

LIONS District 105M IT TRAINING

Short Introduction to the Internet

Date 08/04/2001

Aims of the Course

To introduce the basic concepts of The Internet.

To teach basic use of the World Wide Web.

To show some useful web sites, and give delegates a feel for the potential.

What is the Internet ?

Thousands of Computers around the world, linked mostly through telephone cables. There are hundreds of companies in each country who usually provide access to it for individual users (people like Freeserve, AOL, Compuserve, Demon etc). These companies are usually called Internet Service Providers (or ISPs). Telecomms companies, Governments, major academic and military institutions, major corporations and these ISPs pay for the development and maintenance of the cabling and for many of the big computers that configure it all and keep it running.

What is the World Wide Web ?

Usually when people talk about “the Internet” they are talking about **the World Wide Web**. It’s also known as “the Web” or “WWW” or “W3”.

The Web consists of millions of documents (big and small) on thousands of PCs all over the world. There will be documents about Medicine, documents about Sport, Politics, Television, the Arts etc. Some documents will have been written by reliable authorities, others by dedicated fans of some particular activity. Some documents will be mainly text, others may have pictures, sounds and some will even have video. Some will be written in English, others may be in other languages.

What makes these millions of individual documents into the Web is that they are all written using a set of tags called HTML (HyperText Markup Language). These tags include common instructions such as BOLD, ITALIC etc. that can be understood by your Web Browser. These documents are usually called Web Pages. Collections of Web Pages that live on the same computer are usually called a Web Site.

What is a Web Browser ?

This is a piece of software on your PC which understands the tags in the web documents and shows the documents to you in a consistent manner. (ie. it shows you text in **BOLD** or in *Italics* when the tags tell it to). Microsoft’s Internet Explorer is the most commonly seen Web Browser. Netscape is another. The other major function of the Web Browser is it’s ability to act on special tags in Web Pages that link one Web Page to another.

What is a Hyperlink ?

A special tag inside a Web Page that links to another Web Page, is called a Hyperlink. Your Web Browser will usually show hyperlinks in [Blue with an Underline](#).

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How do I Connect to the Internet ?

Basically when you ask the Web Browser on your Home PC to show you a Web Page that is **on the Internet**, it will usually dial-up your Internet Service Provider (ISP).

All PCs are set up differently. Your PC may not show exactly the same screens as this. Often machines in an office have a special permanent link to the Internet, these may not seem to dial-up. How you connect doesn't affect how you use it.

1. Double click on your "Internet Explorer" Icon
2. It may ask you if you want to connect – click on "connect". You may have to provide a



Username and password. Don't worry, if you need these things, whoever sets up your PC will let you know what they are.

3. It is a good idea to set up your home PC to automatically disconnect you after 10 minutes of "inactivity". Then if you forget to disconnect it will stop you getting an unexpectedly large phone bill.
4. It's a good idea to make sure your home PC dials a local number to get to the Internet. You should be able to tell if it is a local number, many Internet Service Providers give you an 0845 number to connect to which counts as a local number no matter where you are in the country.

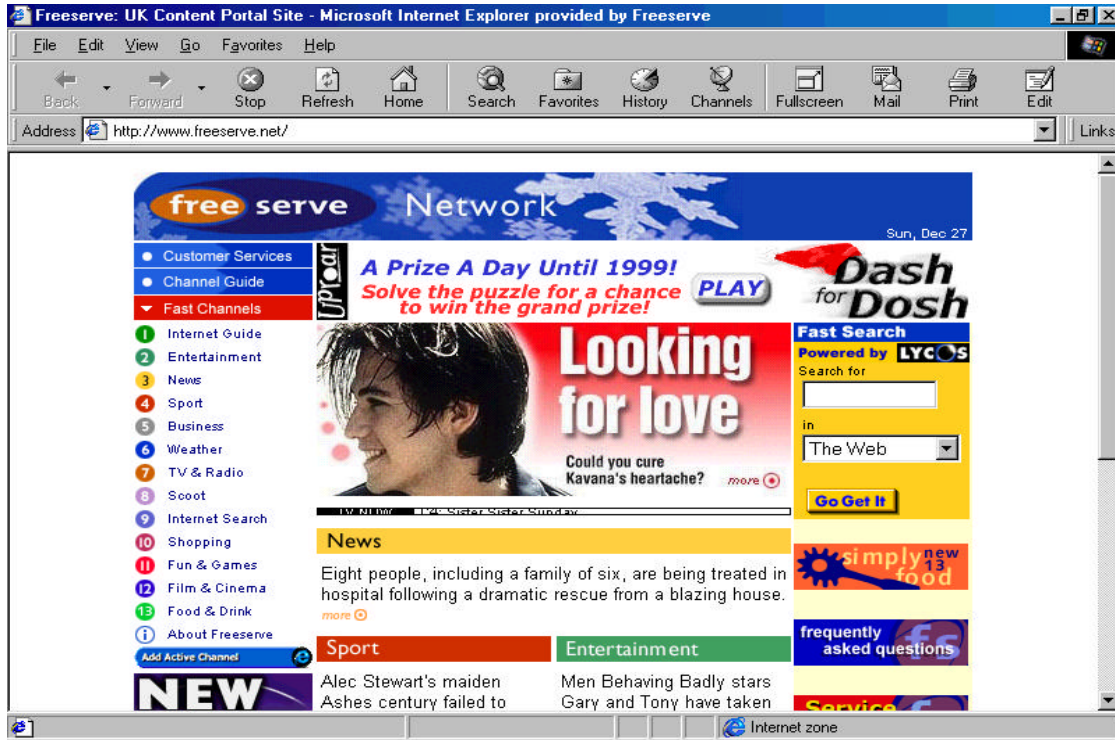
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Where can I go once I'm connected ?

