Ezy-Internet ABC

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Introduction

This ebook is NOT for DUMMIES or IDIOTS.

I hope that any of them who read it will benefit from it but …

This ebook IS for people that have above-average skills in various areas, but have limited experience of the Internet.

Some friends, colleagues and people at my workshops, asked others for help and got this reaction, "**Everybody except you knows how to do that!**"

That's both untrue and insulting.

Their questions and comments led me to write the "Ezy-Internet ABC"

I am NOT a GURU or EXPERT.

I have been involved with computers and the Internet for years but am still learning.

Keep this book beside you on your Net journeys to help make the Virtual Highway a more comfortable, fun and even profitable expressway for you.

The main purpose of the book is to help you to find some good people and opportunities that can help to enhance your career and your family's way of life on the Net.

You don't need lots of money, though it shouldn't hurt. I include suggestions that will help if you're not ready, or able, to put much money into your Internet journey just yet. If you are, please click on the link to my on-line store right now, okay?

I welcome your feedback and questions related to this ebook. You can <u>email me</u> here. More resources and updated information are in my <u>free newsletter</u> at my website <u>http://www.ezy-internet.com/</u>

John Williams

About the Author

I work with computers to help people use them for business and to enhance, not replace, their lives.

I started my on-line Magic Shop on the Net a few years ago.

Then I edited a friend's autobiography, which we published as an ebook (see later). This made me realize that ebooks are a great means to distribute information, and a way that just about anyone can make some money.

I present workshops about magic, computers and other subjects and I write non-fiction.

I started this booklet with the idea of sharing some useful and interesting sites and web resources.

However, the questions from friends and people at workshops convinced me that a "Web ABC" was urgently needed.

I hope that you get what you need from this ebook.

If there are any other questions that I might help with, visit http://www.ezy-internet.com Share the information from this book with those in need, but please ask them to get their own copy from the person that kindly gave you this one. Their name and Internet site is listed at the front of this book.

Anybody Can ….

Let's start at the beginning …

The Internet is the ultimate equal opportunity!

Despite what some computer enthusiasts (geeks) and trainers may say, you don't need to know the history or all the technical aspects of the Internet before you can USE IT, any more than you need to know the mechanics of your telephone before you can make a phone call.

Despite what you children might tell you, you don't need the latest and greatest computer system and recently released accessories to get what you want off the Internet unless you **must** download large music and/or picture files, or you want to play resource-hungry multi-media on-line games.

The machine you are using now is probably all you need!

When you're shopping for a computer, I suggest you find a salesperson that asks. "What do you want to use the computer for?" rather than one that just offers their current special offer or the cheapest package.

 If you have access to the basic equipment:

A reasonably modern computer system; many people are happily reaping the benefits of Internet access, even running on-line businesses with "old" computers.

An Internet service provider (you pay them for the access to and the time that you spend on the Internet) ……………and

A modem …

You can START NOW!

It doesn't matter what age you are.

It mostly doesn't matter where you are on the planet.

Your religion, race, ethnic or other orientation isn't a major factor.

The main factor governing your progress looks back at you from your bathroom mirror every day! Decide what you want to get from your Internet experience and what effort you will put toward your goal, and then no-one can stop you!

No-one can do it all for you either. We can help or hinder, but you will succeed if you have the heart and put in the effort.

So much to see and do …

Today is the best time for you to start taming the Internet.

You will get the best results if:

Your computer has a screen that you are comfortable looking at.

You keep a record of your usage. You usually pay a regular fee for access and you'll pay more on top of that if you use more bandwidth (described roughly as the traffic that you cause to go through your Internet Service Provider's system) than the amount covered by that regular fee.

Remember that all the email you get, including the junk called spam, and all that you send will account for some of that bandwidth.

Your modem has a reasonable transfer speed;

56K is fine (mine often runs at about 30k!) If you can afford and have access to a faster connection, think seriously about it, especially if you intend to grab (download) pictures, music or other files (such as ebooks) off the Net. But it's not essential for general Internet activity.

Don't worry, we'll find plenty of things on which you can spend that money you just saved!

Here we go:

You need an Internet browser program. Most of them are suites or packages because you can also handle all your email and even construct a simple website with extra features that they offer, not just travel around the Internet and view websites.

Most are free and you probably got one of those (Internet Explorer, Mozilla or Netscape) with your computer.

You may want to use a separate program to handle your emails. I do because I started using one very early and have been very happy with it. Some are free, but you have to pay for others if you continue to use them after a trial period of up to 30 days.

You really need an anti-virus program. There's no need to fear computer viruses, trojans and other nasties but it's wise to protect your computer, and the information you store on it, against them right from the start.

