

THE ERNST & YOUNG CENTER FOR BUSINESS INNOVATION

Perspectives on

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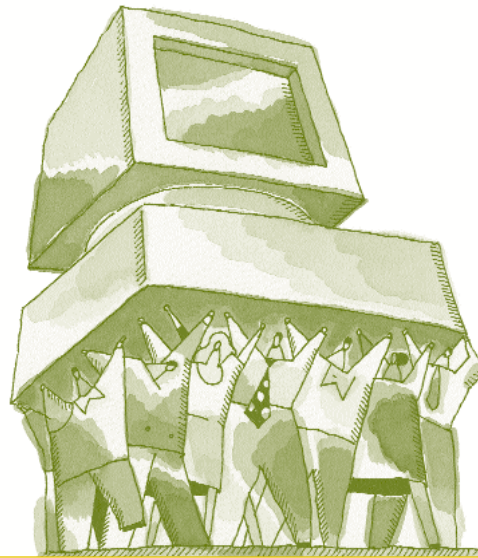
Electronic Commerce



www.businessinnovation.ey.com

The contents of this document reflect a more interactive and growing body of knowledge on the Internet. Please join an ongoing discussion of electronic commerce taking place at our website: www.businessinnovation.ey.com.

THE ERNST & YOUNG CENTER FOR BUSINESS INNOVATION is a research organization focused on emerging management trends, problems, and solutions. It seeks to facilitate a shared conversation among business practitioners, advisers, and observers by which the understanding of all will be enhanced.



Ten Websites that Matter

AdoptioNetwork

<http://www.adoptio.org/>

Finding a child to adopt, finding a child given up for adoption, finding birth parents or siblings—the emotional impact of making (or failing to make) these discoveries is impossible to convey. Read some adoption stories to understand the power of networks for casting light on life-changing mysteries.

Band-X

<http://www.band-x.com/>

In 1997, two men in London created a bulletin board for international telecommunications bandwidth bids and offers. The site has grown to include indices of traffic and pricing, providing yet another example of information about a thing being as or more profitable than the thing itself. Also, a study in commoditization of a formerly proprietary and/or scarce good.

CEO Express

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

They invoke the 80/20 rule: 80% of the value of the Internet may well be delivered by the relative handful of sites listed here. A perfect start page that gets you effectively anywhere you need to go on the first hop.

e-Bay

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

This embodies several important trends that will shape larger businesses: the power of word-of-mouth; interactive, dynamic pricing; price transparency; online shopping as entertainment.

Federation of American Scientists Intelligence Resource Program

<http://www.fas.org/irp/>

This watchdog site provides formidable and fascinating information in the pursuit of a more accountable government. Satellite photos from the Cuban missile crisis, detailed descriptions of intelligence and surveillance operations, and other materials show citizens a glimpse of what their government is doing.

Open Source Software Resources

<http://starbase.neosoft.com/~claird/comp.programming/oss.html>

As powerful data networks make possible entirely new modes of production, distribution, and consumption, the emergence of open-source software bears watching. How could something as complex as the Linux operating system or the Apache web server emerge from non-hierarchical distributed communities of programmers? What will be the implications of this movement for the whole notion of value creation in an information economy?

Pasty Central

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

The Still Waters Community Elders Home in Calumet, Michigan, includes among its residents many descendants of the miners who helped generate an economic boom based on the region's rich copper deposits. The lunch of choice for those miners was the pasty, a meat-and-vegetable pie eaten by hand. Today, those elders (average age 84) have built a thriving Internet business that has become a hub of activity for exiles from Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Here as elsewhere, commerce generated community (read the emails), contrary to consultants' expectations.

Personalogic

<http://www.personalogic.com/home/demo/demo.stm>

Note how the vendor owns the software rather than shipping it; all customers of the service are hosted by the vendor. Also, nice use of artificial intelligence insights to help automate complex purchase decisions.

Unlike collaborative filtering (Net Perceptions, Firefly), Personalogic is transparent: if your queries don't generate the outcome you expected, the system lets you see why—and change the query accordingly if you like.

Thinkquest Team 10015

<http://library.advanced.org/10015/>

Thinkquest is an educational competition in which teams research, develop, and maintain websites. Movie buffs will enjoy the richness of the site's information; corporate managers will be stunned to realize that this elaborate site was created entirely by three students—each in a different state, collaborating virtually—guided by three coaches.

Viking Husqvarna

<http://www.vikinghusqvarna.com/products/software.html>

Is there any current artifact that more symbolizes the industrial age than the sewing machine? Yet this site shows how adding networked information to a device can make it more capable, adaptable, and a secondary unit of production: in addition to the primary task of embroidering clothing, users can create software designs to upload.