

Developments In Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 23, 1996

INTERNET "SCAVENGER HUNT"

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a short experiential exercise for imparting an appreciation of the power of the Internet for acquiring information and data. The exercise is useful for instructors who believe that student understanding of the information available on the Net is important. The exercise can be designed to be conducted in a single class session or can be assigned as a group project to be completed outside of class.

INTRODUCTION

The recent explosion of interest in the Internet for both business and personal use makes it imperative for students to be comfortable in the use of the Internet. As the global collaboration of data networks known as the Internet emerges from the specialized domain of university research departments and government agencies into the public business arena, students must be familiar with the technology, which supports the Net. In order to provide a background for this exercise, we will begin with a brief overview of the Internet and the World Wide Web. We will also discuss Netscape's Mosaic and the use of search engines contained in each.

Basically, the Internet is the architecture upon which everything else you've heard about hangs. It is composed of more than 2 million host computers connected to over 30,000 individual networks in over 70 countries. These computers communicate with each other minute-by-minute over an unbelievably complicated network of cables, fiberoptic filaments and satellite links. Although it was started in the '60's, as a creation of the U.S. Government, the Internet as it exists today belongs to no one country, government or business, nor is it operated by any single authority.

The World Wide Web (WWW) is a system designed to access documents on-line over the Internet. It makes it possible to read and exchange text, images, sound and video. The WWW was born only six years ago, in 1989, as the byproduct of a European physics lab in Switzerland. The WWW now links together hundreds of thousands of documents all over the world, including not just scientific, but educational, business, commercial and recreational interests as well.

Mosaic is a tool, which helps you browse the Internet. It was developed by the National Center for Supercomputing Applications (NCSA) at the University of Illinois, and is available free of charge for a variety of operating systems including Macintosh, Windows, and Xwindows.

Netscape Navigator, one of the first commercial off-shoots of the Mosaic program, is, like Mosaic, a "Web browser," a program that allows you to explore the Web. It is designed not only to read and display Web documents but to be a full-featured interface for most operations you might want to do on the Internet. Netscape makes it easy to download text, graphics, sound and multi-media files.

Objectives and Use of the Exercise

One of our educational challenges is to move the students out of the classroom and into the international world of business. Use of the Internet provides them with glimpses of that world and hopefully will get them excited about communicating and participating in activities around the country and around the world.

Before using this exercise you may want to spend at least one class period in the computer lab acquainting students with how to access the Internet at your particular school. During that class period, we suggest that you help them access the Net and devote the rest of the class period to letting them "play" on the Net. We also recommend that you spend some time designing questions, which are pertinent to your specific class material. Remember that there are literally thousands of ways to get to the answers and probably multiple locations which provide the data necessary to answer some questions. You will need to be prepared to check the locations provided by the students.

Below, we have provided you with some basic, interdisciplinary questions and one location which provides information which will help answer the question. We have also included some of the information, which we found at each location.

Sample "Scavenger" Questions:

1. What were the top five advertising agencies in 1994?

<http://www.adage.com/bin/viewdataitem.cgi?stats&stats2.html>

Rank	Company	Gross Income
1	WPP Group	\$2,768.2
2	Interpublic Group	\$2,211.0
3	Omnicom Group	\$2,052.6
4	Dentsu Inc.	\$1,641.7
5	Cordiant	\$1,431.5

Note: Income Figures are in millions of U.S. Dollars

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2. What is NASA's mission statement?

<http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/nsp/Mission.html>

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It is NASA's mission to:

Explore, use, and enable the development of space for human enterprise.

Advance scientific knowledge and understanding of the Earth, the solar system, and the universe and use the environment of space for research.

Research, develop, verify, and transfer advanced aeronautics, space, and related technologies.

3. How many branches does Citibank support in Latin America?

<http://www.tti.com/citibank/offerings/Intro.html>

In Latin America, Citibank serves almost 2 million accounts in 10 countries with a network of 165 branches.

4. How many companies starting with the letter "U" are listed on the American Stock Exchange?

http://www.amex.com:80/stocks/stk_txtl.htm

UAAA U.S. Alcohol Testing of America, Inc.
 UAAA U.S. Alcohol Testing of America, Inc.Com.
 UBS U.S. Bioscience, Inc. (Com.)
 UBS.W U.S. Bioscience, Inc. (Wts. Expir. 4-24-98)
 etc

5. What was the net profit for GE for 1994?

http://www.ge.com/reprot94/fin_highlights.html

	<u>1994</u>
Revenues from continuing operations	\$60,109
Earnings from continuing operations	4,137
Earnings (loss) from discontinued operations	588
Earnings before accounting change	4,725
Net earnings	4,725
Dividends declared Per share	1,985
Earnings from continuing operations	2.41
Earnings (loss) from discontinued operations	0.34
Earnings before accounting change	2.75
Net earnings	2.75
Dividends declared	1.16

Note: Income figures are in millions of U.S. dollars

6. Where would you go to play "virtual scrabble" with Homer, Marge, Bart & Lisa?

<http://www.webcom.com/-shanti/scrab.html>

7. I'm going to be traveling alot next summer and I want to get some maps. Where might I find

companies that supply maps? Hint: 800 numbers would be nice!

<http://www.tollfree.att.net:80/cgi-bin/category?cat=MA0825&title=Maps%20%26%20Charts>

8. I'm planning my study and party schedule for today and I need to know who's on Letterman tonight. Where would I find this information?

<http://www.cbs.com/lateshow/>

9. I'm really into football. Where would I find "The Official Online Service of the National Football League Players?"

<http://www.sportsline.com/>

10. Now that you have completed this assignment, you might want to visit the Miller Genuine Draft TapRoom. But first, you have to find it!

<http://www.mgdtaproom.com>

Below, we have also provided you with some locations, which provide information, which, may be helpful to business students:

Yahoo Directory

<http://home~netscape.com/home/internet-directory.html>

The Electronic Newstand™

[gopher://gopher.eneews.com: 21 00/](http://gopher://gopher.eneews.com:2100/)

NewsPage Sources

<http://www.newspage.com/NEWSPAGE/npsources.html>
 (167K)

NBR - Business News

<http://www.nijenrode.nl/nbr/news/> (1 K)

Internet Gatew- Interesting Sites to Visit

<http://www.idsonline.com/gateway.htm> (1 K)

Business Update (InternetMCI)

<http://www.gnn.com/gnn/wic/news.35.html>

Newshare(SM) Business News Resources

<http://www.newshare.com/Newshare/Syndicate/Topics/news-business.html>

The Internet Business Center

<http://tig.com/IBC/index.html>

REFERENCES

Harris, Stuart & Kidder, Gayle (1995) *Netscape Quick Tour: For Macintosh*, Ventana Press, Chapel Hill, NC