Most virus protection programs will have to be paid for, though there are a couple that are free of charge. I use a commercial program because I may need their telephone support if I get another serious intrusion. I notice that some free programs only offer support by email, so you could be in real trouble if your only computer system is infected by one or more nasty and destructive intruders.

It is foolish to send any emails from a computer that you know is infected.

No anti-virus program can protect your computer 100%. Most are updated at least weekly with protection for the new nasties that the anti-virus producer is aware of.

But, a new virus might appear the day after that update was released. It takes time for the good guys to grab a sample of the virus and work out some way to:

Stop the virus getting into as many of the various types of computer systems as possible without damaging anything, and

Remove it from their clients' systems where it has already sneaked in

That's another reason that I pay the annual fee. If I need support, I'll need it as soon as possible and, if I had just one computer, then I wouldn't want to email the company if I had a virus in my machine!

I wouldn't mind paying a long distance call charge if their response was prompt, but the company I use (in Australia) has a customer service line that costs the same as a local call.

I'll recommend another purchase right here; a small notebook or folder with lots of pages and alphabetical tabs. So much for the "paperless office" idea!

I use these for recording passwords and registration details for:

The commercial software that I have

Membership sites that I use for my business

My domains (including dates when these have to be renewed)

Yes, I have some of this information on the computer, all of it in an electronic organizer, and most of it is also stored in back-up files elsewhere.

But I learned from experience that all of these may become unavailable (at home when you're at the office or even stolen!) or develop faults. That may be when you need the information right away.

Most disks and other storage devices have guarantees that only offer, at most, replacement of the device and exclude any liability for "consequential damage" (loss of your vital information, financial loss, etc).

Your $4 notebook may be as valuable as your $3,000 electronic notebook!

Connect to the Net

You need:

A computer

Browser program

Modem - a machine that converts computer data to data that is in a form that can travel through the phone line to another modem (at your Internet Service Provider). Their modem converts the phone-friendly data back to computer data. Your ISP's equipment connects to the Internet, as well as recording your connection times and the amount of data you cause to go through their system so they can charge you for it.

A telephone line that you can connect your modem to.

Optionally, an email program if you decide not to use the one that is probably built in to your browser program.

Domains and Other Important Background

The Internet consists of a huge number of inter-connected networks. Each of the thousands of computers (hosts) connected to the Internet has a unique address (IP address). These are represented by a 32 bit number (don't worry, this is not essential to remember) so it's taking a while to use all the possible numbers. For example 145.29.5.44 (I just made that one up).

Each domain name that we use is assigned to one address (this is a bit simplified);

Wiggollies.com (yes, I made it up) on 142.55.7.77 (another made up one)

All this vital information is recorded on Domain Name Servers.

Every time you type in the domain name for a site that you want to look at, a path is established (almost always).

The path goes:

From your computer

To your ISP (which checks a Domain Name Server)

To the site

… and the particular page on the site you specified appears on your screen.

That happens almost instantly all over the world, at the same time and almost always.

And you DON"T have to know how! That's why you pay the hardware suppliers, the ISP, the program suppliers and sometimes the programmers and repair technicians.

But, these vital addresses and who is authorized to use them has to be recorded and regulated. Otherwise, you might see a train-spotting site at that address now and a mountain climbing equipment company next time!

There is a responsible international body with subordinate national bodies around the world that regulate all the domains in their respective countries so we don't have to remember the IP address, but just http://www.ezymagic.com/ (that's real – it's mine!).

The system was originally set up in the United States of America where they used three-letter suffixes (com, org) and other countries added their own two-letter suffix on the domains for that country (au for Australia, for example).

You cannot assume, however, that a site that ends in .com is owned by a company in the USA, though that was probably the original intention.

Email for Everyone

This is probably one of the most used (and useful) part of the Internet - and it's also the most abused!

Your Internet Service Provider will give you at least one email address to use for email as part of your account - most will allow you more than one.

The ISP may specify that the name you use for your main email address is the nickname that you use to connect to the ISP's service. If you use the nickname, "fred14", to connect to the ISP's system, then your main email address will probably be "fred14@yourISP.com"

You can use any name (if it is not already in use by someone else that has an account with the same ISP) for the other email addresses that your ISP lets you use.

You might use these other email addresses for email on particular topics that you send and receive:

Email address for your business

Email address for close friends and relatives

Email address related to a favourite hobby or activity

But you might want to give some of those addresses to other members of your family so they can keep their personal emails to themselves. You do not have to use all of the addresses that you are allotted.

The web browser program that you use probably has all that you need to send, receive, and sort your email messages.

You need to become familiar with the email functions in your browser or your separate email program if you use one.

You can do this before you connect to your ISP.

I will give you an overview of the usual functions, but please read the instructions for the particular program that you use.

