Internet

What Is The Internet?

The Internet is a worldwide connection of computers. Many including businesses, governments and universities e.t.c may own these sites. Being `on the net` means you can access all of the information on these computers from your home computer. You join the net by installing software and set-ups on your system from a certain company e.g. Tiscali and sign up to a price plan with them and then your online. To get connected to the Internet your computer needs to have a modem and then the modem has to be connected the phone through a wire. Through this piece of equipment a normal signal from the phone line is created into digital data in the modem. Modern modems can transfer data at very high rates e.g. broadband and ISDN. You also need software that will enable you to access and view other Internet sites. The World Wide Web usually does this.

FTP (File Transfer Protocol.)

This is a way of getting files of information or programs from other computers. Many freeware programs use this such as MSN messenger e.t.c. Hundreds of others sites on the net use this program. There are also up to the minute weather satellite photographs and the current NASA projects can be accessed and downloaded via the Internet once your computer.

World Wide Web (WWW.)

Users of the World Wide Web use a web browser e.g. Internet explorer e.t.c. and access a search engine such as Yahoo or Excite. The first site that appears is your home page. These pages are usually in HTML (Hyper Text Mark-up Language) format that allows links to be made to other pages throughout the world.

A WWW web site address is similar to an e-mail address except the site is filled with a lot more information. The websites are known as URL's and all addresses begin with WWW. Http:// servers are contacted in order to download data.

Search Engines.

In order to find a piece of information or subject on the Internet you can use a search engine to do this. Search engines have thousands or even millions of web pages stored n their hyperlinks. Some of the most popular search engines include www.google.com and www.yahoo.com. When you have accessed a search engine you type in a word and the engine will filter out the results with that word in the description of the site. The most popular sites usually come up at first and usually display the best information. The record at the top will be the one that fits the closest search query. You don't type in common words such as and or not into the search engines because this brings up a lot of results with the wrong information.

Bookmarks

The Internet communication software allows users to save the addresses of the WWW sites that they like to use as bookmarks. Using a bookmark saves having to remember and type in long addresses each time you want to visit a website.

Usenet

These are newsgroups formed on the Internet, where people 'talk' and send messages to each other e.g. MSN Messenger. Whatever you are interested in there is probably a newsgroup for you! If not you can set up your own!

FAQ (Frequently asked questions.)

When using the 'Net', you will come across 'Help' buttons on different sites. There is also often a FAQ button. It is often a good place to look if you are having problems. The odds are that somebody else has already had that problem.

E-Mail & E-Mail addresses.

Electronic mail is the process of sending messages directly from one computer to another. This could be between computers in the same room, building or to someone on the other side of the world. E-Mail accounts are usually free e.g. hotmail.

An E-mail address is made up of sections that identify a 'unique address' like the address of a house in the street. E-mail addresses are very easy to understand.

By Will Bush