, Usenet Media/news (All, Broadcasting, Business, Columns, Commercial News Services, Daily, Editorial, Entertainment, Events, Government, Health, Internet, Journalism, Legal, Magazines, Newspapers, Newswires, Personalized News, Politics, Radio, Real-Time Chat, Science, Sports, Technology, Television, Usenet, Weekly, World, WWW What's New)

Movies (All, Actors and Actresses, Awards, Box Office Reports, Columns, Companies, Contests, Events, Exhibits, Film Festivals, Film Making, Film Music, Film Schools, Genres, History, Home Video, Independent, Interactive Games, Journals, Laserdisc, Lists, Magazines, Mailing Lists, Multimedia, News, Organizations, Parodies, People, Personal Pages, Quotes, Real-Time Chat, Resources, Reviews, Screenplays, Studios, Theaters, Theory and Criticism, This Week's Releases, Titles, Trivia, Usenet)

Music (All, Artists, Awards, Band Naming, Bootlegs, Charts, Classifieds, Companies, Composition, Computer Generated, Consumer Information, Contests, Countries and Cultures, Cover Art, Discographies, Education, Events, Film Music, Games, Genres, Girl Bands, History, Humor, Independent Music, Instruments, Karaoke, Listening Booth, Lyrics and Notation, Magazines, Mailing Lists, Music Videos, Musicals, News, Organizations, Polls, Radio Programs, Real-Time Chat, Religious, Reviews, Software, Soundtracks, Trivia, Vocal, Usenet)

Recreation (All, Amusement/Theme Parks, Animals, Automotive, Aviation, Cooking, Dance, Dating, Drugs, Events, Fashion, Fishing, Games, Hobbies and Crafts, Home and Garden, Hovercraft, Motorcycles, Outdoors, Real-Time Chat, Sports, Toys, Travel)

Reference (All, Acronyms and Abbreviations, Almanacs, Atlases, Calendars, Codes, Dictionaries, Encyclopedia, English Language Usage, Etiquette, Flags, Interesting, Journals, Libraries, Maps, Parliamentary Procedure, Patents, Phone Numbers, Postal Information, Quotations, Searching the Net, Standards, Thesauri, Time, Weights and Measures, White Pages)

Science (All, Acoustics, Agriculture, Alternative, Amateur Science, Anthropology and Archaeology, Artificial Life, Astronomy, Aviation and Aeronautics, Biology, Chaos, Chemistry, Cognitive Science, Complex Systems, Computer Science, Earth Sciences, Ecology, Education, Energy, Engineering, Events, Forensics, Geography, Geology and Geophysics, History, Humor, Hydrology, Information Technology, Institutes, Journals, Life Sciences, Magazines, Mathematics, Medicine, Meteorology, Museums and Exhibits, Nanotechnology, News, Oceanography, Organizations, Paleontology, Paradoxes, Physics, Psychology, Real-Time Chat, Research, Space, Weights and Measures, Zoology, Usenet)

Society (All, Affirmative Action, Age, Alternative, Animal Rights, Birth, Charity, Children, Civil Rights, Crime, Cultures, Cyberculture, Death, Disabilities, Diversity, Environment and Nature, Etiquette, Families, Fashion, Firearms, Friendship, Gender, Holidays, Human Rights, Left-Handers, Lesbians, Magazines, Minorities, Museums and Exhibits, Mythology and Folklore, Nonviolence, Organizations, People, Poverty, Race Relations, Real-Time Chat, Relationships, Religion, Reunions, Royalty, Seniors, Sexuality, Singles, Size Issues, Veterans, Weddings)

Sports (All, Amateur, Archery, Art, Athletes, Auto Racing, Badminton, Baseball, Basketball, Baton Twirling, Billiards, Boat Racing, Boomerang, Bowling, Boxing, Bullfighting, Cable TV Networks, Canoe Polo, Canoe-Kayak Racing, Cheerleading, Coaching, Collectibles, College and University, Companies, Contests, Cricket, Croquet, Curling, Cycling, Danball, Disabilities, Dog Racing, Dogsledding, Education, Equestrian, Events, Fantasy Leagues, Fencing, Fishing, Flying Discs, Footbag Hacky Sack, Football American, Football Australian, Football Gaelic, Gambling, Golf, Gymnastics, Handball, High School, History, Hockey, Horse Racing, International Games, Jai-Alai, Jump Rope, Korfball, Lacrosse, Luge, Lumbering, Magazines, Martial Arts, Motorcycle Racing, Museums and Halls of Fame, News and Media, Officiating, Organizations, Orienteering, Paddling, Polo, Psychology, Racquetball, Ratings and Rankings, Real-Time Chat, Regional, Ringette, Rodeo, Rounders, Rowing, Rugby, Running, Sailing, Schedules, Sepak Takraw, Shooting, Shuffleboard, Skateboarding, Skating, Skiing, Skydiving, Snowboarding, Snowmobiles, Soccer, Softball, Software, Squash, Stadiums, Surfing, Swimming and Diving, Table Tennis, Technology, Tennis, Track and Field, Triathlon, Trivia, Tug-of-War, Volleyball, Wakeboarding, Walking, Water Polo, Waterskiing, Weightlifting, Windsurfing, Wrestling, Usenet)

Travel (All, Air Travel, Automotive, Backpacking, Boating, Books and Publications, Budget Travel, Convention and Visitors Bureaus, Cruises, Currency Exchange, General Information, Health, Honeymoons, Lodging, Magazines, Products, Resorts, Tour Operators, Train Travel, Transportation, Travel Agents, Travel Related Businesses, Travelogues, Virtual Field Trips)

Weather (All, Aviation Weather, Books, Climate Centers, Companies, Daily Weather News, Education, Events, Institutes, Maps and Data, Newsletters, Organizations, Real-Time Chat, Research, Software, Storm Chasing, Weather Phenomena, Usenet)

If you can't find an affinity group that matches up with the demographics or psychographics for your product, I'll be happy to offer my consulting services at my standard rate.

But Mark Welch, an attorney, doesn't think it's that easy. He offers himself as an example in a post to the Online Advertising List.

Date: Sat, 27 Jul 1996 12:55:02 -0700

To: online-ads@o-a.com

From: Mark J. Welch (markwelch@ca-probate.com)

Subject: ONLINE-ADS>> New Subscriber Intro: Mark J. Welch

I am an estate planning attorney in Pleasanton, California. I have created a wonderful web site about California estate planning, probate, and trust law. I would like to attract people to my web site, and of course ultimately I want people to hire me to represent them in their estate planning matters, or in probate administration proceedings.

Geography.

I am admitted to practice law only in California, and generally my clients live or work within about 15 miles from Pleasanton, California. There are probably about 1 million people in my geographic target area.