You have to type some information in to your email program or the email section of your browser;

Your nickname and password for connecting to your ISP's system.

Whether or not you want to let it collect your email automatically

Each email address (and a password for each) that you use with this ISP

When you connect to your ISP's system and start your email program, you will see indicators showing that the program identifies you to your ISP's system with your nickname and password, then it checks what messages are waiting for you.

The first time that you connect (log on) to your ISP's email server, there will probably be a message from your ISP about how to use their particular system.

You can now write a message to be sent by email. If you are using more than one email address for your own emails, you have to select which you will send each message from.

Most programs also allow you to add a "signature", called a "Sig". This is up to 5 lines that includes "Yours Sincerely" (or any other salutation that is appropriate), your name, and maybe the address of your web site. This will be attached to each email that you send provided that you have selected that signature to be used. If your program lets you use several different signatures, you will be able to select which one that you want to attach to each email that you send.

This can save you a lot of time if you send many emails on different subjects.

I do some of my messages before I even connect to the Internet because, even though I do a lot of writing, I can save quite a bit of time by writing some in advance.
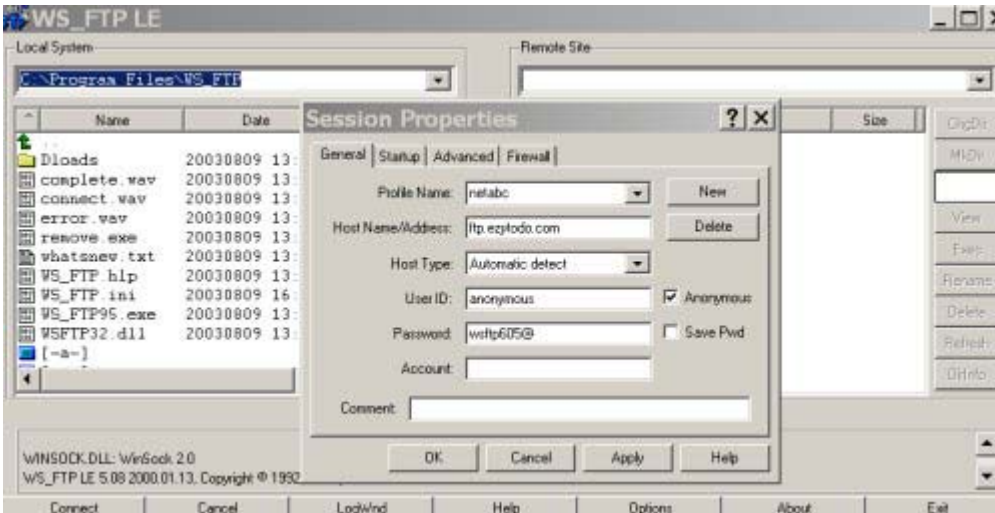
Getting and Sending Files

You should keep your anti-virus program running in the background while moving files between your computer and websites. I have put a bit more detail about this in the "Direct Downloads" section of this Chapter.

The traditional method for sending (uploading) files to Internet sites and getting (downloading) them, is by FTP (File Transfer Protocol).

We do this with ftp programs that are very simple to use. Two good programs are WS_FTP and Smart FTP.

Full instructions come with each, but I will outline the whole process, using the WS_FTP LE program for my example. You will see differences if you use a different program, but the basics are the same.

WS_FTP LE is probably one of the most well-known ftp programs. The lite (LE) version is free for students (and most others in education and US Government employ) to use. Other people can use it for non-business activities, otherwise they should consider buying its "big brother" – WS_FTP from http://www.ipswitch.com/

You need:

An FTP program to send files to internet sites and gather files from them to your computer

The exact location on your computer of either

The file that you want to upload to the website … or

The folder where you will put the file that you get from the website OR

The address where the file you want to get is located on the website …or

The folder on the website where you will send the file from your computer

The password(s) to get into (access) the folder and files on the website

You may have to obtain a username and password to access the website FTP area, or the site may permit public access to that area; you will then usually login to it as an anonymous user.

You get the information about the website and its files, folders and passwords from the owner or webmaster. If you are sending files to or getting files from your Internet Service Provider's system (server), the passwords and locations will probably have been in the "Welcome" email that you got when you opened your account. If you cannot find the information on your computer, email or phone your Internet Service Provider's support team and get it.

It's a good idea to put all the information into the program before you actually log on to the Internet, so you do not waste access time that you pay for. You can open your FTP program before you log on to the Internet through your ISP.

In later sessions, you may set the ftp program to make a connection to the Internet automatically to save time. I never do this because I prefer to start and close all Internet connections myself.

If you just open the ftp program to enter information about another site and the program starts to connect to the Internet, just cancel the connection immediately and then type in your information.

Open the FTP Program.