When you first connect to the Internet you will normally be taken directly to the Web Page you have defined as **Your Home Page**. You can change Your Home Page if you don't like the one you've got. "Home Page" is also used to refer to the INDEX page or TOP page of a Web Site. For instance the Freeserve Home Page looks something like this...



There will usually be a slot near the top showing the WEB ADDRESS of the page (in this case it is <http://www.freeserve.net>). If someone gives you a Web Address to look at you would normally type it in here. It's getting common for Web Addresses to be shown on TV programs, Posters, Adverts and Brochures. For instance, to look at the Home Page of the BBC's Web Site you can type into the slot, www.bbc.co.uk and then hit return. Web Browsers are very particular about full stops and slashes and exact spelling. If you get the address wrong, you won't find the page.

Your Home Page (like the Freeserve one shown) may have lots of Hyperlinks built in to help you find the kind of information you are interested in. You can usually tell what's a hyperlink by hovering your cursor over it. If it becomes a "pointy finger" you can click on it to link to the next document. Often there are Hyperlinks under pictures, just hover about and keep an eye open for the "pointy finger".

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Get Back, Get Back to Where You Once...

If you click on a Hyp erlink that takes you to a page you don't like, you can use the BACK Icon (usually a left pointing arrow) on your toolbar to work your way BACK through the links. This is often useful when you follow the wrong link from a page with many links.

No Place like Home...

If you want to get back to Your Home Page, and you can't be bothered to click Back lots of times, just click on your Home Icon (usually a little house) on your toolbar to go straight to Your Home Page (without passing go and collecting 200 pounds!)

Searching

If there is no "Search" box on your screen you can use the Search Icon on your Toolbar to get one. The Search Icon usually creates a thin frame down the left-hand side of the screen where the Search box appears. The Search Icon is a toggle (like BOLD in Microsoft Word), once you turn it on it stays on until you turn it off by clicking it again.

You can type a key word or phrase in the "search box" then click on the "Go" button or hit return.

You may have to scroll down to see the results of your search...

Somewhere on the screen it will tell you how many Web Pages have been found containing the keywords and give you a list of Hyperlinks that link to each page.

You will often find that there are hundreds or even thousands of pages containing your keywords. There is a lot of rubbish out there ! There is also a lot of American information out there ! Be careful if you search for something about "Birmingham" as you will probably find more web pages about Birmingham, Alabama than about the *real* Birmingham. You can usually search more cleverly by learning a few tips...

Put phrases in quote marks eg. "**Great Britain**" rather than just **Great Britain**.
Otherwise you may get web pages that contain the word "Great"

If you want Birmingham in England try typing **Birmingham +England**

There are certain Web Sites dedicated to searching the Web. These sites are called Search Engines. Useful Search Engines include... www.yahoo.com or www.yahoo.co.uk to get less foreign documents, www.infoseek.co.uk, www.lycos.co.uk etc.

