

IAT INFOBITS

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About INFOBITS

Infobits is an electronic service of the Institute for Academic Technology's Information Resources Group. Each month we monitor and select from a number of information technology and instruction technology sources that come to our attention and provide brief notes for electronic dissemination to educators.

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NATIONAL NETWORKING AND THE NATIONAL INFORMATION INFRASTRUCTURE (NII)

The [March/April 1994](#) issue of *EDUCOM Review* features a special report on national networking issues and their impact on higher education. Ten experts report on policy, legislation, ethics, and the NII. Back issues of *Educom Review* are available EDUCOM's Web site at URL <http://ivory.educom.edu/web/edreview.html> or EDUCOM's gopher site at URL <gopher://ivory.educom.edu:70/11/educom.review>.

Two of the report's authors (Robert Heterick, Jr., President of EDUCOM and William Graves, Director of the IAT) will cover national networking issues during the IAT's April 28, 1994, satellite broadcast, "Moving Toward a National Learning Infrastructure."

For more information on the National Information Infrastructure (NII), connect to URL <http://sunsite.unc.edu/nii/toc.html>. The files are also available via anonymous FTP at URL <ftp://sunsite.unc.edu/pub/academic/political-science/internet-related/National-Information-Infrastructure/>

HELP-NET -- MORE HELP FROM YOUR EMAIL FRIENDS

After our [January](#) article "Get by with a Little Help from your Email Friends," which listed some computer support email lists, Susan C. Bredesen (VMS System Manager at Phillips Laboratory) wrote to suggest another list for computer support staff. She cautions that this is a list with a lot of traffic. Monthly logs of messages are archived in five parts to handle the large amount of email that subscribers generate.

To subscribe to HELP-NET, a Bitnet/Internet Help Resource, send mail to: listserv@vm.temple.edu with the message:
subscribe help-net your_firstname your_lastname

KEEPING UP WITH NEW INTERNET RESOURCES

Several email lists now exist to keep us informed about new sites and services on the Internet. All the mailing lists are very active, so prepare to get a lot of email when you subscribe.

NEW-LIST@vm1.nodak.edu -- announces new discussion groups and e-conferences.

Subscribe via email to listserv@vm1.nodak.edu

NEWJOUR-L@e-math.ams.org -- announces new electronic journals.

Subscribe via email to listserv@e-math.ams.org

NEWNIR-L@itocsivm.csi.it -- announces new international Internet resources.

Subscribe via email to listserv@itocsivm.csi.it

NET-RESOURCES@is.internic.net and NET-HAPPENINGS@is.internic.net -- both announce new Internet resources.

Subscribe via email to listserv@is.internic.net

Thanks to Diane Kovacs at Kent State University for compiling the list. Diane is also Editor-in-Chief of the Directory of Scholarly Electronic Conferences, a compilation of listservs by academic disciplines. The Directory is available on the Web at URL <http://n2h2.com/KOVACS/> or via Gopher at URL <gopher://gopher.usask.ca>.

DON'T CONFUSE ME WITH THE FAX

With all these email addresses proliferating, it's easy to forget that for a huge number of people, electronic communication means fax communication. According to an article in *ComputerWorld*, "Fax is bigger than e-mail. There were 24.5 million fax machines in use worldwide in 1993. That compares with 14.25 million e-mail boxes worldwide. Each fax machine is shared by an average of eight people." ("Fax-on Demand Grows" by Lynda Radosevich, *ComputerWorld*, January 17, 1994, p. 59.) This article was brought to my attention in an editorial titled "Internet Snobbery" in *Sarah Stambler's Marketing with Technology News* (vol. 3, issue 7, March 31, 1994) which was, not surprisingly, faxed to me. This newsletter is only available by fax.

In sharp contrast to Stambler's enthusiasm for fax communication is Nicholas Negroponte's statement in the [April 1994](#) issue of *Wired* (p. 134): "I truly believe that the fax machine has been a serious blemish on the computer landscape, the ramifications of which we will feel all too soon." Negroponte figures that there are about 40 million email users, and the number is growing by more than 10 percent per month. "By the turn of the century almost everyone will be using e-mail, not fax."

Negroponte's argument is that while fax is a blessing for the telephone industry (and publishers like Stambler), for the rest of us it is no more helpful than microfilm. He contends that imaging systems, such as fax machines, create digital data that is not structured, and therefore, not computer-readable and capable of computer manipulation. "E-mail is data that can be filtered, sorted, retrieved, and edited. Its form makes it meaningful to computers, as well as people." Following his line of thinking, information creators and providers should be moving toward standardization of document-description languages that serve up data in symbolic, rather than facsimile, forms. Our archives of digitized data are growing phenomenally. Can we afford not to deliver and store the data in as rich and versatile a format as possible, both for today's uses and for uses we have yet to imagine?

Wired articles can be read online at URL <http://www.hotwired.com/wired/>. *Wired* magazine is published monthly by Wired, P. O. Box 191826, San Francisco, CA 94119-9866, USA; tel: 800-769-4733 (inside U.S.) or +1(415)904-0660 (outside U.S.); email: subscriptions@wired.com. Individual subscriptions are \$39.95/year (US), \$64/year (Canada/Mexico), \$79/year (all others).

For information about *Sarah Stambler's Marketing with Technology News*, write to TechProse, Inc., 370 Central Park West #210, New York, NY 10025-6513, USA; tel: 212-222-1765, fax: 212-678-6357.

TSUNAMI OF INTERNET BOOKS

New books about the Internet seem to be appearing as frequently as new Internet sites. The IAT Library regularly purchases Internet guides, both for evaluation purposes and to use in our workshops. Looking through quite a few books for new Internet users has persuaded me that, while the style may change, the substance is pretty much the same. How many ways can you describe a sample FTP session, after all?

Currently, we include *Navigating the Internet* by Richard Smith and Mark Gibbs (Indianapolis: Sams Publishing, 1993. ISBN:0-672-30362-0) in the materials packet for our introduction to the Internet workshops. We chose it because it includes a lot of guided exercises to give students more practice activities after the workshop.

One of our administrative staff recommends *The Internet for Dummies* by John R. Levine and Carol Baroudi (San Mateo, CA: IDG Books, 1993. ISBN: 1-56884-024-1). Its breezy style and Rich Tennant's cartoons come across as less intimidating to non-technical users. (This book is not to be confused with *Big Dummy's Guide to the Internet* by Adam Gaffin and Jorg Heitkotter which is available via anonymous FTP on host: ftp.eff.org; directory: pub/Net_info/Big_Dummy; filename: bigdummy.txt.)

I like *Net Guide* by Peter Rutten, Albert F. Bayers III and Kelly Maloni (New York: Random House, 1994. ISBN: 0-679-75106-8) just for the fun of it. As the "TV Guide of Cyberspace," this book provides pointers by subjects to Internet sites, USENET newsgroups, and commercial resources (CompuServe, America Online, etc.) It proves that there's something for everyone somewhere out in the electronic world.

URL: <http://www.unc.edu/cit/infobits/bitmar94.html>

Infobits editor: [Carolyn Kotlas](#)

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