

SURF 'N GO

IF YOU'RE a Net regular, you may find yourself drawn to certain sites repeatedly. They are the places that you've found useful and informative. So how can you make your return trips to those sites more efficient and eliminate some of the wait? With offline browsers!

These tools let you browse through your favorite sites quickly when you're not connected to the Net. Offline browsers work like this: While you're online, you select the sites (by URL, topic, or keyword) that you want to download. Then you log off the Internet and the software automatically collects and stores the information on your computer's hard drive. When you reconnect to the Web, all the information that you have requested is waiting for you.

Another advantage of an offline browser is that it brings surfing to road warriors that may not have an Internet connection. For example, before a plane trip, you can download sites to your computer and then view the material en route to your destination.

Offline browsers minimize connect time and allow faster access to Web data. Yet, they also use a lot of hard drive disk space, especially if the downloaded sites contain sound and

video clips. Here are a few of the products that are worth testing. (A few are available for free on the Web.)

Webhacker 2.0, <http://www.ffg.com>, includes toolbars, utilities for finding and downloading pages, and search tools. This offline reader also has a directory so you can organize saved sites. It lets you

choose how much information to retrieve from each site, as well as when to update that information.

WebEx 1.01, <http://www.travsoft.com>, works from within Microsoft Internet

Be sure to visit
ASTD's Web page at
<http://www.astd.org>

The screenshot shows a website for 'TRAVELING SOFTWARE'. It features a navigation menu on the left with items like 'the company', 'the products', 'web support', 'server info', 'the press', and 'downloads'. The main content area highlights 'NEW Version 7.51' for 'LAPLINK' with the text 'One Step Remote Access to Your Desktop...'. Below that, it promotes 'WEBEX Instant Offline Web Access' with the text 'Now Available At Retail Stores!'. At the bottom, there is a banner for 'Compaq VP Named CEO of Traveling Software' and a 'WEBEX click here' button. The footer contains contact information and a copyright notice for 1994.

Explorer or Netscape Navigator. You specify the sites you want, the link levels, and the download schedule. WebEx lets you navigate within a main window or in an outline view. It comes preloaded with several sites including Yahoo! and the *Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition*. WebEx supports Java applets, image maps,

NEWBIE KNOW-HOW

Here are a few tips from *Computer Life* that will help you bond with your browser.

► **Update the screen display.** To make sure you are getting the most recent version of a page, press shift (Windows) or option (Mac) when you click the reload button. This tells Navigator to reload from the server rather than from the local cache on your hard drive.

► **Launch your favorite home page.** To start from a page other than Netscape when you launch your browser, go to general preferences from the options menu. Then, click the appearance tab, check the home page location button, and replace the Netscape Uniform Resource Locator with another URL.

► **Increase the browser's font size.** If your screen is difficult to read, you might want to change the font size. Choose select preferences from the options menu, then select fonts. Set the proportional and fixed font sizes to 14 or greater and click OK. Then select save options from the menu.

► **Organize your bookmarks.** In Netscape 2.0 and higher, you can create folders for your bookmarks. That way, you can organize sites by topic, interest, or importance. Choose bookmarks from the menu, then click just above where you want the new folder to appear. Choose insert folder from the item menu, type in a name, and click OK. Bookmarks can then be dragged and dropped into the appropriate folder.

CYBER-JARGON

► **Barney Page.** A Web page designed to capitalize on a current trend (such as Barney-bashing). "Have you seen the new O.J. Simpson Barney page?"

► **Chain Saw Consultants.** Outside experts brought in to reduce the employee headcount (leaving the top brass with clean hands).

► **Dead End Users (DEUs).** A derogatory play on "end users." Used by some technical support people to refer to the clueless masses that call with painfully obvious tech questions.

► **Designosaurs.** A species of nearly extinct designers that refuse to use computers.

► **The Golden Rolodex.** The handful of experts that are always quoted in news stories and asked to be guests on discussion shows. Example: Henry Kissinger appears to be in The Golden Rolodex under foreign policy.

► **Mouse Potato.** The online and interactive-TV generation's answer to couch potato.

(Source: *Wired* magazine)

and sound and video clips.

Freelander, <http://www.freelander.com>, is a free, advertiser-supported program. First, you select Web sites, which are automatically downloaded to your computer's hard disk. Then, you can organize data from various Web sites into one of 15 categories including computers, entertainment, and politics. Freelander also displays updated Web data as a screen saver on your PC.

NetAttaché Pro V 2.1, <http://www.tympani.com>, lets users determine whether the program downloads images, Java applets, Java script, inline plug-ins, or multimedia files. The software shows what information has changed between visits and displays new links if they are available. A filtering mechanism saves you time by highlighting new material each time you download a Web page.

Netriever 2.0 downloads selected pages and turns them into bitmapped images that can be used as either wallpaper or screensavers on your computer. It can download pages at irregular intervals during the day and after a download, you can view retrieved pages or have the software create a slide show that rotates a display of each image.