Wealth.

While everyone should have a will, poor people and those with modest incomes don't hire me. Most of my clients have a net worth of $250,000 or more (per married couple), and estate tax planning generally is important only for clients with a net worth over $600,000.

Age.

Young people do not do estate planning. Roughly 85% of my clients are over age 40, and 60% over age 50.

Sex.

In a married couple, it is the wife who most often provides the pressure to do estate planning, and more often than not she also selects the attorney.

Sexual Orientation.

Gay couples have more need for estate planning because 'interstate succession' rarely matches their goals.

Triggering Events & Behaviors.

Most clients seek out legal assistance for estate planning because of common triggering events:

Birth of second child (rare)

3-5 years after second marriage ('blended family')

Youngest child 'leaves the nest'

Pre-Retirement (age 57-62)

Retirement

Death of Friend or Relative (Not Spouse)

Death of Spouse (update plan 1-2 years later)

Of course, the other aspect of my practice—estate administration (probate or trust administration)—arises when someone dies.

Okay, let's try to design an Internet advertising program for me, based on the information. . .

We have some problems right off the bat: there is no way to target directly geographically or based on age, family status, or based on the triggering events specified. (Indeed, even designing a direct mail campaign would be difficult.) Certainly, we can provide some geographic targeting, based on the IP address of the visitor (that will probably result in acceptable accuracy for 60% to 80% of visitors, if I accept about a 30 to 40 mile radius).

But we could easily identify a list of possible web-site subjects that would be relevant and would target a relatively high percentage of people in my target audience: seniors, retirement, retirement planning, financial planning and investment, death, grief, obituaries, life insurance, investments, rental property management.

Unfortunately, if I wanted to place an advertising buy with most pooled advertising networks, I couldn't get categories even vaguely related to these subjects.

Even if the categories I want were available, I would want some assurance that the sites that checked that category were truly relevant. Indeed, I would almost certainly want to screen all the pages where my ad would appear, in advance, to insure that the ad would not appear on sites I found offensive or inappropriate for my ad. (Note that a web page that is acceptable one day might become unacceptable the next, if the content is changed.)

Is Welch hard to please? Is Welch asking too much? Actually, he's a pretty typical advertiser. But you'd be hard-pressed to find somebody that's thought about these issues as long and as hard.

The power of targeting specific editorial content and collecting such a wide variety of information across multiple Web sites is considerable. Knowing your audience is, after all, the name of the game. There is, however, a fly in the ointment. There's a little bit of a discussion about cookies.

The Cookie Conundrum

Cookies have been getting a bad rap up on Capitol Hill. It's a privacy issue.

The protectors of the realm in Congress feel that one-to-one marketing might be okay if it's done carefully. A server can write a cookie on a client's hard drive because there is an implicit relationship between the surfer and the surfee (Web site).

You come to my Web site and we can be said to have established something of a relationship. That's fine. No harm, no foul. But it's possible for a third party to place a cookie on your browser. Did you know that? Doesn't it bother you? Doesn't it seem like there's infinite room for abuse? Well, not really.

The only way a third party could plant a cookie on you is with the permission of the second party—that is, the content Web site operator. The content Web site has to put the hooks into his HTML that calls the third party.

So why is this a problem? Because DoubleClick and MatchLogic use cookie technology to keep track of people. You go to AltaVista and through them, DoubleClick is permitted to write something in your cookie file. It's a very powerful tool for advertisers because they can start to hand

out banners based on information collected over time instead of information gathered and deciphered at the moment.

The Internet Engineering Task Force, which more or less sets the technical standards for the Internet, has offered up Request For Comment #2109 (**http://ds.internic.net/rfc/rfc2109.txt**). This RFC would have all browsers automatically reject cookies from third parties.

The obvious solution is to let individuals decide if they want to accept cookies or not. Like most of what's wrong with the Internet, it's not a problem that needs to be legislated. If you start to feel your privacy is being violated, you can delete your cookie file after every session. Better yet, with Netscape version 4.0, we'll all have the ability to set our cookie preferences ourselves. This wasn't a decision made in the dark. In fact, Lou Montulli, protocol manager at Netscape, was one of the original authors of the RFC. The bit about the third-party Web sites got in there over his objections.

"I think we're doing the right think for the users," Montulli told Rick Bruner, of *Advertising Age*. "But it's a very fine line. If we were to unilaterally disable this feature, existing content on the Web would no longer work...[Also] sites that use [cookies] tend to use them in a way that generate revenue. If you take away revenue from the sites, then the users may lose their ability to go to these sites."

With Netscape 4.0, I'll be able to reject them out of hand if I choose. Chances are very likely that I'll immediately notice that the Internet if full of dumb ads for things I don't care about and would never buy. I'll notice that the longer my cookie file is in use, the more interesting the ads get. Sounds like a win-win situation to me.

Networks of the Future

Mark Welch is one of those Internet marvels. In addition to being a probate lawyer, Welch is a man deeply interested in advertising on the Internet. His magnum opus, Web Site Banner Advertising: Banner Ad Networks & Brokers, which can found at **www.ca-probate.com/comm_net.htm**, is a resource not to be missed. It includes pointers to players and sound advice, not to mention a healthy helping of his own opinion. Take a look at it in Figure 6.21.

Some of Welch's advice from his Web site includes:

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Note that several companies listed here have already defaulted on payment promises, and several companies have 'changed their rules' with little notice (at least one imposed new rules retroactively to refuse to pay sites).

Beware of strangers. Don't do business with a company that won't tell you its street address, telephone number, and the names of the principals. Check if the information you get matches the information in the company's domain name registration. Consider carefully whether you should do business with a company that's located in another country or even another state or city.

Contracts: Be sure to carefully read and print out any web site pages describing payment rules and policies. Some companies change their rules or don't define their policies clearly. Don't sign or otherwise accept a contract that includes unacceptable terms; if a vendor tells you the contract

doesn't mean what it says, don't sign the contract until it's changed to say what you believe. Consult with an attorney (I do not provide legal advice to web publishers). . .

Don't count on payment. The entire advertising industry is famous for paying late, or not at all. Don't put yourself in a position where you can't pay your web hosting fees unless your royalty check arrives on time (or at all).

Warning to Advertisers, Ad Networks, and Web Publishers: Beware of 'web page pirates,' who copy successful web pages and then attempt to sign up with ad networks and exchange programs to unfairly generate profit from their copyright infringement. The page you are viewing has been copied three times in the past few months, and each time I have had to spend time, effort, and money to get the ISP to close down the offending web site. Don't do business with web pirates!



FIG. 6.21
Mark Welch's compendium of Internet advertising links and thoughts is well worth your time.