A "Session Properties" screen will appear. You need to type in the details of the site you want to exchange files with, including passwords and the folders where the files are that you will download, or the folders where you will put files from your computer.

Over time, you may add details of other sites that you will exchange files with by opening the "Session Properties" screen and entering the information with a different name for each site that you will exchange files with. Then you will start a session with the site by selecting the name that you gave it from the list in the "Session Properties" screen.

Each time you exchange files with one site, it is called a "session".

For my explanatory session, I will just show you how to exchange files between your computer and the space that your Internet Service Provider has given you (as part of your account) for you to use for your personal web site.

Click NEW and then enter a name for the site you are contacting (something like "MY SITE" (without the quotes) or the name of your Internet Service Provider followed by FTP will be easy for you to remember.

Put in the ftp address that your Internet Service Provider gave you, also your username and password. The spelling of all these must be 100% accurate.

It will usually work fine if you leave the Host Type as Automatic.

You can add detailed information such as the exact folder on your computer that you want to get the files from and the exact folder on their system that you will get files from or leave files in.
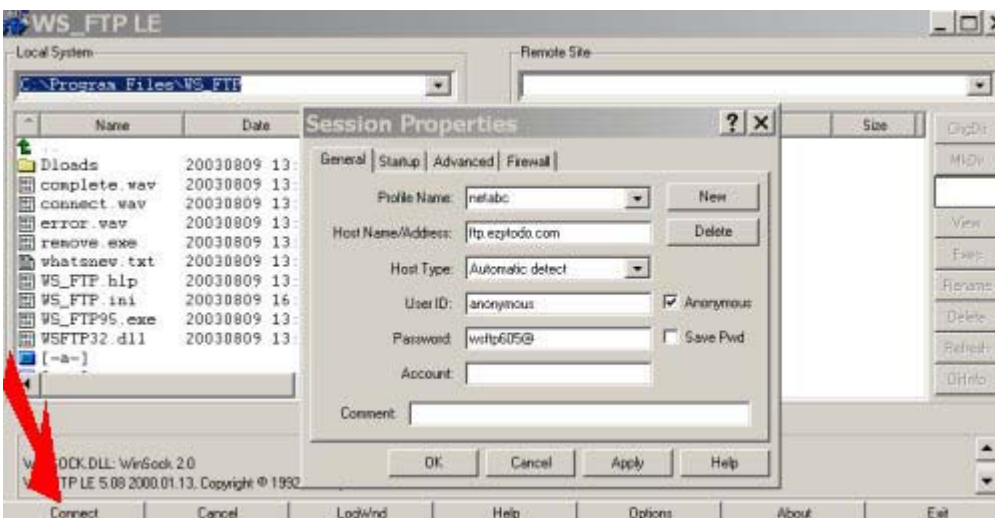
You can also make new folders on your computer from within WS_FTP LE if you want to. I suggest when you are just starting, that you just make a

"Download" folder (without the quotes) inside the folder where WS_FTP LE is located and put everything that you download in it until you get offline.

Then you should use your anti-virus program to check EVERYTHING that you download before you do anything else with it.

Click APPLY. The information that you have will be saved on to your computer.

Click the CONNECT button on the lower border of the WS_FTP LE screen,

then click OK on the SESSION PROPERTIES screen.

The program will complete the link from your computer to the site, provided the information that you put in is accurate, and you will see 2 windows, one showing the contents of a folder on your computer (usually the folder where the FTP program is located or one that you have told the program to use for storing files).

The other window will show the first level of folders on the website. You then click on the folder names to navigate to the folder where you will get or leave the file(s), just like you were navigating through the folders on your own computer.

There many options that you can set regarding the display and they will vary with each ftp program that we might use. One very useful option in this program is the white box you can see below MkDir in the menu to the right of the right window.

This is a "file mask" window. If, for instance, you are looking for a particular type of file such as a picture – maybe picture.jpg – then you can type *.jpg in the box and the only files that will be displayed in the right window will be those that are .jpg's. If you leave the "file mask" window empty, then all the files in the selected folder will show in the list.

Find the file that you will send (or get). Highlight it by clicking once with your mouse. If you want to get more than one file from that particular folder and the files that you want are next to each other in the list, you can highlight the top file, hold down the SHIFT key and highlight the last file that you want.

You will see a menu of options about the transfer or just two arrows that point in opposite directions between the folders. Either click on the Menu option that you want (send file or download file) or click your mouse on the arrow that points in the direction that you want a copy of the file to be sent between the displayed folders.

The FTP program will show a scale indicating the progress of the transfer between your computer and the website.

NOTE, you are actually creating a copy of the original file at the destination. The original file is not removed unless you specify that it be deleted. You NEVER do that unless it is your website and you own the file.

