



Keeping Abreast of Internet Trends

Jonathon Cummings, Marketing Director, IoD

11th May

Breakout Session Notes

Jonathon introduced himself and explained his role at the IOI, each attendee also introduced themselves and explained their particular interest in the Internet.

Jonathon mentioned that in an earlier session with a group of information professionals hardly any of them actually used the internet for research and mainly used web enabled fee based services.

Jonathon presented a set of powerpoint slides, the first of which referred to the Speed of Internet development showing some statistics:-

1969 there were only 4 networked computers
By 1980 there were 1000
By 2001 there were 110 Million
As at today no one knows the actual number

In 1979 there were 3 newsgroups, by 1994 there were 11,000

In 1993 there were 133 web sites
By 1994 there were 2,500
By December 1994 there were 10,000 sites the increase attributed to the release by Tim Berners Lee of HTML, by 2001 there were around 28 Million sites on the internet

We then looked at the chessboard model to represent Moores law of multiplication showing how a grain of rice placed on one square and doubling on each successive square would reach a volume after 64 squares to cover the world in a layer of rice 6 feet deep.

Moores law says that the performance of chip doubles every 2 years and so far there have been 33 doublings.

Someone said that a current mobile phone has the same amount of technology as was used to drive the first moon landing.

Moore's law also operates in the telecoms bandwidth area with 26 doublings and in the wireless industry with 42 doublings.

A further slide discussed problems with the web and the expectation that all on the net is free. There is a huge amount of information out there which is incorrect or misleading and there exists an invisible web estimated at over 500 times the size of the visible web, the invisible web means all those documents we create which are not for public consumption etc.

We discussed which search engines were most used with Google at around 47.3% Yahoo taking 20.9% MSN taking 13.6% and Alta Vista once a popular engine not having much use currently

There are a large number of specialist search engines which are not well publicised.

Now days all search engine technology is more or less the same so that to maintain market share engine operators are now spending cash on marketing to keep their position.

Philb.com was mentioned as a good site about search engines

A slide on Trusted Sources and how to evaluate and assess their quality generated a general discussion culminating in the following points would be used in any assessment of a source of information:-

- Purpose of the source
- Coverage
- Authority
- Reputation
- Accuracy
- Currency
- Maintenance
- Accessibility
- Presentation
- Arrangement
- Ease of use

Theo De Regibus from RM Online explained his theory of the "Closed Internet" based on the fact that in most companies everybody has unlimited access to the internet and that a large number of working hours were being used by employees on the web. This will eventually become an issue with employers who will want to limit use of the net for specific business purposes only and perhaps there will emerge a technology which will allow employees to only use "authorised" sites. Full access to the net would be extended to

only a few selected employees such as information professionals. All other desktops would only have restricted access.

The Future

A question was put to all asking if anyone still worked with significant hardcopy resources and a unanimous NO was returned.

Working from home is becoming more popular although some in the group did not have full access to all systems from home because of security restrictions. Other considerations affecting home workers were social ones where people like to meet face to face.

We discussed Voice over IP as a fairly new technology.

The session ended.