That's good advice for ad buyers. On a related page, The Ad Network of the Future (**http://www.ca-probate.com/adfuture.htm**), Welch offers some suggestions for network builders:

SmartClicks (still in 'beta' testing) designed software that allows each web page to be separately categorized; the software tracks the performance of each banner advertisement (based on the ratio of displays to click-throughs) in each category. An advertiser can then designate specific categories for their advertisement, or can instruct that SmartClicks automatically display ads more frequently in categories that it has 'learned' are more effective. My own experience, after two weeks of allowing random rotation of ads, was the discovery that my ad was performing well in an unexpected category; on reflection, I understood why, but I would never have selected that category without first seeing its success.

A vendor must devote substantial energy to creating, maintaining, adapting, and enforcing a system of categories for web pages. Each page must be separately registered, since many web sites include a variety of web pages often with unrelated content. And the vendor must adopt a system to verify the proper assignment of categories. For larger sites, this will entail actual review of the site or page and confirmation that the correct category or categories have been assigned. Ideally, the category system must allow for dynamic extension, with sub-categories added to distinguish sites and pages whenever possible.

The ad network must address the issue of content changes at a web site: some system must be created to insure [sic] that new content, or gradual changes to content, are reflected in the category assigned to the specific page. A system must also be adopted for web sites with "dynamic content" (such as newspapers with new articles each day, or sports sites whose primary sports theme shifts with the seasons).

There are a few more tricks beyond targeting that network builders can use. Some have been through the proof-of-concept stage and some are just now being put into practice.

The Real Me: The Fine Art of Profiling

Mark Gibbs, network consultant and contributing editor of *Network World* magazine, pinpointed the art of pinpointing during an e-mail discussion between the two of us:

With an Internet Marketing campaign, there is no idealized consumer—a sales message should be unique for each specific individual. The key to the future of Internet advertising is consumer information: the more you know about who is getting your message and the more that you tailor the content, the more effective your pitch will be.

The first I heard of profiling was at Firefly (**www.firefly.com**), when it offered to recommend a movie to me (see Figure 6.22).

I thought about the time and effort that would go into creating such a thing and shook my head. A huge database filled with all of the best movies, categorized by subject, genre, theme, actors, music, director, and a dozen other attributes. It was truly a task of epic proportions.

Furthermore, I couldn't see how it could really work based on the limited information it asked of me. I was presented with a list of movies and I was asked to rate them on a scale from nothing to 7, as follows:

don't know
1: hate it!
2: pretty bad
3: not my thing
4: it's alright
5: I like that
6: great stuff
7: the best



FIG. 6.22
Firefly is smart enough to make movie recommendations without a direct pipeline to Siskel & Ebert.

Surely that's not enough to go on. But, to my surprise, it started recommending movies that I had not rated yet. And they were good movies. Well, I'm sure my wife would disagree and my mother would be appalled, but my brother would say, "Hey, that Firefly knows what you like!" And he'd be right.

Collaborative Filtering

That's when I looked under the covers and tripped over *collaborative filtering*. I had heard the phrase only once before, in association with Net Shepherd.

Net Shepherd (**www.netshpherd.com**) started life as a tool to help keep kids away from objectionable material on the Web. CyberSitter, Net Nanny, and Surf Watch were busy building databases of pornographic sites that they would block if you installed their software.

Net Shepherd took a different perspective. It understood the community nature of the Internet and wanted to create a filtering system that was in keeping with the idea that like-minded people like to share their opinions. So it created a database server that allows any database subscriber to vote on the Web sites they visited. If you subscribed to your state's elementary school database, you would rate sites based on their appropriateness to kids' ages: 4–6, 7–10, 11–13, 14–17, and 18–21. But not all by yourself.

Everybody who subscribed to that database would always have the opportunity to vote on whatever sites they wanted to. The result would be a communal collection of ratings based on community standards. Not legislated standards, but true community standards.

Youngsters would be blocked from seeing Web sites that talked about AIDS. Pre-teens would be blocked from sites that talked about romantic sex. Teenagers would be blocked from sites dealing with racial hatred. But the exciting thing that caught my attention was that it wasn't a small group of people in some Star Chamber deciding what was good and ill. It was up to the community.

Further, you could belong to more than one community in recognition of the fact that we all wear multiple hats. You could subscribe to your church database, which would bar sites that use foul language, and you could subscribe to the *Playboy* rating database that, as a community, felt nudity was okay, but violence was not.

And that's what I found under the covers at Firefly: collaborative filtering, but of a slightly different nature. This version was simpler. This version was so simple I marveled that it hadn't been done before and still can't figure out why everybody else isn't doing it yet.

Firefly didn't compare my taste to a database full of Oscar awards and actor nominations. It compared what I liked against what other people liked. I like science fiction. I like historical drama. I like action adventure. Firefly created a profile of me based on how I responded to specific movies. It then looked for comparable profiles. When it came across some that were the same, it looked for movies they liked that I hadn't rated yet. Simple. Brilliant.

May I See Your Passport, Please?

Moving this technology out of its own site and into others, Firefly created the Passport. Think of them as the Secretary of State. They know who's who and they keep all of the basic profile information in Firefly Central which they describe on their site as "a rapid cache of Firefly Passports which can be used by any site to recognize existing Passport holders and exchange Passport profiles with other sites." If somebody comes to a Starwave Web site and shows their Passport (logs in with their Firefly identification), then Starwave knows something about them right off the bat. Starwave can then start asking questions and build the profile over time.

Doug Weaver, Vice President of Advertising and Web Publishing for Firefly, explained during a hastily-grabbed lunch at Spring Internet World 1997 how this information could be shared. "Let's say I go to the Starwave site and it asks me some questions. Let's say it finds out that I like Willie Nelson. I'm cruising around the site and come across a banner for a Ford Explorer. I click. It takes me to a picture of the dashboard highlighting a killer sound system that has a streaming audio clip of a Willie song. If I agree to take a test drive, they'll give me a free Willie Nelson CD. Cooperative marketing at its best."

The drawback here is the need to log in, the need to be identified.

Proof Positive

The marketer in me says that what this world needs is a good five-cent ID number for every man, woman, and child. One number that identifies you, nails you beyond question. Assures us marketers that we know who you are. It borders on being something only the Borg from Star Trek could love. We know where you live. Resistance is futile, you will be assimilated.

Now I, of course, have nothing to hide. I'm as pure as the driven snow and have never looked for pornography on the Internet or parked in a red zone or driven over the speed limit—so such an identity number would never bother me. And Scully and Mulder were born in the Cardassian Sector.