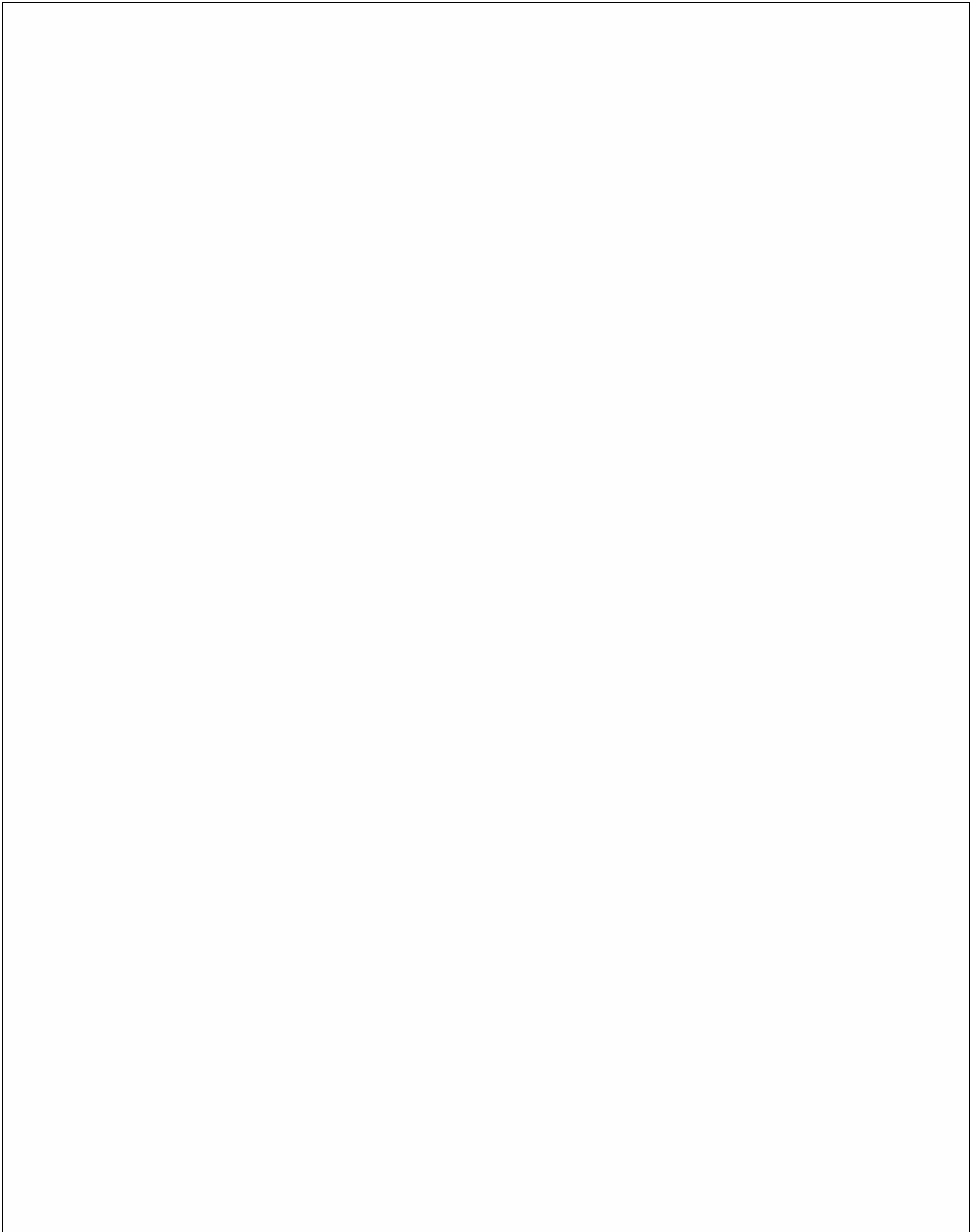
There are also many huge Web Sites offering excellent menus of categories. These include... www.bbc.co.uk, www.freeserve.net, www.solihull.gov.uk, www.telegraph.co.uk, www.birmingham.gov.uk, www.lit-net.org (literature), www.lions105m.org.uk

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A Word of Warning...

If you read something on a web page that says chocolate makes you thin, consider the source of the information before rushing out to the shops. You can't believe everything you read, especially on the Internet where you can't always tell who has written it.

A Word from our Sponsors...

There is an increasing amount of advertising on the Internet. Many of the most useful web pages now carry advertising. Think before you Click and don't forget, if you don't want to look at something just close it down.

These are a Few of My Favourite Things...

To add a page to your "favourites" – go to the page and click the "favourites" option on the menu, then "Add To Favourites" and "ok". (This will mean you will be able to retrieve this page quickly next time without having to remember the web address.)

To go to a page from your favourites, click the "Favourites" option on the menu and click on the page you want. The Favourites Icon on the toolbar acts like the Search Icon, it opens a frame down the left-hand side of the screen showing your favourites. Like Search, it is a toggle, you have to click it again to get rid of the frame.

Time for Bed, said Seabed...

To close down Internet Explorer, click on the **X** at the top right of the screen. On your Home PC, you **may** then be asked if you want to close the connection.

