

hands and getting rid of this potential open door to my computer. You can read the article and get a replacement browser here:  
<http://software.newsforge.com/software/04/07/01/123233.shtml?tid=78&tid=82&tid=90> I just hope it doesn't all end in tears!

### Full circle?

I may be missing the point here, but AT&T are marketing a service that sends phone calls over the internet  
<http://www.technewsworld.com/story/news/34901.html> . It's probably something to do with the US system of privatised telephone networks as discussed in this follow-up article:  
<http://www.technewsworld.com/story/34574.html> .

### MSN Search revamp

Microsoft has announced the public preview of its search engine, designed to take on the likes of Google and Yahoo! There is a very full article about it at the following link:  
<http://searchenginewatch.com/searchday/article.php/3376041> , which describes the changes and where Microsoft sees the development leading. At this stage, all that is happening is that MSN Search is getting a cleaner look with the more weighty changes taking 5 to 10 years to develop.

### The UK, the US and Australia to fight unwanted spam e-mail

It was reported on the ITV news website that agents from the three countries will work together to track down rogue e-mail marketers who send their messages across national borders to avoid prosecution. The agreement means agencies in the three countries will share information and work together to investigate and prosecute these irritating people who send out billions of dubious pitches each day. Unfortunately, the first meeting is only scheduled for October, so I will have to keep adding to my Blocked Senders list – I wonder how long it is now?

### Directgov

Further to my last report about Directgov, the Office of the eEnvoy has carried out a user survey that indicates they have produced an easily used website:  
[http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/news/2004/040428\\_digital.asp](http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/news/2004/040428_digital.asp) . Their efforts are to be applauded as it is now very much easier to find that elusive official information. The site is also to be made available on digital television, bringing it within the reach of nearly ten million households.

This is to be my final column for UKOLUG, and I would like to express my gratitude to Peter for giving me the opportunity to practice newsgathering and editorial skills in a most supportive environment. I hope someone will step forward to keep the column going and I wish them every success.

## Intranets and Content Management

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### How many intranets are there?

At the Internet World exhibition in June I was struck by the number of low-cost CMS products, with server license fees in the range £15000 -£40000. The vendors are all keen to target the intranet market, especially in smaller organisations and in the public/not-for-profit sector where they felt there was more growth than the web market. This started me thinking about just how many intranets there are in the UK.

Each year National Statistics carries out an E-commerce survey among some 12,000 businesses in the UK. National Statistics have had very considerable definitional issues with this survey, and so it is classified as 'experimental', meaning that the results should be used with some care. The 2002 E-commerce Enquiry to Business results were published in late 2003 and are the most recent available. Among the questions asked were whether the business had an intranet. This is of course where there is an immediate definitional issue, as many larger companies have multiple intranets. One of my clients is certain that they have 350, and suspect there may be twice that number!

By taking the percentage adoption and the number of companies per band I came up with a figure of 150,000 intranets in a total of 1.6 million businesses, roughly 9%. Of course this varies widely with the size of the business. For businesses with more than 1000 employees the adoption level is around 80%. The survey excludes the public sector, education and other not-for-profit organisations, so perhaps in 2002 there might have been 200,000 overall. I doubt that the growth in new intranets has been high so I'll take the 200,000 as a conservative figure for the UK.

I have not been able to find comparable data for the US but there is another UK survey, Business in the Information Age – International Benchmarking Study 2003. This study has been carried out by the Department of Trade and Industry since 1997 as a means of showing how advanced the UK is as an e-

business nation. I will admit to a degree of interest in this survey as I wrote the report for 2000. The survey covers eleven countries, with 3000 businesses surveyed in the UK and 500 in the other countries.

However the numbers do not make sense. The country with the highest intranet penetration is reported to be Canada with 58% of businesses having an intranet. The UK figure is reported at 52% (compared to 9% from the National Statistics survey) and the USA figure is 48%. According to the DTI survey the top three uses for intranets in the UK are knowledge-sharing, business helpdesks and personal diaries, which I also find very difficult to accept.

### **Sharing ideas and good practice – a role for UKeIG?**

Despite the number of intranets in the UK there is still no defined forum for the exchange of ideas and good practice. If you assume for a moment that of the 200,000 intranets only 5% have a full time intranet manager that means there are 10,000 intranet managers in the UK, which is around half the membership of CILIP. Even be really conservative and take a 2% level and you still come up with 4000, or twice the membership of the IIS. Certainly there are a few conferences on intranets, but not that many. Perhaps eight a year in the UK based on the brochures I have for 2003. I've remarked on a number of occasions that intranet managers are very lonely people because of the lack of any formal, or even informal, networking opportunities.

Of course one of the reasons usually given is that there is a huge concern about giving away confidential information. But detailed screen shots are not required to have discussions about job descriptions, views on content management software, how to get support from senior managers, and ideas for marketing an intranet. One of the features of the Intranets conferences in the USA are the evening sessions (there is absolutely nothing else to do in Santa Clara than count the Cisco offices to get to sleep!) when delegates have a chance to ask questions of a panel of intranet managers, and also to show some selected screen shots of their intranets. It all works out very well, and there is an acceptance that any commercial information that may be imparted does not leave the conference room.

Now that UKOLUG is proposing to change its name to the UK Electronic Information Group (UKeIG) perhaps one avenue of expansion might be to see if we can provide a home to the intranet community in

the UK. I think there might be a lot of potential, but given my line of business I would!

## **Reference Management**

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### **Software update**

Endnote 8 has now been launched with upgrades to: New Unicode support – this development makes working with multi-lingual text, maths symbols or other technical characters easier for Endnote to cope with. This feature has been missing from earlier versions of Endnote. It does mean that you don't have to limit the content of the reference database to English or Western European languages alone.

Increased storage capacity for larger records and libraries is now available in version 8. If you use handheld machines, Endnote has increased the capacity to work with Palm@OS handhelds. However, if you tend to work with others who have earlier versions of Endnote then version 8 is not for you. In order to support the Unicode feature, version 8 is unable to work with lower versions of the software. So beware!

### **Linking to the full text**

To help researchers locate full text to bibliographic references retrieved, many information services and providers support OpenURL Resolvers. Indeed, Endnote has a OpenURL link feature built in. Open URL effectively checks the server details of the host institution to identify if the full text is available to the user or to point them in the direction of the full text – maybe to a library catalogue for instance. This is beginning to merge the function of reference management and link resolution for researchers. A useful article on this development can be found at <http://curtis.med.yale.edu/dchud/writings/blm.html>

To take the architecture further there is the Bison-Futé model, a conceptual generalization of the OpenURL framework which aims to extend the scope of open and context-sensitive linking beyond web-based scholarly information by suggesting directions and guidelines as to how the current OpenURL specifications could be extended to become applicable beyond the scholarly information environment.

Further details at <http://www.dlib.org/dlib/july01/vandesompel/07vandesompel.html>