But we're not that far off from having a universal ID. It's just that we're going to end up having several. Barnes & Noble, Yahoo!, AOL's Greenhouse Networks, Ziff Davis, and Reuters New Media are all using Firefly's Passport.

Netscape, Internet Shopping Network, Motley Fool, Switchboard, and Virtual Vineyards are all signed up to use VeriSign's Digital ID, which guarantees the identity of the visitor. Web traffic trackers and profilers like Affinicast, Broadvision, ClickOver, I/Pro, Netcount, and net.Genesis are in the process of altering their code to accommodate the Digital ID.

Microsoft has been pushing the idea of a Global User ID (guid) and Versit, made up of companies like IBM, Apple, AT&T, and Siemens are touting a virtual business card called a vCard. At **www.versit.com**, Versit suggests the vCard can be "used in applications such as Internet mail, voice mail, Web browsers, telephony applications, call centers, video conferencing, PIMs (Personal Information Managers), PDAs (Personal Data Assistants), pagers, fax, office equipment, and smart cards."

If you think about it, we really will need some sort of verified digital identification soon. Online buying and selling is going to move from being a child to an adult and we're going to have to be certain we know with whom we're dealing. These are the tempestuous teen years for secured communication. It will have to settle down and start making its own car payments any day now.

Behave Yourself

From the July, 1997, issue of *Webmaster* magazine (**www.web-master.com**) by Jim Sterne:

It's been a while since I felt my hair (what's left of it) stand on end. No, I didn't have my hands on a Tesla-coil. I was sitting in a micro-office in the middle of the Infoseek booth at Internet World, listening with rapt attention under non-disclosure to Peter Rip, vice president and general manager of Infoseek Network. He was talking about the very near future of advertising on the Internet.

Advertising has come of age on the World Wide Web. We've progressed from getting flamed for launching commercial Web sites to getting bombarded with offers to buy banner space. And while there are many effective ways to get your message out besides banners, banners are starting to get smart.

Yes, you can go to DoubleClick and buy space across a whole network of Web sites, targeting men in the 18-to-24 age range by zip code who are surfing in from .edu's and sell them condoms. You can also buy a banner on Women's Wire (www.women.com) promoting home pregnancy kits. If you do, your clickthrough response will go from the usual 1.5 percent up to 3 or even 5 percent.

You can also buy keywords on search engines. You want to advertise your marathon run on Maui? Buy the words 'marathon,' 'Hawaii,' 'Maui,' and so on. Doing so will increase clickthroughs significantly.

But what if the ads themselves were smart? What if a banner ad knew who might want to see it? In that case, you'd have a bit of a content/context revolution.

Infoseek Gets Ultra Smart

Rip talks with the urgency associated with a major discovery, tempered with the strain of having to explain it again before it's even announced. In a nutshell, Infoseek now knows what users like and what kinds of ads they are most likely to click without violating their privacy. That raises the same question asked of Napoleon when he described the thermos that could keep hot things hot and cold things cold: How does it know?

Infoseek's new feature—called Ultramatch—starts off with 300 Micro-Interests spread across 22 Behavior Segments. A Behavior Segment is a broad area of interest such as computers, entertainment, health, the outdoors, or real estate. Users are categorized according to which subjects they seek on the Web. Their interests are identified by actions, rather than by declaration. Infoseek watches while they surf.

Say a user goes to Infoseek and searches on 'airfare.' The engine then gives him or her a cookie that identifies that person as somebody interested in travel. He or she proceeds to one of Infoseek's partner sites—to which the company is delivering ad banners, and clicks an ad for a Hawaiian vacation. Sometime later, the user does a search on sporting events. At each step, his or her behavior pattern is crunched into a digital profile that Infoseek slips back into the user's cookie. The next time he or she goes to an Infoseek partner page, Infoseek reads the profile and selects a banner to show—on a marathon on Maui. In real time.

Before privacy hormones start coursing through your veins, rest assured that Infoseek is tracking the user's profile, not the user. The company knows what she is interested in, but not who she is. It doesn't know her name or e-mail address. It knows what sites she visited, but that information is recalculated into her profile and then discarded. Yet because it knows what she likes, it can give her a banner that she is more likely to click.

As a result, the user sees more ads that speak to her interests. Users will like going to the Infoseek site because it's sponsored by companies offering stuff that is right up their alleys. The other search tools just have regular, run-of-the-mill ads.

The result for the advertiser is less waste. You buy one million impressions and you get one million people who are likely to be interested in your products and services. The eight-year-old doing her homework on the Hawaiian Islands won't be one of the impressions you paid for.

Really Smart Ads

Now let's go one step further. Using collaborative filtering, the technique pioneered by Firefly, Infoseek can actually imbue an ad with intelligence.

Firefly recommends things like movies by comparing a user's stated likes and dislikes with the stated likes and dislikes of a database of others. Infoseek's innovation was to think: Why not do the same with the unstated but exhibited behavior of others? Lots of others?

A banner ad is thrown into the profiling machine. Based on the ad's content, Ultramatch makes some educated guesses about who might want to view it. The software then starts showing the ad around. Over a surprisingly short period of time, it builds a database of the profiles of people who have clicked that banner. The result? Ultramatch knows what types of behavioral profiles are most likely to click that ad. Not just that type of ad, or ads about that subject, or ads with that type of offer—that specific ad.

And once it knows, it takes action. When the next person with that profile calls up a page on the Infoseek network of sites, Ultramatch reads the cookie, matches the profile to the ad, and ships it off. In milliseconds.

The software that runs Ultramatch was adapted from the code that checks someone's credit card history when he makes an unusual purchase.

'Mr. Sterne? You don't usually spend $10,000 in a single month on air travel. Has your card been compromised?'

'No, I just have a lot of flight time ahead of me, and bought a bunch of tickets. But thanks for checking.'

This technology has been in place and working for years. It scales.

Value Ads

The bottom line is that exhibited behavior is a far more reliable gauge of future behavior than anything an individual might say on a profile form. Giving users an ad that people similar to them have clicked dramatically improves the chance that they will click it, too.

How dramatically? In a six-month trial on its site, Infoseek measured a split run. Users exposed to the usual rotation of banners clicked the usual number of times (1.5 percent for random ads and 3 percent for keyword-selected ads).

Those targeted by Ultramatch had a 25 percent higher clickthrough rate. When Ultramatch was coupled with the use of keywords, the results were even more impressive. In some campaigns, Infoseek experienced a 9 percent clickthrough rate—better than anything on the Web this side of 'Download naked pictures here!'

For example, those seeking information about teens, kids, college, and shopping enthusiastically clicked the Columbia House Records banner reading '7,000 Reasons To Stay Home Tonight.' People seeking information about entertainment, travel, science, and computers—presumably upscale types—were successfully tempted to 'Click here to check out over 100 beef recipes.'

