after hours: *on line*

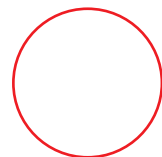**Terry Pinnell this month tunes his PC to a radio programme, checks out a state-of-the-art Web site and still has time for a Pink Floyd album**

In the Pink

Pink Floyd fans, look no further. Here's a site that's generous with information, pictures, lyrics and other links. You can view the cover, the song lyrics and read notes on the production for most of the albums. There's animation, a photo gallery, and, naturally, every Pink Floyd release to date is listed.
/www.mtnlake.com/~robp/floyd1.html

Cyrano

The best known modern-day version of the romantic Cyrano de

Bergerac story was 'Roxanne', starring Steve Martin, and you may recall that the film included a certain amount of love-letter drafting. By contrast, this site offers to write 'breaking up' letters for you. Based on a simple form that you complete, Cyrano will do the rest. State-of-the art expert intelligence it's not. HAL of 2001 has nothing to fear. Nor will the eloquence of its writing win any prizes. But it does offer a few minutes of lightweight fun and could even help you learn how to handle forms with HTML.

If your Web browser has the Shockwave Plug-in, note also the animated floating hearts at the top of the card.
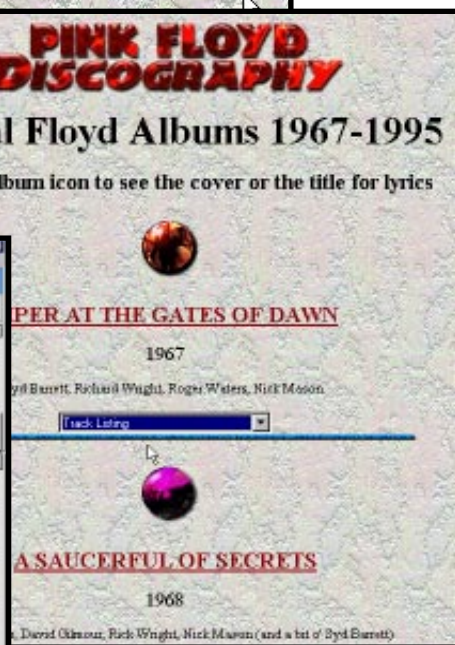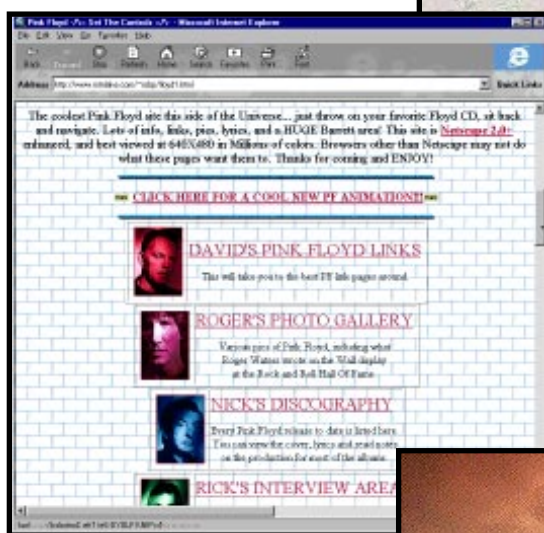www.nando.net/toys/cyrano.html
www.macromedia.com/Tools/Shockwave/sdc/Plugin/

New Age

While the numbers of our readers belonging to the UFO, Pagan, Occult, or Alternative Spirituality communities might be on the low side, 'New Agers' are probably more numerous. Webworks New Age has the declared aim of linking all these communities to share ideas, products and services. It's aimed at 'the open minded', and features articles, interviews, events calendar, poetry, essays and alternative product reviews. An e-zine, it calls itself a cyberzine, but I bet you'll find neither in your paper-based dictionary just yet.
www.newageinfo.com/   ▶

Steps to getting started

1 Install a fast modem on your PC (ideally 28,800bps).
2 For full Internet access, open an account with one of the many Internet Service Providers, within local call range.
3 If you can afford the extra cost, extend your scope by opening another account with a general on-line service provider, within local call range. You may be able to combine **2** and **3** with a single provider, but separate services generally provide better performance.
4 Install software for browsing the Web and using other Net and on-line services, plus off-line utilities.
5 Several 'Internet connectivity kits' are available which package the above elements into one bundle.
6 Revise your phone budget and possibly your sleeping habits.