The program will indicate when the transfer has completed and show the name of the file(s) in the destination folder.

If the transfer does not succeed, then you will have a list (log) of error messages in the long narrow window at the bottom of the WS_FTP LE screen so that you (or the webmaster) can check out the problem.

This may sound a lot more complicated than it really is.

The good news is that you can get most of the files that you might want from the Internet without using FTP!

The occasions when it is usually necessary to use FTP is when you are getting files from, or delivering them to areas that are not publicly accessible:

When you add or change files on a website that you control.

When you deliver files to companies that specifically give you access to the FTP area of their site for that purpose.

Direct Downloads

When you see a file offered for download from a website, like this;

http://www.ezymagic.com/freebook.pdf (this is NOT real and this link won't work)

you can either click your mouse on the highlighted address (link) or right-click your mouse and select the "Save As" option in the menu that pops up.

With both these methods, you have to remember the folder on your computer where you specify that the file is to be copied to. The simplest way to do this is to drop them on your Desktop while you are on-line. Then, after you have disconnected from the Internet, check the file(s) with your anti-virus program before you move them to wherever on your computer you want to keep them.

Any time you do not take this precaution, you could end up wasting a lot of your time looking for the file(s) you downloaded and you may have to go back to the site to download them again.

And no-one needs the practice that much!

Your Own Kingdom

I'm not going to cover setting up your own domain in this ABC, though it is not as hard as you may think.

I will give you a brief outline that should be enough for you to take advantage of the website space that your ISP lets you use while you are paying for access through them.

This space is not really suitable for selling products off because the address that people use to view your site is usually something like http://www.yourISP.com/~yoursite/ (No, it's not a real web address)

This is fine for a personal site, where you tell visitors about yourself, your family, hobbies and other interests but it's not permanent and, most important, it's not uniquely yours like http://www.mysite.com.au/ would be.

Your business needs its own unique location with an address like http://www.furryfootballs.com/ (No, at least I don't think so) that you can take with you when and if you move to another hosting company.

If you want to put your own personal site on the space provided to you by your ISP, these are the steps.

Get the location, passwords, etc from your ISP. They usually have all this on their site, and often, you can download the information in PDF Acrobat format so that you can read it on your computer with the free Acrobat reader when you are not connected to the Internet.

If it is only available on web pages, then you can go to the file menu of your browser program, click "Save As" and save a copy of the pages to your computer for off-line reading. You can also print them out later, but they may not neatly fit on to the pages the way that pages in a PDF document will.

You need an editor program (some browsers have simple ones inside them) and the text and pictures that you want to use on the web page.

There are some inexpensive web editors around with good features. There are some free ones at:

http://www.webattack.com/ (they also have shareware that you have to pay to use after a trial period).

http://www.nonags.com/ (they also have shareware that you have to pay to use after a trial period)   … and

http://www.freeserifsoftware.com/

Unless you want to start to learn to make websites for your business, stick to a WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) type of editor and keep things simple.

Some editors come with sample site designs that you can adapt by adding your own text, links (web and email addresses) and pictures.

If not, or if you don't like those, you can get plenty from http://www.freesitetemplates.com/

Be careful (and courteous) by following any requirements that the designer or supplier of the template requires. This usually just means leaving a link to their site at the bottom of the site that you use.

Be sure that you have the right to use any pictures that you put on your Web pages. You can get into serious trouble if you use pictures that you do not own or do not have permission from the copyright owner to use for your Web pages. For instance, I have pictures (from my Magic shows) that have appeared in newspapers. I have permission from the editors to use them in my promotional material and books, but some specifically rule out any use of their photos on the Internet. One reason is that people can, and often do, copy photos that are on the Web and the owner of the photo could lose control of how that photo might be used.

Even photos that are in some collections of Clip Art may have restrictions that do not allow you to use them on the Web. If you want to use any clip art, and especially if the photos contain images of real people, you must read the fine print on that agreement that comes with the package or possibly face expensive legal action (or have your site closed down)!

You can, if there are some clip art photos that you would particularly like to use, email or write to the company that produced the package and ask for permission. Be specific about how you want to use it and give them the Web address (URL) of the Web site where you want to use the photo. Some may say, "No, sorry", some may say, "Yes, it will cost you $$$'s" while others could say, "That's okay if you put this line of text near the picture." I have done this a few times and have always been treated well, even by those who did not give me permission to use the photos that I wanted.

The best way is to only use photos that you have taken yourself and always ask permission of any people (that are not your immediate family) before you use them on the Internet.

Give the website design that you have chosen its own folder on your computer and make a folder inside there called "images" if you are going to put pictures on the page. This keeps everything neat and easy to find.

Read any instructions or help files that come with the editor that you use. Don't worry that you should be using the very powerful programs used by professional designers and others.