This sort of tool points you toward people who have a demonstrated proclivity for clicking your offer but who don't hang out in the obvious places. With it, you can seriously test which banners work and which don't.

There are two problems with the Ultramatch approach. First, people who don't like cookies can blow them away. But this is a small threat to marketers: recent studies show that only 25% of the browsing public has ever even heard of cookies. (And once enough people do know about them, it won't take Madison Avenue long to kick off a 'Got Cookies?' campaign.)

The other concern is legislative. Some people worry that aggregated behavioral information could potentially invade the privacy of registered voters. Heaven help us as the government embarks on the long process of legislating technology that changes on a weekly basis. That cat, however, has already escaped its bag. Databases have been used by marketers for decades, and now they'll be able to talk to each other.

There is every expectation that Ultramatch technology will be applied to content as well as to ads. The ability of a search engine to learn about users' tastes and interests has interesting implications for finding things on the Net. In the hands of marketers, 'Where do you want to go today?' becomes 'Where you want *to go today.'*

The Future of Advertising

The time will come when we are well known for our inclinations, our predilections, our proclivities, and our wants. We will be classified, profiled, categorized, and our every click will be watched.

Eventually we will stop wondering "How did they know I'd need a new vacuum cleaner?" and start wondering, "Why didn't I get an ad reminding me it was time to change the oil in my car?" It'll be the next great excuse of the next decade. "I'm so sorry, but my mail server was down and your Hallmark birthday reminder bounced."

Now that You Know Where to Find Them. . .

You've set your budget for banners. You determined the goals of your campaign and you settled on which metrics will establish just how brilliant you are. You figured out where your potential customers hang out. You tracked them to their favorite places. You set up caller ID and profiling and voice-prints and DNA testing to know exactly who you wanted to advertise to and where they would be at any given moment.

Now that you know just where to find them, all you have to do is figure out what you're going to say. ●

CHAPTER 11

A Few Words About the Law

It's nice to have an understanding of a subject. It's advisable to have a plan of action. It's good to set a proper level of expectation. In addition, it's very important to stay out of trouble along the way. There are some things you shouldn't do online and forewarned is forearmed.

This appendix is not intended to mete out morality. That should be entirely unnecessary. There's pretty much one rule to live and work by in that regard: If you think it pushes the boundaries of morality, for goodness' sake, don't do it. That's as much as you need from me on right and wrong.

What you do need is a feel for the tripwires. Some are obvious, some are not. Most will only be set by law when they are brought to the courts dressed up in suits. If you've been in business for more than a few years, you've come to learn that right or wrong, lawsuits are a drain on all resources: financial, temporal, and emotional.

The best approach is to know enough about the law to know when to bring in an attorney. If you let a wound fester long enough, it can reach the point of amputation. If you ignore a legal issue long enough, it can put you out of business.

There are a couple of twists to the world of online advertising that need special attention. The first is privacy. While we are just starting to come to terms with database marketing, those databases are now accessible. The second is jurisdiction. If ever there were a medium that could cross borders, the Internet is it.

Before delving into those, it's worth a moment to review the laws that don't change much. All of the laws of the land apply to the Net. The rules for advertising in print and on the air still have meaning on the wire. You're not permitted to advertise medical products or drugs that have not been approved by the FDA—period. It doesn't matter if it's TV, radio, blimps, or handbills. If you're in the medical field, you know how strict the FDA can be. When Claratin put up the Allergy Relief Site, the FDA made them take it down until they changed the name to the Allergy Symptom Relief Site.

For the rest of us, the rules of advertising apply and the Federal Trade Commission is the judge. ■

Traditional Advertising Issues

Don't lie, cheat, or steal. Sounds straightforward, but there are those who feel the best way to describe their products is simply a matter of taste and style. The government doesn't agree. In the eyes of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), it's a matter of being able to substantiate your claims, a matter of not deceiving your prospects, and a matter of fairness.

Ad Substantiation

You just said your new fountain pen can write underwater—even in whip cream. You just said your house coating is ten times thicker than paint. You just claimed that your airline has the best on-time record in the industry. Can you back that up? Can you prove it? Have you got the test results handy?

The FTC Policy Statement Regarding Advertising Substantiation Program from August 2, 1984 (**www.webcom.com/~lewrose/adsubpol.html**) reads in part:

> *[There is a] legal requirement pursuant to section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act that advertisers and ad agencies have a reasonable basis for their objective claims before their initial dissemination.*
>
> *Many ads contain express or implied statements regarding the amount of support the advertiser has for the product claim. When the substantiation claim is express (e.g., 'tests prove,' 'doctors recommend,' and 'studies show'), the Commission expects the firm to have at least the advertised level of substantiation. Of course, an ad may imply more substantiation than it expressly claims or may imply to consumers that the firm has a certain type of support; in such cases, the advertiser must possess the amount and type of substantiation the ad actually communicates to consumers.*
>
> *Absent an express or implied reference to a certain level of support, and absent other evidence indicating what consumer expectations would be, the Commission assumes that consumers expect a 'reasonable basis' for claims.*

If you promote your products anywhere by claiming that four out of five doctors recommend rubbing it on your toes after each meal, that's fine—as long as you can prove that you interviewed enough doctors and they did, indeed, make such a recommendation. If you don't make a claim with proof, but just make a claim, that's fine. As long as the claim can be considered reasonable. "Will keep you alive and well underwater for days," is a little tough to swallow without some kind of clinical tests to back it up. "These four strong legs will ensure your table stays where you put it," doesn't really require a battery of tests. We expect things to generally stay where we put them and since the matter of strength is not comparative (stronger than what?), there's nothing to substantiate.

Deception

The FTC Deception Policy Statement, from October 14, 1983 (**www.webcom.com/~lewrose/deceptionpol.html**) says in part:

> Certain elements undergird all deception cases. First, there must be a representation, omission or practice that is likely to mislead the consumer. Practices that have been found misleading or deceptive in specific cases include false oral or written representations, misleading price claims, sales of hazardous or systematically defective products or services without adequate disclosures, failure to disclose information regarding pyramid sales, use of bait and switch techniques, failure to perform promised services, and failure to meet warranty obligations.

Sounds like a nervous shopper's nightmare. Makes you want never to buy a used car again. These are the problems people run into when they have a shoddy product to start with. This sort of malfeasance is perpetrated by those who operate under more pressure than their integrity or common sense can bear. Try this stuff on the Internet and the phrase, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive," takes on a whole new meaning.

Unfairness

"That's not fair!" If you have children, you know that phrase very well. The Supreme Court knew that there was no way to properly define unfair business practices in a meaningful way that would stand the test of time. Instead, they put their trust in the courts to keep up-to-date.