Glossary
popular gobbledegook

FTP	File Transfer Protocol; an 'FTP site' is a source for downloading files.
HTML	Hypertext Mark-up Language; for making Web pages.
IRC	Inter Relay Chat; using the Net like a CB radio.
IP	Internet Protocol; an addressing system.
ISP	Internet Service Provider; sometimes confusingly abbreviated to IP.
JPEG	Joint Photographic Experts Group; popular graphics file format (JPG).
PPP	Point-to-Point Protocol; communications program.
SLIP	Serial Line Internet Protocol; another program for communications.
UUE	UUEncoded files used with Internet News Groups.
URL	Uniform Resource Locator; Web addressing system.
Winsock	Windows Socket; standard interface between applications (like Netscape) and networking protocols (like PPP).

Contacts
Major on-line services and/or Internet Service Providers:
Pipex: 01223 250100
CompuServe: 080 289378
CIX: 018 296 9666
Microsoft: 080 75080
AOL: 080 376 5432
UK Online: 01749 333300
Demon: 018 371 1234
Pinnacle: 01293 61368
Direct Connection: 018 297 2200
BT: 0345 776666
Cityscape: 01223 566950
Global Internet: 018 957 1003

Euro 96

I know it was all over months ago, but if you haven't been there yet it's still worth taking a look at this impressive site while it's still available. If you're likely to be planning or developing your own organisation's site and you want to be in the vanguard of technology, then you could do a lot worse than consider Euro 96 as a model. The official UEFA Euro '96 home page, it comes flowing into your PC accompanied by Simply Red's 'We're In This Together,' complete with scrolling marquee, bouncing football and a perfectly mowed soccer pitch. One click from the top level takes you to the organisation page, and one more starts a PowerPoint animation showing how all the elements were integrated. You'll need Microsoft's MSPower-Point Animation Player for ActiveX to see the action, but you can download the latest version of that from the Euro 96 site too.

Apart from basic news and numbers, the site offers lots of other links, such as those from its Fans Forum page. If you were using a beta of Microsoft's Internet Explorer 3.0 browser at the time, then you could view the live 'ticker' or marquee scrolling along the bottom of the screen, displaying the latest events and real-time match scores, no matter where you were in the site.
www.euro96.com/
www.euro96.com/_vti_bin/shtml.exe/comhome.htm/map

Cyberville Radio

Here's another pace-setting site using lots of the latest technical tools. Its main claim to fame is that it simulates a chat-and-music radio programme. OK, you already have a radio, and I'm not suggesting your PC can replace it. But Cyberville Radio scores highly for sheer novelty – it's one of the first with anything approaching 'real' time radio. To listen to the programmes you need to download the TrueSpeech Audio Player, about 1.6 Mb, and then you'll be able to click on the buttons on the main page to hear the programmes. Don't throw away your hi-fi yet, though. The quality from Cyberville is not bad, but is a bit woolly due to the combination of low sampling rate and the 15 to 1 data compression. Without that, the sound files would be far too large to be playable in real time. Microsoft's new audio streaming system based on ActiveX offers potential for higher quality fairly soon. Although the programmes are recorded, they're typically uploaded to the Net around 5pm UK time on the same day, so they do seem topical.

The idea is that, from the selection offered, you start your chosen 'show' as Cyberville calls them, and then carry on surfing while you listen. You can also send Cyberville your own WAV files and get them played on air – presumably after occasional censoring. Note however that this radio is not a wireless; that thin one connected to your phone socket will make a fair impact on your quarterly bill if you listen for long. But it's great fun value, and for a while at least will stay in my Favourites folder.
www.cyberville.co.uk/

Feedback welcomed:

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