You just need a program that gives you the result you want.

Getting your pictures in a form that you can use for your website is where you might have to spend some money.

They can be scanned with a scanner and saved in jpeg format or, if you have a video camera or digital camera, you can download them to your computer. This may require an extra device. Some shops that print your photos also will offer to put them on a CD Rom for a small fee so that you can easily put them in to your computer.

Remember that you do not want very large pictures for a web page and you don't need to save them at high resolutions – 75dpi is enough.

Large, high resolution pictures mean that the web page will take longer to load into visitors' browser programs and web surfers are notoriously impatient.

I read that 20 seconds is a good **maximum** time for your web page to load or many visitors will not be waiting around!

You can get more information about web editing from http://www.boogiejack.com/ and there are some "tricks and tips" at http://www.timroot.com/

Log on to the Internet, open your FTP program, select your website from the list and navigate to the folder on your own computer where you put the page(s) that you created.

Use the program exactly the way I described previously to transfer the pages to your site on your ISP's system.

If you get a "Transfer succeeded" message, you should be able to see the page that is the result of your work in your browser program. You should really get at least a couple of hours away from your computer before you start making changes but, I know, it can be very addictive.

Good Luck.

Newsgroups, Forums

Great resources, even bigger time-absorbers

<div style="color:red">

When you discuss anything with people in Net newsgroups, forums etc, remember that they may not be the person they portray in that area.

Keep your personal information private. Take a while to check around about anyone that starts to ask questions not directly related to the subject.

There have been many viruses and other nasties developed for delivery through chat rooms etc.

</div>

Newsgroups

These are discussion lists that operate through a section of the Net called UseNet. It could be compared to communal noticeboards with notes (news, notions and nonsense, depending on the topic) from people that share a common interest in the subject that they post their views on in that particular group.

Think of a subject and there will probably be several groups that focus on different aspects of it. You could actually spend almost all of every day just reading and responding to the traffic (yes, this counts in your bandwidth!)

You may not even need special software to reach the newsgroups; some browsers have newsgroup reading functions within them.

If you do need to get software, look for Free Agent from Forte or Gravity. I have used both. My business commitments currently mean I must stay away from the Groups or I wouldn't get much else done!

Your newsreader program (or that section of your browser) will probably have a list of news servers already in it. You link to these through the program to get a list of available groups (this could take quite a while the first time).

Then you select and subscribe to the groups that cover the subjects that you are particularly interested in.

Now, you get your program to grab the headings of the messages currently available in the groups that you selected. This will take a while with groups that focus on very popular or topical subjects.

Then you just select the messages where the headings look particularly interesting and the program will bring them down to your computer.

The program will also give you the option of replying to messages and post a message to the group. Be sure to read and abide by any Etiquette files or Rules that are posted from time to time in most groups.

Chat Rooms

They are immensely popular meeting places for good and otherwise.

They range from:

Simple forums where people register with a "nickname" and some basic personal information, then enter the chat room where everyone sees a message on their screens. Each person's posts appear like entries in a film script:

Mickey: "How's the weather where you are?"

Moovystar, "Cloudy. How is it where you are?"

Not very exciting?

There are chat rooms where each person is represented by a cartoon character. These are more visually interesting but require a bit more computer power.

You select the cartoon character from the available range when you sign up to use the Chat Room.

Remember, some people give information about themselves that is no more real than the cartoon character or nickname.

Forums

These are on-line discussion groups and they cover about the same range of subjects and sub-groups as the News Groups.

As well as thousands of publicly accessible Forums, there are many that restrict access to people that demonstrate an active interest in the area that the Forum covers, or are prepared to pay a regular fee to exchange views and information with other Members of the Forum on the topic, which is often business related.

All these areas have their own rules and etiquette. Blatant advertising is frowned upon as well as disruptive behavior.

But it's common in many business related forums for people to put a small "Sig" after their name at the end of their post. The sig may be about four lines and have a link to the poster's business site or other information. Yes, it's similar to the "signatures" that many people use in the emails that they send.

Discussion Lists

These are mailing lists; each has a moderator, usually the person that started the list or someone that has "inherited" the task of coordinating the emails, and blocking posts from disruptive people.

People that share an interest in the topic of the list register, and some even contribute.

Many of these lists have related sites where the back issues of the mailings are accessible to members and there may also be other related contributions from members.

Some people operate a list (or even more than one) using software on their own computer or software that is located on their Internet Service provider's system.

There are also companies that offer free hosting and even provide the software for people to create and manage their lists. Most of these companies do not charge for this service, but get their profit from advertising that they include in every email that is distributed through their system.

Let the People …

The development of the Internet was begun by scientists and driven by the USA military establishment, who needed fast, easy, and secure ways to share news and information with their peers, and they were a group that was able to obtain sufficient funding.

