



Update

USING THE INTERNET FOR COMMUNICATIONS, MONITORING AND MARKET RESEARCH

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The INTERNET is an excellent, low cost and efficient means of communicating over long distances and many of its features can also be used for marketing goods and services and information through Home Pages. The INTERNET is also a huge storehouse of information that can easily be accessed with INTERNET applications such as GOPHER and World Wide Web SEARCH ENGINES. This article will outline some of the advantages of the INTERNET with respect to:

- Communications, or e-mail
- Marketing
- Searching the INTERNET for information.

E-mail: Using electronic mail or e-mail as it is commonly known, is an extremely cost effective method for communicating over long distance.

The amount of money saved in long distance phone calls will more than pay for the cost of a single INTERNET connection. E-mail is also much more efficient than faxing because a document sent via e-mail can be sent either as regular text or, depending on the software used, in its original file format as a file attachment.

A fax in contrast to e-mail is simply a graphic image. A fax has to be either entered manually into a remote computer or it needs to be scanned in and converted back to text. Increased use of e-mail will eventually cause the fax machine to fade from everyday business usage due to the vast cost and time savings of using e-mail. There are now several sites on the INTERNET where information about the e-mail addresses of individuals, businesses and organizations in Canada, the United States of America and especially Ukraine can be obtained. One such site is the Ukrainian Canadian Professional and Business Federation (UCPBF) Home Page at URL: <http://soma.crl.mcmaster.ca/~kostiuk/ucpbf.html>.

Electronic mail also gives a user the opportunity to take in a wide variety of OFF-LINE discussion groups called LIST SERVERS. There are many LIST SERVERS which are dedicated to discussing

international trade and marketing as well as searching for business contacts. For example, the UCPBF operates a list server which is accessible by e-mail at:

ucpb-request@soma.crl.mcmaster.ca.

Anyone can subscribe to this list server by sending e-mail to the above address and then typing SUBSCRIBE in the subject field.

Marketing: By using simple HTML coding, organizations can transfer their documents and graphics to home pages that can be accessed by anyone in the world who uses a World Wide Web browser such as Lynx (does not support images), Mosaic, Netscape or Microsoft Explorer. Once a Home Page is ready for public viewing, the next step is to register the Home Page with several INTERNET directory and search facilities such as Yahoo or Alta Vista.

It is important that people are aware of a Home Page once it is established because registering your organization's Home Page makes it easier for people to find your organization through INTERNET search engines. The address of a Home Page can also be printed on an organization's regular correspondence, business cards and advertising in order to make its presence better known. Not only can a Home Page be used to market a particular group or organization, but it also allows other people to access various types of information that your organization chooses to have available on the page. A Home Page also operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week which makes it an extremely useful as an effective means of distributing information. Many organizations and publications are now moving away from the printed medium and are using the technology of the World Wide Web Home Page to distribute information.

Business and trade research on the Internet:

- Business LIST SERVERS. Not only are LIST SERVERS good for those users who only have e-mail, but they still can be very useful for users with full access as well. Business related LIST SERVERS are not only good places to find out information about business and trade, but often the real resources to be found are the other members of the List Server. Post a question to a list server and you may be quite amazed at the quality and quantity of results received.
- Usenet groups. There are many Usenet groups that deal with business and international trade such as: alt.business, alt.business.import-export, alt.business.misc and clari.biz.world_trade. Business and trade related areas on USENET operate on a similar manner to LIST SERVERS except that it is more structured and each individual discussion area is open to anyone who wishes to take part in them. A person using a USENET group can either make a posting to the group that can be read by the public or an E-mail message can be send privately to another user on the USENET group.
- Home pages dedicated to International trade: For those people who have access to the World Wide Web, there are a growing number of excellent sources of international trade information. Two very good Canadian Home pages related to Business are the DFAIT Home Page and the Canada Trade Show Home Page. Both of these Home Pages can be accessed through the UCPBF Home Page under the heading BUSINESS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE. The UCPBF Home Page also has links to International trade newsletters and publications.
- Using Gopher and Veronica to search cyberspace for information: GOPHER is an INTERNET application which will allow a user to search for information