SEARCH SAVVY

Finding information on the Net can be onerous, even if you use such search engines as Excite and AltaVista. However, Amulet, based in Acton, Massachusetts, has developed a possible solution. Its Internet-based automated research service, InfoWizard, determines where to look for information and dispatches smart agents to gather that information. Then, it creates a personalized report and delivers it to the user's desktop via the Web. InfoWizard gathers information from trade publications, business reference databases, industry news sources, government databases, user forums, and Web sites. To sign up for a free trial of the product, visit <http://www.infowizard.com>.

COOL SITES

► **Center for the Study of Work Teams Web page**, <http://www.workteams.unt.edu>. This site provides information about research and education on collaborative work systems, including papers presented at the Center's conferences, student research, a bibliography of team-related books and periodicals, and training and educational opportunities. Through this Web page, you can also subscribe to TeamNet, an e-mail list dedicated to a discussion of teamwork.

► **Office Products Web site**, <http://www.officeproducts.com>. Twelve major office products manufacturers have launched this site to educate office workers about important workplace topics. Each month, the site features information on such topics as writing and communications, computers, filing, and office organization. No office products will be sold at this site, but visitors will be able to look at and compare a variety of products for specific office needs and also link to manufacturers' home pages.

Reader recommended sites

► **The Training and Development Resource center**,

Welcome to the Center for the Study of Work Teams at the University of North Texas

Center Conferences Mission Statement Center Information & Editorials

List of Links Research Projects

Products & Services Educational Resources

Private Corporate Sponsor Page Conference Proceedings

TeamNet E-mail List Add to Mailing List Work Teams Newsletter

What's New at CSWT:

- Brochure and registration for the Fourth Annual Strategies and Skills Conference for Effective Teams
- ★ New to this year's Conference: One-Day Post-Conference Workshops
- ★ Strategies and Skills Conference for Effective Teams: Conference Program
- Interested in Team Measurement & Compensation System Effectiveness? Join CSWT in a Performance Measurement and Compensation Roundtable Study! or fill out our Research Design Survey
- The TeamNet E-mail List subscription is now automated.

<http://www.tcm.com/trdev/>. This site provides HR and training job listings throughout the United States and Canada. It also offers electronic resume posting, conference listings, training products, training and development links, discussion groups, and newsgroups.

► **Facilitator Central**, <http://hsb.baylor.edu/fuller/fac/train.htm>. A site for facilitators that includes a library, a list of consultants, training resources, conferences, newsgroups, and educational resources for facilitators.

—Thanks to Barbara Rivers, a T&D reader.

SMART COOKIES

Cookies on the Web aren't sweet or cream-filled.

They are files that are put on your hard drive by another Web site. The files collect information about you and then transmit it back to that other site. For example, if you visit HotWired's site, <http://www.hotwired.com>, a cookie is sent from your browser to the site telling it about you. In Netscape 3.0 you can select from the options menu a network preference that allows you to be warned each time you visit a site that requests a cookie.

Cookie information might include what type of browser or computer you are using, or it may include personal information such as your surfing preferences or sites you visit frequently. To conceal a cookie, you can go to the Anonymizer Web page, <http://www.anonymizer.com>, and travel the Web incognito. However, the Anonymizer will prevent you from seeing and hearing some interactive content and it will bring browsing to a crawl.

(Original source: *Fast Company*)

PLUG-IN UPDATE

A new plug-in, unveiled at Comdex '96, promises to turbo-charge Web browsing. Peak Net.Jet is Java-based software for the Internet that reportedly increases browsing speeds on Web sites and accelerates real-time browsing at new sites.

The software, which is available from Peak Technologies, <http://www.peak-media.com>, can increase a modem's speed from approximately 11 percent to as high as 90 percent by preloading links within a site. While viewing a Web page, the software automatically starts to download all text and graphics of each link shown on the page. That saves time when you're ready to click to the next link.

Peak Net.Jet also has an intelligent caching system that learns from your browsing habits what sites you like the best, where you

go most often, and where you have been most recently. It then maintains those sites in the product's cache.

"This Web accelerator makes fast browsing accessible to everyone, regardless of modem speed. People will be amazed at how much time Net.Jet saves while surfing the Web—the more it's used, the quicker it becomes," says Doug Foster, president of Peak Technologies. Foster says that the time saved will vary depending on users' browsing patterns. Visitors that browse a set number of sites frequently will have better results than random surfers.

Peak Net.Jet is Windows 95 and Windows NT compatible and works with Netscape 2.0 or later and Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.0. A Mac version of the software is in the works.

ON THE ROAD...AGAIN

Santa Clara, California-based TravelNet Voyager lets travelers book air, hotel, and car reservations from their desktop or laptop computer. Corporate travelers and travel agents can use the system to automatically search negotiated rates from more than 16,000 properties.

To book a trip, a user clicks on the TravelNet icon, enters a password, and provides basic information such as preferred travel dates, departure time, and destination. The product displays room availability and cost, arranged by "best rate," on a user's computer screen. Once a hotel is selected, Voyager books the room and provides a confirmation number. The completed reservation is forwarded to a travel agency for ticketing. (Original source: Business Wire)



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