Access by the general public was not part of the original plan. We should all be grateful to those far-sighted people who expanded the original plans to include us. They put the whole World at our fingertips!

Sorry, I do get carried away a bit. But it was a great gift.

Some examples that I've seen:

Ebooks - Books that are produced as computer files and then advertised, distributed and delivered on the Internet. The speed of the whole process means the information is up-to-date, readers get their books almost immediately, and the author gets feedback almost as quickly. No paper is wasted either!

Information: You can get information on whatever you want with a few clicks and most of it is free.

Business: The Internet offers any business, based almost anywhere in the World an opportunity to offer its products and services to potential customers around the World at very low cost.

Just Find It!

Search the Internet and you will find it, as well as a lot of things that you probably don't need!

Search Engines are one of the success stories of the original dot com explosion that didn't pop, but have continued to grow along with the Internet.

Most people that use the Internet to get information, use the Search Engines, such as Google and several others.

They're fast, but they don't really have all the information about the Internet – that would be impossible with current technology. There are more sites and site changes every day than they can cope with.

But most website designers recognize the value of a high listing (in the first three pages for any relevant topic) and make sure that they prepare their sites and information in a "search engine friendly" way.

The search engines are still free to use for searches. They make their money from the advertisements on their pages, the charge they make for people that want prominent entries on the Search Engine's pages, and some charge for accelerated reviewing and possible insertion in to the Search Engine for sites and other services.

You need to know what words are most likely to focus the results you get from your searches as closely as possible to your target.

Search for a popular subject like, say, American comedy legend, Bob Hope, and you'll get thousands of results almost instantly.

So, what particular aspect of Bob Hope's life and career are you most interested in?

"Bob Hope+Road" will bring entries that relate to the famous "Road" movies to prominence (plus any roads that might have been named after Bob Hope!).

But this is still very unsophisticated compared to the detail that you can include in your request.

Just go to any of the Search Engines and look for the "Advanced" section.

Where do you think that your friends get those amazing questions for trivia quizzes?

And you can also use specialized engines to search for people, cars for sale – anything that there is enough interest in to attract those advertisements that pay for your free searches.

Real and Virtual Books

Some sage pronounced that our offices would be paperless in a few years – it hasn't happened quite yet, has it?

I think it was the same fellow that said, "Newspapers and magazines will be confined to museums within a few years."

It may happen, but it will take generations. Too many people get great satisfaction from creating their own mind pictures from written words. They are accustomed to holding the "News" in their hands and wrapping the kitchen scraps in it the next day.

They watch and enjoy clever multi-media presentations and admire the technical cleverness but, even in these days of films with some actors that are digitally created and "film" that is not actually on film stock, none of it can progress until somebody writes the story.

Although the Internet and other advances in technology have brought new rivals to these traditional systems for dispensing information, they survive in some form.

One very useful innovation is the electronic book like this one that you are reading.

It's created as a single computer file by compiling text, pictures and, sometimes, even small movies with a nice picture on the front.

Readers and some traditional publishers have benefited greatly from the digital revolution. Some Internet sites offer electronic versions of classic books for free download. Others offer books on almost every subject imaginable which you can get within minutes of paying through a secure page right there on the site!

Some publishers supply their books in electronic form and others add CD rooms to some of their printed books - an easy way to add extra information, and especially pictures, that would be costly to include in a printed book, at relatively low cost.

The buyer gets their copy in a couple of minutes, usually after they pay for it, even if they are on the other side of the World from where the original file is stored on-line.

While there are many ebooks (electronic books) that are in a format which can only be read on PC Windows computers, those in Acrobat format can be read on and printed from both PC's and Macintosh computers.

You can find ebooks on almost any subject imaginable. Type an author's name, a book title, or even just a subject that you would like to find an electronic book about, into any of the search engines or directories and you'll be overwhelmed with the number of results that you get in just a few seconds.

This is partly because there is no large investment required to produce a stock of books that may never sell!

Ask the EBookWholesaler Member that supplied this ebook to you, to let you know of ebooks that they can supply covering areas that you are interested in. Their name and Internet site is listed at the front of this book.

The advantages of ebooks include:

Ease of production - Some software that will help you to produce ebooks can be obtained for free, and the most expensive cost a few hundred dollars.

Ease of delivery - We only keep one copy of the ebook on our site; every copy that we supply is produced almost immediately on the customer's own computer.

With the entire sale handled by secure software, customers can buy and receive their books at any time, wherever they are in the World and even if we are sound asleep at the time!

Ease of printing - You can print out the whole book on just about any reasonably modern printer attached to just about any current computer. And, if you wish, you can just print out those parts that are of particular interest, saving paper and ink!