Federal Trade Commission Unfairness Policy Statement, December 17, 1980:

> By 1964 enough cases had been decided to enable the Commission to identify three factors that it considered when applying the prohibition against consumer unfairness. These were: (1) whether the practice injures consumers; (2) whether it violates established public policy; (3) whether it is unethical or unscrupulous.

Injury Did the ad cause you to buy something unwanted or defective, or harm you by leaving off some important bit of information? Billboards for cigarettes in London loudly proclaim, "Smoking Kills." It's a little more in-your-face than the quiet Surgeon General's statement in American advertisements. The first test is that the injury be of substance. You see an ad that injures your sense of style? Upsets your delicate sensibilities? Ruffles your predisposition toward the socially acceptable? Sorry, not substantial.

The second test is the "net effect" issue. If the harm done is outweighed by the good provided, the net effect is not an injury. This one is a bit squishy but stands to reason. "A seller's failure to present complex technical data on his product may lessen a consumer's ability to choose, for example," says the Unfairness Policy Statement, "but may also reduce the initial price he must pay for the article."

It's just not fair that my new laptop isn't documented well enough for me to get it to print through the nifty infrared port without spending an hour on hold waiting for tech support to explain how. On the other hand, if it were documented that well, it would cost twice as much and the manuals would take up a significant portion of my book shelf. The net effect is a non-injury.

The third test of an injury is that it "must be one which the consumer could not reasonably avoid." If you bought the broken lamp that was marked down, when there plenty of others to choose from, that's not an injury. If you were not told the lamp was broken, or if you were told that all of the others were, it would be a different story. If the media owner has a financial interest in an advertiser's success and secretly blocks other ads from being seen, then your injury as a space buyer could not be reasonably avoided and, well, that's just not fair.

Public Policy Were there any local laws or established industry practices violated by the ad? Sometimes this test is used to determine that the advertising methods were unfair, but most often it's used to help determine the validity of the supposed injury. "The Commission wishes to emphasize the importance of examining outside statutory policies and established judicial principles for assistance in helping the agency ascertain whether a particular form of conduct does in fact tend to harm consumers."

If the community has determined that the practice is unfair, then the Commission needn't waste additional time trying to prove it.

Unethical and Unscrupulous Here the Commission uses words usually brought to bear on cartoon characters or men in melodramas with black top hats and long waxed mustaches—words like immoral and oppressive.

This was added to be sure there was a way for the Commission to catch bad guys even if they squirmed around the first two issues. However, "Conduct that is truly unethical or unscrupulous will almost always injure consumers or violate public policy as well. The Commission has therefore never relied on the third element...an independent basis for finding of unfairness, and it will act on the basis of the first two."

Who knows, maybe the Internet will provide the unique circumstances necessary for the Commission to change its tune on this one.

Trademark and Copyright

The church was up in arms when the printing press made it possible to easily make multiple copies of a document or a book. They were afraid they would lose control over the dissemination of thought and the total rule of government. They were right.

The literary world was up in arms when the copy machine made it possible to easily make multiple copies of a document or a book. They were afraid they would lose control over the financial return on their efforts. The impact has not been significant.

The music industry was up in arms when the tape recorder/cassette recorder/digital recorder made it possible to easily make multiple copies of a piece of music. They were sure they would lose control over their ability to profit from copyrights. They had a bit more to worry about.

Today, they are all afraid of the Internet. Ideas can spread far and wide. A book can be posted to a newsgroup and downloaded by the thousands. A music sample can be put up on a Web site for all to hear.

But the law hasn't changed. It's still illegal to profit from somebody else's creation without permission. It's just that it's so much easier than before. In fact, instantly making copies of things on the Net is how the whole thing works.

Copies by Necessity When you come to my Web site, you're not logged onto my computer. You're not "at" my computer. Instead, you made a request for a page. My server sent you that page, your computer stored it in your cache file, and displayed it on your screen. You can hang up the phone, pull the modem out of your computer, and be completely disconnected from my machine, and you're still looking at my home page. You made an electronic copy. And we won't even get into the issue of proxy servers that keep the copy for showing to other people.

The issue here is, what are you going to do with it? There's no problem if I check out the United Airlines home page and view their corporate logo. But if I "Save Image As..." and decide to put it up on my Web site as if they're endorsing my company, we have a problem.

Covering Your Assets Trademarks and copyrights revolve around ownership and ownership revolves around protection. You are not permitted to call your tissues Kleenex or your copier a Xerox. These are not generic terms. Yes, they're used in modern day vernacular, but they are the respective properties of their owners. To satisfy the courts, owners must exhibit an active program of protecting their possessions.

If somebody calls their tissues Kleenex and Kimberly-Clark doesn't go after them, the courts figure Kimberly-Clark doesn't care. Once enough people have used the term, it is considered to be part of everyday speech and, bingo, no more ownership. The owner let their proprietorship lapse.

Fair Use The fair use doctrine covers the use of others' materials for the purposes of education. This book is filled with pictures of Web sites. Because this book is intended as an educational tool and I'm showing these sites for the purposes of example or criticism, it's okay. If I were to create a coffee table book of all the nifty sites out there and offered no critique, I could expect to hear from some lawyers. Half would be there defending their clients' copyrights and half would be there arguing that their clients deserved a share of the profits.

In May, 1997, the Council on Fair Use adjourned for the year having agreed to disagree. A conclave of software developers, musicians, book publishers, academics, and video producers, this gathering conceded a lack of consensus. Even so, fourteen academic groups like the

American Council on Education, the American Library Association, and the National Humanities Alliance issued a statement opposing the proposals that the Council on Fair Use did publish. The digital world has made the issues a bit fuzzy.

There are a number of companies, however, that are looking at providing a technical solution to digital ownership: the digital watermark. This is a string of bits that would become part of the picture or the music that would be ingrained in the file like DNA. (There's a good paper on digital watermarks by Hal Berghel, University of Arkansas and Lawrence O'Gorman, Bell Laboratories at **www.acm.org/~hlb/publications/dig_wtr/dig_watr.html**.) Once fingerprinted, a daily search of the Web for that particular string of DNA would provide the first level of proof that you were trying to protect your mark. The next level is going after the perpetrators.

All in all, you still own the rights to your creations. It's still a crime for somebody to copy your work and use it as their own. It's just that it's so much easier to do.

Contests

Contests and sweepstakes are a big draw in the world of advertising. They're a big draw all by themselves. I freely admit to buying a lottery ticket or two when the jackpot climbs above $20 million. A million dollars a year for a buck? Go ahead and laugh, but I'll be writing my next book from my own little island in the Bahamas. Move over, James Martin.

