

DISS 790 - Extra Credit

by

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A paper submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for DISS 790 - Assignment Eight

School of Computer and Information Sciences
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July 1999

An Abstract of a Paper Submitted to Nova Southeastern University
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One of the goals of DISS 790 was to develop an awareness of the technological issues facing individuals and businesses today. Excellent sources of the latest developments in electronic commerce technologies are Internet discussion lists and newsletters. In the following pages, this paper discussed select topics from the Internet Wire Digest. Topics included Convenc International's impact on online education and a new 3D Internet chat site.

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One of the goals of DISS 790 is to develop an awareness of the technological issues facing individuals and businesses today. Excellent sources of the latest developments in electronic commerce technologies are Internet discussion lists and newsletters. At the beginning of the 1999 Spring Cluster, I subscribed to the following newsletters:

- New research from Forrester - <http://www.forrester.com> (premium service)
- InternetWire Digest listserv - <http://www.internetwire.com> (free service)
- The Scout Report - <http://scout.cs.wisc.edu>

Of these three services, I found the InternetWire Digest to be the most interesting and informative. The InternetWire Digest e-mails subscribers a daily message that contains links to that day's top electronic commerce stories. The newsletter is divided into two parts: daily headlines and daily debuts. The daily debuts section is meant to introduce subscribers to a variety of interesting and unique Web sites.

Daily Headline

One storyline that appeared numerous times in the daily headlines section of the newsletter followed the efforts of Convene International in the area of educational electronic commerce. Convene of San Francisco is the world's largest provider of online services to colleges, universities, and corporations (Convene, 1999). In fact, the most successful online distance education programs in the country use Convene to host their online programs.

In a story dated March 25, 1999, the newsletter reported about Convene's new Fast-track program for instructors interested in creating online classes (Internet Wire, 1999, March 25). Convene unveiled the program as part of its expanding efforts to help meet the demands for online instructor training. Convene is the online delivery partner behind hundreds of accredited online degree programs. The new Convene program is taught entirely online by experienced instructors and can be completed within a four- to six-week period.

Another story related to Convene International's efforts appeared in a subsequent Internet Wire e-mail. The story reported how a Michigan college professor was able to extend his teaching career due to the flexibility that Convene offered to instructors teaching in Baker College's online degree programs (Internet Wire, 1999, April 30). The professor who had been a victim of muscular dystrophy since birth was physically unable to continue teaching in traditional classes by age 40. In order to continue teaching, he began teaching in Baker College's online programs using Convene software. The professor now teaches full-time from the computer in his living room in a farm house in the Michigan countryside.

The InternetWire listserv recently sent an article that reported the world's first virtual campus dedicated to home schooling - grades 3-12 (Internet Wire, 1999, June 18). The new school is a partnership between Central Connecticut Adventist Virtual School

(CCVAS) and Convene. The CCVAS program will begin classes in September 1999. The curriculum is Christian-based, but parents anywhere are invited to enroll their children in the virtual home school. The addition of this new program means that a person is now able to attend an accredited virtual school from third grade all the way through his or her Ph.D.

Daily Debuts

The Daily Debuts section of the newsletter also proved interesting. One site highlighted was Worlds.com. The premium chat service called "Worlds Ultimate 3D Chat" featured a large selection of avatars used to represent users in the 3D chat site. Meeting rooms in which avatars are able to chat include: The Dance Club, New Relationships, Romance World, T.V. World, Wall Street Club, and Movies World.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Internet Wire newsletter was a valuable addition to the DISS 790 course. It provided numerous ideas for research paper topics and WWWBoard discussions.

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