Ease of corrections and updates - If corrections or other changes are needed, there is no great problem. Just one file has to be edited and supplied to the publisher, and then the corrected version can be made available within minutes to resellers all over the World.

And not one tree's worth of paper has to be trashed.

The electronic book is a great development for authors who have never finished or published their book because of the delays and high costs that are part of the traditional paper-based publishing.

If you have a book in preparation, ask your ebook supplier for information about writing ebooks. They will be able to supply you with books such as "eBook Power" by Tom Hua, owner of eBookWholesaler

By the way, eBooKWholesaler is always looking for suitable non-fiction original books that could suit their publishing program.

For more information, ask your EBW Member. Their name and Internet site is listed at the front of this book.

Spam and Other Trash

The ease of access and low operational costs associated with the Internet have also encouraged an explosion of junk mail, called 'spam' and officially termed "U.C.E." for "unsolicited commercial email".

There are many reasons for not tolerating spam including:

The sheer volume degrades the operation of the rest of the Internet

The content is often objectionable

Never click on the link in any spam that says "to remove, click here" or similar. That just confirms to the spammer that your address is genuine; you'll get MORE spam and they'll get more money when they sell your address to other spammers!

Make a Million

You might not believe it, but there are people waiting in the lobbies of London hotels almost every day who are waiting to give away their life savings to confidence men and women that use the Internet to contact them with variations of such venerable con games as the "Nigerian" scam!

There are millions to be made but only by the scammers. If it looks too good to be true, it probably is.

"Send Me A Dollar"

Thousands did and they still do! It wasn't me that made that request a few years ago. The man who did has been overwhelmed by the response from other Internet users to his cheekiness. Some were generous, many just plain gullible, but all responding to his simple, straight-forward plea to mail him a

dollar. They knew that he would not acknowledge their gift and they would get nothing tangible for it.

It's not likely to get the same response now, though some copy the idea and others try their own variations. Some reap a handsome return too.

Net Garbage

I'll not go into detail about the other low-lifes and potential dangers that do exist on the Net. This is intended as a family friendly booklet that you can, if you want, print out and leave in your living room.

Where to Go and What to Get

I will include a few well regarded sites and resources here.

World Time Clock: Put 5 clock-faces on your computer Desktop showing the current time in the five cities you select. FREE
http://www.programming.de/

Graphics software, desktop and web publishing software - FREE
http://www.freeserifsoftware.com/

Graphic Viewing Software: One of the most feature-rich programs and only $10 last time I looked (the trial doesn't expire and the program you download says "Registered to you!" http://www.irfanview.com/

Remove "Spyware"; **Ad Aware** http://www.lavasoftusa.com/ which can alert you to "spy" programs that may have been introduced to your computer system. Run this program regularly to scan your whole system.

 There is a free version and a professional version with features suitable for network use.

Another program called Spybot http://www.spybot.com/   will also remove the offending programs entirely under your control. Some of the "free" software that brought unwanted "spyware" to your computer may not work after you let Ad Aware remove the spy programs.

On-line Services

www.jimtools.com Free web tools, web pages designs, web related Forums and much more.

http://www.selfpromotion.com/ The site for promoting your web site. Many free options or pay a few dollars annually for more powerful services.

AcmeFreeware.com just freeware, no shareware

Tutorials

http://www.davesite.com/

http://www.boogiejack.com/

http://www.timroot.com/

Everything

Almost Everything You Could Want - and a lot you probably don't!

The Internet is an ever-expanding marketplace and almost limitless well of resources that can enhance your career and your family's life-style.

Because of the huge and growing number of people who interact through the Net, even those whose special interests and hobbies are very specialized can find people and sites that support their pet subjects.

If you can't find a site with the information and resources you want for your hobby, consider setting up your own!

You can do this at very low cost with a minimum of time and effort.

This could be a magnet for people that have interests similar to yours and even support a business of your own to add cream to your daily bread and jam.

Free

The most common word on the Internet is not "the" or "a" - it is "FREE"!

The persistent belief that the Internet is FREE is remarkably enduring when you look at the enormous amount of effort and equipment required to keep the Internet growing and the enormous profits that are still achieved by many companies that are associated with the Internet. The costs of providing the services we take for granted have to be paid for somewhere along the line.

But some extract more "for free" from the Net than you might ever imagine.

One gentleman travelled the World for a couple of years with all his expenses, including travel and accommodation, provided by Net surfers who responded to the pitch on his site for donations in kind.

They do get something - the traveller records their generosity and his experiences on his website. I don't know if they also get hundreds of other requests from other people who visit the site and might decide they want some free accommodation as well!

He will probably write a book in due course, or perhaps advertise for someone to do it for him.

Free, of course.

Another eBookWholesaler Publication