But the rules and regulations about gaming are many and varied and can get you into a lot of hot water very quickly if you don't pay strict attention. The best place to start is with a definition of the one game that will get you into trouble the fastest.

A *lottery* is a contest that awards a prize, is determined by chance, and requires a player to pay something of value to participate. Operating a lottery is also illegal, except by certain states like California and Florida.

If it requires any kind of skill, like writing an essay or submitting a photograph for judging, it's not a lottery. If it can be played for free (no purchase required), it's not a lottery. If you eliminate the element of chance, it's not a lottery. That is, if it requires some skill to win. It is amusing, however, to see how close to the line contests in Canada come. Their idea of skill is, "Answer the following question: 7+3-6 = ?"

Be sure to make it clear who is permitted to participate in your contest. "Only open to residents of California." A simple "Void Where Prohibited" should keep you out of trouble. But remember, we live in changing times. The state of Florida figures that Internet access is a cost of entry for your "free" contest and they may, therefore, consider it a lottery.

One of the best introductions to the legalities of contests in general was written by Margo Block, Esquire, and can be found at the Arent Fox Web site (**www.calivin.arentfox.com/features/sweepstakes/articles/sweep.html**).

Unique to the Internet

There are some issues that are being decided as we surf. They are open for interpretation and are food for thought. The legality of unsolicited e-mail is being tested in our courts. The issues surrounding privacy are exaggerated online and are causing a great deal of discussion. The biggest conundrum of all, however, may be the puzzle of jurisdiction. Let's take the easy one first.

Unsolicited E-Mail

Love it or hate it, sending e-mail to a mass list of people who did not specifically sign up for it is bad marketing. But is it illegal?

That question seems to rest solely in the hands of Sanford Wallace of Cyber Promotions, Inc. Wallace is the self-proclaimed Spam King and makes a living helping others send out unsolicited e-mail. To the tune of four million each day.

He has been sued by America Online. He has been sued by CompuServe. He had been sued by Web Systems, a Web site developer in Houston, Texas. AOL and CompuServe wanted him to stop sending mail to their customers. They settled. Web Systems has a different gripe.

Web Systems was getting an avalanche of e-mail from people all around the Net complaining about the spam they received, seemingly from Web Systems. Web Systems didn't do it. Web Systems points to the King of Spam and says he was using Web Systems as a spurious return address. Cyber Promotions sent out hundreds of thousands of e-mails and made it look like they all came from Web Systems.

Why? Because anybody who spams can expect an avalanche of angry e-mail. So, in an effort to stay in business and not have their servers inundated with hate mail, Cyber Promotions and their ilk forged the return address. How often do you try to reply to a message that offers to remove you from their list, only to have your request bounce back as a non-address?

If the return address really belongs to another company, we start dealing with issues of copyright as well. It'll get very interesting before it's over. And it's only just begun.

Frank Murkowski, a Republican Congressman from Alabama, has proposed the Unsolicited Electronic Mail Choice Act of 1997. It would require spammers to identify their spams by putting "ad" or "advertisement" as the first word in the subject line. That way, e-mail programs could filter them all to the trash basket.

A nice idea, but not a solution. When I'm in a hotel in Hong Kong and being charged two US dollars per minute for using the phone, I don't want to wait for ten minutes while spammers fill my hard drive with trash.

If there is any legislation that comes out of it, I'm hoping it's not a restriction on what one is allowed to send, but on the necessity of signing your work. That way, if I get spammed, I can simply ask 10,000 of my closest friends to send the offending company an e-mail with a copy of the operating system attached.

Privacy

The copyright problem on the Internet is that it's so easy to make copies. The privacy problem on the Internet is that it's so easy to collect and access information.

When you consider the amount of information there is out there about you, it's, well, more than you can remember. Do you recall how many speeding tickets you got in the past seven years? The DMV knows. How about the number of times your mortgage check got to the bank a day late? (Hey, I forgot it was Memorial Day and the Post Office was closed!) The bank remembers. Your affinity card at the grocery store means they know every item you bought and when. American Express knows how much you spend on airline tickets. City Hall knows if you bought or sold a business.

This doesn't really become an issue if each of those entities keeps it to themselves. But now, it's so easy for different organizations to share information that your whole life story is bobbing around out there on the sea of consumer database marketing.

On the one hand, I'm all for data sharing. When I have to fill out a medical history questionnaire, I always have to scratch my head. Did I have the eye operation when I was four or five years old? Was I a freshman or a sophomore when I had mononucleosis? Why can't they just access that great big database in the sky and be done with it?

The problem comes when people know too much about you. Just ask the expectant mother a week after she's found out she's an expectant mother. The mail box fills with offers for diaper services and pregnancy-exercise video tapes. The phone rings with people selling all flavors of insurance, investments, and nutritional supplements.

In June, 1997, Lexis-Nexis joined seven other large personal information companies and announced an agreement to voluntarily limit the privacy intrusions their services could cause. Too little, too late says the Electronic Privacy Information Center. Marc Rotenburg, EPIC's director, says the law simply has not kept up with the changing times. "We are selling information today that ten years ago would not be bought and sold," he told a Senate hearing on the subject on June 26, 1996.

At the Privacy & American Business National Conference in October, 1996, FTC Commissioner Christine Varney wondered about the hundreds of other companies that collect and sell personal information. How would we get them to sign the self-limitation agreement? And, as the technology becomes more widely used, how do you get each company in the U.S. to agree to the limits of their personal data collection and dissemination over the Internet? "In short," said Varney, "the time has come for us to consider whether the existing arrangement properly balances individual personal privacy values with competing information flow benefits."

The FTC has to decide if rules and regulations are in order, or if the efforts of organizations such as TRUSTe (**www.truste.org**) will be enough. TRUSTe is asking Web sites to voluntarily label the level of care they take with information about visitors. Will the Web site simply not record the information? Will it keep the information strictly confidential? Will it share the information with third-party marketers? Can the Internet police itself, or is Big Brother required to step in and control potential privacy infringements by a burgeoning host of little brothers?

In the meantime, the Consumer Internet Privacy Protection Act of 1997 is bouncing around the halls of Congress. This bill is intended to prevent the disclosure of personal information without prior written approval. It would provide the subscriber of an interactive computer service the ability to review and correct information about themselves. It would require the sellers of the private information to tell subscribers to whom the information was being sold.

This bill is pretty narrowly focused. It offers up guidelines and remedies for access providers: ISPs. Presumably, ISPs are the only ones on the Internet who know—who really know—if you're a dog. You could describe yourself as just about anything you wanted to the rest of the world, but your ISP knows where you live. Your ISP knows when you log on and assigns the temporary IP address to you each time. That means they know where you surf.

