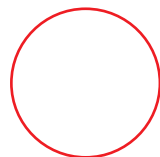


after hours: *online*



CarPoint

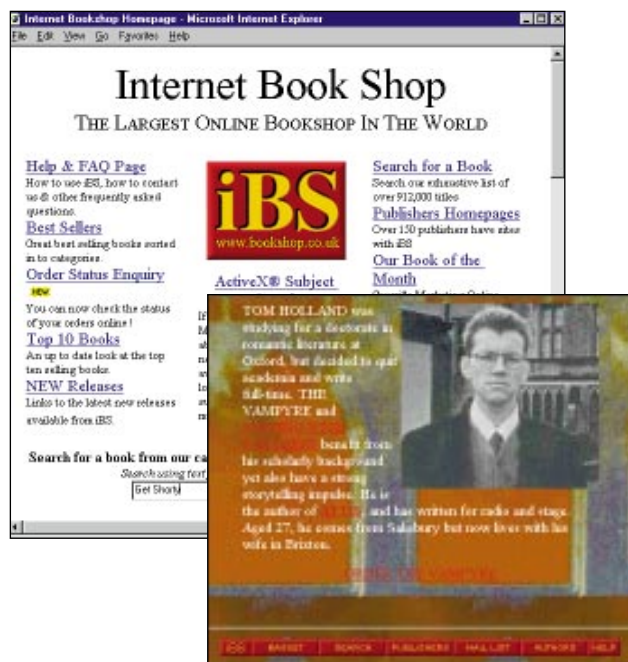
Multimedia Web pages now assail our eyes and ears. How long before our noses too? The smell of new car upholstery would certainly be appropriate at CarPoint, Microsoft's fascinating on-line car-buying site, part of the MSN (Microsoft Network). Its Surround Videos effectively put you in the driving seat, letting you view the full interior of cars – a full 360 degrees and up and down – by clicking and dragging the mouse. The downside is that, naturally, US models dominate and even the European makes have left-hand drive. As well as the clever graphics you get road test results and previews of new models. Pity a right mouse-click doesn't get you a test drive though! carpoint.msn.com/product.asp



This month Terry Pinnell checks out the latest movie rumours, narrowly avoids games addiction and gets slightly serious over an anagram of 'creamy cod'

Internet Book Shop

Doing great business on the Web, Oxford-based Internet Book Shop (IBS) lets you browse and order books on line, choosing from something like a million titles. You can search on title, author, ISBN or publisher, or from some 2,500 different subjects. Once you've located a book you want, you simply add it to your shopping basket with a



click. Without the dripping umbrella over an arm and briefcase at your feet you might not be so aware of your purchases, so it's reassuring to be able to check the basket to see if your enthusiasm is running away with your funds.

Finally, you pay on line and your order is then delivered to your door. Pending the arrival of *Star Trek* technology, that still gets done the old-fashioned way. www.bookshop.co.uk/

Cinemaniania

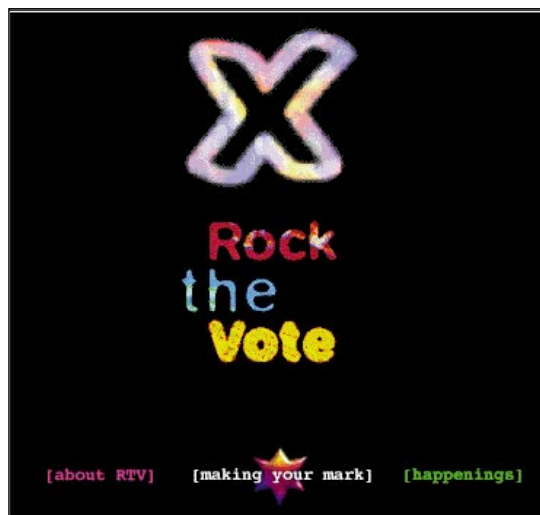
Here's another MSN site that manages to combine useful content with attractive presentation. You can review existing films, preview forthcoming ones, ogle pictures of your favourite stars or research their backgrounds and careers. The Features section includes not only the fairly predictable interviews with writers and directors, but also some crisp critiques and a neat guessing game based on identifying celebrities from fragments of their pictures. <http://cinemaniania.msn.com/>

- 1 Install a fast modem on your PC (preferably 28.8 or 36.6Kbits/s).
- 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 free up a lot of hard drive space.

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).

Major on-line services and/or Internet Service Providers:

Service Providers:
Pipex: 01223 250100
CompuServe: 0800 289378
CIX: 0181 296 9666
Microsoft: 0800 750800
AOL: 0800 376 5432
UK Online: 01749 333300
Demon: 0181 371 1234
Pinnacle: 01293 613686
Direct Connection: 0181 297 2200
BT: 0345 776666
Cityscape: 01223 566950
Global Internet: 0181 957 1003



Here's a non-profit organisation with charitable status, set up to encourage younger people to vote. At the 1992 General Election only 57 per cent of under 25s voted, compared to 69 per cent in 1987. Rock the Vote aims to reverse the trend, through participation of rock bands, comedians and other celebrities. Its Funktastic Juke Box is great, based on ActiveX and Real Audio. You can play the Rock the Vote CD that's about to be launched, with tracks from the likes of Menswear, Radiohead and Steve Coogan. While you're browsing, the Rock The Vote theme tune plays and there are also some nice animated GIFS. The Real Audio streams have been donated by Demon Internet and the Real Audio controls



Spend much time here and you risk starting down the slippery slope to all-out addiction. Games Domain, widely acclaimed as the Web's top games site, is the place to go for independent reviews of computer games. Its site map is a good place to start, or you could begin with one of the many Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and their answers. To avert insanity when you just can't puzzle out that winning move, there are also 'walkthroughs' to help you to cheat – but they can easily ruin the fun.

It's a great source of patches too; for example, you can download a number of Quake patches to fix bugs and add enhancements. If studying reviews and trying out games still leaves you with time on your hands, you could help convert the backlog of FAQs and walk-throughs to HTML format, report errors, or provide games information if you find something that isn't on the site. Or you could even start your own games site. Providing it's original, of high quality and not too large, Games Domain says it'll be able to find room for it.

www.gamesdomain.co.uk

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