Overview of Internet Explorer 4.0 – The Best of the Web, the Best of the PC

Introduction

The Internet has clearly become a necessary component of everyday life. It has developed into, for many of us, the fastest way to get the information we need to successfully perform our daily tasks. Even with the technology advances in browser technology to date, there are still a number of key issues that customers tell us we need to address:

1. **The use of different and inconsistent tools to browse the Web and use the PC.** Users tell us finding and using data on the Internet requires a different set of tools and methods than finding and using data that is stored on their computer or on a server, making the training and learnability unnecessarily difficult.
2. **Finding useful information on the Internet is too difficult.** Today, when users are interested in finding information, they have to initiate a search with the hopes that the results will be easily manageable, useful and what they are most importantly looking for. Invariably, the result users receive from the search is information overload. Overwhelmingly, users tell us that they would like a way to have the information that is pertinent to them delivered directly to their computer.
3. **Bandwidth issues limit productivity.** Users tell us that the way they use the Internet could be improved. For example, if a user has five favorite sites they want to check every day for new information, they physically have to visit each Web site with their browser to determine if anything has changed. This is magnified for users of dialup connections, who pay for an inordinate amount of connect time for reading and searching online.
4. **Web content lacks compelling presentation and ineffective use of the medium.** There is an incredible amount of hype about the Web and users' expectations are incredibly high. Many users, after they visit a few internet sites, complain that Web is not exciting, the 'cool' content is not there, it takes forever to download the Web Pages, etc. Users expect Web sites to offer the same experience and quality they experience with television and CD-ROM titles, when in fact it doesn't.
5. **Rudimentary communication capabilities.** Users tell us that communication tools on the Internet today are limited, with most not venturing beyond basic email. Even with the existing communication tools, finding friends, family, or co-workers on the Internet is too difficult.

This document outlines Microsoft's plan for solving the key customer problems as a result of the needs that users and corporations have told us in focus groups, user groups and newsgroups.

What is Internet Explorer 4.0?

Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 is all about integrating the PC and the Internet, which is Microsoft's overall concept known as the Web PC. This concept embraces the importance of integrating Web tasks into a proven and popular user interface design that leverages current investments in training and solves key customer problems that exist today. The Web PC is the next step delivery vehicle in Microsoft's overall vision of Information at Your Fingertips (IAYF), which is Microsoft's goal of making and finding information easy and painless, regardless of where it is stored. For corporations, Internet Explorer 4.0 is designed to make users more productive and ease the migration to and management of the Intranet. Having the browser integrated into the operating system interface leverages the existing investment in training. For end-users, it provides a much richer overall Internet experience through rich Web site interaction, delivers full-featured communication capabilities, and makes finding information on the Web easier than ever before. For developers, Internet Explorer 4.0 finally delivers on the Web promise of full interactive and compelling content.

The Web PC delivers the next generation Internet Client and has 4 key components:

- **Best Browser**
  The most important aspect of having a great Web experience comes from the strength of the browser. IE 4.0 once again raises the bar for unique innovation that directly impacts the overall browsing experience and provides the easiest, fastest, and most fun way to browse the Web.
- **Complete Communication and Collaboration**
  Internet Explorer 4.0 comes with a complete offering of integrated tools for every type of user, including electronic mail, news, conferencing, authoring tools, publishing tools and broadcasting.
- **Webcasting of Sites and Channels**
  Internet Explorer 4.0 enables users to have information they care about delivered right to their desktop the way they want it, when they want it. Additionally, IE 4.0 can automatically notify users of Web site changes and even enables them to take the Web on the road with strong offline capabilities.
- **True Web Integration**
  True Web Integration has 2 parts: First, Internet access becomes a seamless part of your desktop operating system, with the browser and browser-like navigation available in every Windows view. The Windows user interface has been updated to be "Web Savvy". Second, Internet Explorer 4.0 tightly integrates the overall suite of products in Best Browser and

Complete Communication and Collaboration to ensure consistency across all the applications in the suite and provide an easy way to switch between the application suite.

Internet Explorer 4.0 - Customer Solutions and Benefits

Microsoft built Internet Explorer 4.0 to directly address some of the key problems that users are facing today with the Web and is divided into the key customer segments.

Corporations

For corporations, Internet Explorer 4.0 can reduce the overall cost of ownership, improve end-user productivity and improve the overall business process.

Examples:
1. An IT or Sales Manager can distribute information, specific to each department or job function, directly to each desktop.
2. Microsoft NetMeeting facilitates help desk troubleshooting, and offers audio, video, and application conferencing over the existing network infrastructure.
3. Microsoft Netshow can broadcast video and audio information for distance learning and training.
4. The integrated, consistent interface means no additional learning curve, no separate browser application is required, and training time and costs are leveraged.

End-users

For end-users, Internet Explorer 4.0 is the leading, integrated suite that delivers the easy, personalized, and complete way to get the most out of the Internet.

Examples:
1. Users can create their own 'personal newspaper' by customizing the information they want to have delivered.
2. Users no longer have to surf for hours to locate updated sites or new content - - Internet Explorer does the work for them with notifications and subscriptions. For example, users can be notified every day when the new issue of the Wall Street Journal on the Web becomes available.
3. Users save time and money by storing the sites they visit most offline, and browsing them when disconnected from the Internet. Again using the Wall Street Journal example, users can configure Internet Explorer to download the entire new issue every day to their hard disk, for reading during the commute into work.
4. Only Internet Explorer offers them the complete set of tools they need to fully utilize the Internet, including Web browsing, email, communication, multimedia, Web site creation and publishing tools. Users have everything they need to communicate, and to create, publish, and view Web content.

Developers, ICP and ISVs

For Developers, Internet Explorer 4.0 creates an underlying architecture to build compelling, interactive, media-quality Web sites and combined with Channels, ensures that Internet Content Providers reach and stay in contact with their customers.

Examples:
1. Much higher-quality Web content is now possible, including rich animation, streaming audio and video, and other multimedia.
2. Channels enable custom content to be more accessible (through a consistent interface) and more broadly available. Instead of a myriad of custom applications to access content, developers can concentrate on the quality of their content, not the delivery mechanisms.
3. Only Internet Explorer's open architecture gives them the broadest choice of tools and technologies for developing their content. Developers can choose the technology that suits them best – Java, ActiveX, HTML, and more.

OEM/ISP

For OEMs, Internet Explorer 4.0 can directly reduce their overall support costs, enable OEMs to communicate on a more personal level with customers and offers new revenue opportunities.

Examples:
1. NetMeeting allows support personnel to remotely troubleshoot and configure user's PC's.
2. Channels can push new and relevant information to the desktop. For example, when new drivers, hardware upgrades, or special offers become available, users can be notified automatically, creating new revenue opportunities.
3. Web Views can be customized for customers automatically. For example, the control panel of a new Windows PC could have links to tips and tricks for that particular PC model on the manufacturer's Web site.

Summary

Microsoft Internet Explorer uniquely answers the request of Internet users today for a better Web experience in all aspects of using the internet – locating and accessing information, facilitating easy and powerful communication, and providing access to the next generation of interactive Web content. From end users to computer manufacturers, IS professionals to content providers, only Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 gives them the premier Internet experience – the Web PC.