"Oh look, there goes Jim Sterne again, reading the Advertising Age site and Interactive-Week.com. Pretty boring."

"Yeah, maybe, but we got calls just yesterday from Marketing Books Of The World and the Global Database Of Advertising Executives. They both wanted to get the postal addresses of everybody who showed an interest in Internet marketing information. What's our policy on that?"

"Well, that sort of depends on our cash-flow situation."

The issues are many and tend toward the philosophical. Are cookies the greatest thing since baked bread or are they a tool of the devil and should not be foisted off onto unsuspecting users of the Internet?

In June, 1997, the Open Profiling Standard (OPS) was put forward by a co-op that included Netscape, VeriSign, and Firefly. The OPS would let surfers prepare a Personal Profile containing the frequently asked consumer questions:

Name
Address
Phone number
ZIP code
Age
Marital status
Interests
Hobbies
User ID and password

This profile could then be given out at the touch of a button. That keeps the user in control, it keeps the marketing world mollified, and it even keeps the FTC happy. Christine Varney was quoted in the press release (**www11.netscape.com/newsref/pr/newsrelease411.html**) as saying "OPS brings us one step closer to market-based solutions for privacy protection." We'll see.

The proper answer lies in self-determination. Individuals should have the right to participate in Web activities that collect and store and analyze information about them. If the payback is high enough, enough people will participate to make the venture worthwhile. If they don't feel they are getting value for the information they divulge, they won't. The market can decide.

Jurisdiction

PERSONS OUTSIDE OF MINNESOTA WHO TRANSMIT INFORMATION VIA THE INTERNET KNOWING THAT INFORMATION WILL BE DISSEMINATED IN MINNESOTA ARE SUBJECT TO JURISDICTION IN MINNESOTA COURTS FOR VIOLATIONS OF STATE CRIMINAL AND CIVIL LAWS.

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Pursuant to Minnesota Statute Section 609.025 (1994)
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And all because of a dispute with Indians. American Indians. It seems that a rifle was fired from inside an Indian reservation across the boundary line at somebody outside the reservation. The intention, said the State Supreme Court, was to cause harm in the state of Minnesota. Fair enough. But what if it's not your intention to cause harm there?

In 1994, Robert and Carleen Thomas, from northern California, were extradited to Tennessee and found guilty of obscenity. They ran a bulletin board from their home that charged money to download dirty pictures. A postmaster in Tennessee was able to download a few that may have been questionable in California but were clearly beyond the scope of decency according to local community standards. Two years in jail for him, thirty months for her.

But what if the couple had run their computer from a country that had no extradition treaty with Minnesota? What if the server were 100 miles off the coast of nowhere? How do you pass laws that govern a communication network that knows no bounds? Web sites updated from the top of Mount Everest, the bottom of the ocean, and the occasional space shuttle are no longer big news. They are simply part of the Net. And the Net is not simply part of any nation on Earth.

International Incident It's not just time to get more familiar with the law of the land. It's time to get familiar with the laws of the lands.

If you choose to compare your products to those of your competitors, you are very likely to be breaking the law in Germany, France, and Belgium. Offering coupons or discounts? Special offers? Austria, Belgium, and Italy may have a legal bone to pick with you. Putting up a site offering short skirts and see-through blouses? Don't plan on visiting the Middle East very soon.

If you plan on selling products in France, better beware of the Loi Toubon. This is a 1994 law passed by the French government to preserve and protect the mother tongue. A $5,000 fine awaits those bold enough to advertise or label their products in a single language and that language is not French.

The Georgia Institute of Technology was brought up on these very charges for putting up a Web site about their school branch in France. They got off by the skin of their teeth on a

technicality, but the issue about Web sites remains open. By the time you read this, the Defense of the French Language and the Future of the French Language groups may have been successful in their appeal of the decision.

CompuServe seems to be forever in trouble in Germany for allowing customers there access to some 200 different sexually-oriented newsgroups. The talk is dirty, the pictures are dirtier, and the German courts hold CompuServe responsible as a publisher. No, the argument goes, we're not the publisher, just the printer. Tell it to Herr Judge.

Virgin Atlantic came afoul of the U.S. Department of Transportation over taxes. They weren't behind in their payments, they were behind in their disclosure. Virgin announced a special advanced purchase fare between the U.S. and the UK and advised customers to check with their travel agent or the reservation desk for availability, restrictions, charges, and taxes. By not disclosing a $38.91 per ticket tax on their Web site, Virgin found themselves on the receiving end of a $14,000 fine. Did the ad meet advertising rules and regulations in Britain? The DOT didn't care. It didn't pass muster in the U.S. and U.S. customers were seeing the ad.

Benetton Group S.p.A. ran its "H.I.V. Positive" tattoo ad in France and had to pay $32,000 because the ad was "a provocative exploitation of suffering." That was in print, but lots of companies like to put their print ads on their Web sites. Beware.

Some of these examples are found in "Internet Marketing: Practical Suggestions for International Advertising and Promotions," written by Lewis Rose and John Feldman of Arent Fox. It can be found at **www.webcom.com/lewrose/article/intl.html**. It also contains some steps to take when preparing an international campaign, such as:

> Make sure you comply with U.S. law first.
>
> Clear your ads in the key foreign markets for the brand by consulting counsel in each country.
>
> Prepare instructions for foreign counsel that includes your advertising, a cover letter about timing, fees, and correspondence, and a questionnaire asking if the ad can be run and what changes would make it acceptable.

Rose and Feldman caution that the law there may be treated differently than the law here. Here, if it's not identified as illegal, give it a try. There, if it is not identified as legal, don't try it.

In summation, there are two rules to live by. First, if you don't plan on doing business in a country that finds your ad objectionable (and you don't have any assets there), don't worry about it. Next, sprinkle your banners, bridge pages, and Web sites with disclaimers.

Disclaimers Are Your Friends

> Void Where Prohibited
>
> Must Be 21 Years Old
>
> Not Valid Outside the United States and Canada
>
> Some Restrictions Apply
>
> Your Mileage May Vary

While these phrases seem to permeate our lives, there's good reason for them. They can protect you and your company. The best protection, however, is not to be stingy with them. It's one thing to have a disclaimer on your home page, but it's far more meaningful (and protectively powerful) if that disclaimer lives on each page that make a potentially offending offer. And don't settle for a link to a common disclaimer, either. The courts may not feel the expressed intent of a linked disclaimer is sufficiently intuitive.

I am not a lawyer, nor do I play one on TV. The information here may be incomplete, out-of-date, or misleading. Always check with your own attorneys in these matters. Some restrictions apply. Your mileage may vary. ●

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