Hands-On Internet *for Windows*

Neil J. Salkind

HANDS-ON INTERNET *for Windows*

Neil J. Salkind
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boyd & fraser publishing company

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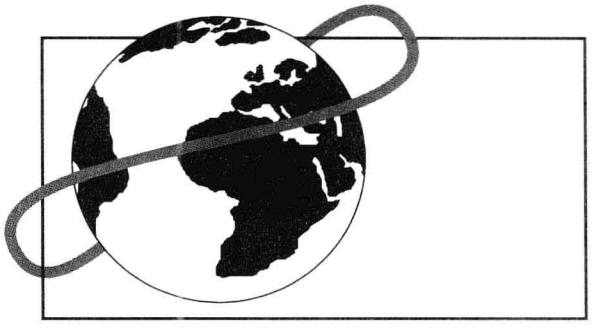

Preface

Everyday, we're deluged with information about everything from the score of last night's football game to the latest food scare to Congressional committee business to the weather reports. While the information has always been there, the information superhighway has not. Today, all it takes is a personal computer and some connection software to make anyone an information equal of anyone else. And now, with Windows-based tools available for accessing this information, things look more attractive then ever.

That's where the Internet and *Hands-On Internet for Windows* comes in. My goal in writing this book is to give you a hands-on overview of what type of information is available on the Internet and how you can access it. I tried to stay away from technical talk and get straight to the procedures you will find most valuable. Tech talk is important if you want to go beyond just using the Internet and understand the dynamics of telecommunications. But for now, we'll just concentrate on the basics.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

Hands-On Internet for Windows is organized into eight chapters.

Chapter 1 describes the Internet, how and when it developed, some of the things you can do on the Net, and some general guidelines for behavior when using the Internet.

Chapter 2 explains how to connect to the Internet, the different types of Internet connections, how people and places are named on the Net, and the importance of passwords.

Chapter 3 focuses on how to browse the Net and the World Wide Web (also known as WWW or W^3). Home pages, dynamic links, URL's and http will become your second language, and you'll have more fun than you would have imagined.

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For many people, e-mail is the only reason they use the Internet. Chapter 4 shows you how to use Netscape to send mail and introduces the fully-featured mail program Eudora (named after the author Eudora Welty).

Chapter 5 begins our journey into what's available on the Internet. Using file transfer protocol, you can go to one of thousands of computers and discover the millions of files that exist on everything from NASA photos to games. Then, with a few simple commands, you can transfer these files to your computer and explore them at your leisure.

All the News That's Fit to Print might be the New York Times' banner, but newsgroups (Chapter 6) are where all the news you might want to read is at. From more than 30,000 newsgroups, you can select the articles you want to read about everything from archery to automobiles, and you can contribute your own observations as well. These on-line bulletin boards allow you to learn and exchange ideas and views.

Chapter 7 introduces you to the telnet command, which you can use to go to another computer such as the online catalog at the Library of Congress, and remotely access information.

Finally, Chapter 8 provides an overview of Internet utilities and how they are used. These utilities, such as Archie and Veronica, help you search through thousands of Internet locations to find a file or some information. The Internet utility Gopher allows you to go from Internet site to Internet site with the press of a key to track down important information.

Appendix A contains a list of resources on the Internet. Appendix B contains hints on how to get out of trouble once you're in it (which happens to all of us once in a while!). Appendix C contains the answers to the end-of-chapter Review Questions and Exploration Exercises. Appendix D discusses the changing nature of Netscape.

OUTSTANDING FEATURES OF THE BOOK

Readability. Any book, especially one that deals with such technical material as the Internet, must communicate ideas and transmit information. This book is carefully organized with logical presentation of topics. The information is presented at a level that is understandable for the beginning student.

Advance Organizers. Each chapter begins with a brief list of what the student will be expected to have mastered after the chapter and the chapter exercises are completed.

Key Words. At the end of each chapter is a list of the important terms that were introduced in that chapter. Each term first appears in bold in the chapter.

How To Boxes. Throughout *Hands-On Internet for Windows,* step-by-step instructions on how to perform certain tasks are integrated into the chapter material and physically set off so the student can see immediately what steps are necessary to perform such tasks.

Illustrations. *Hands-On Internet for Windows* contains many illustrations showing how to perform important tasks. Students are encouraged to participate in these hands-on exercises. The accompanying screens show what they can expect to see as a result of their efforts.

Exercises. Each chapter ends with two types of exercises. The first, Review Questions, are a set of substantive questions about the content of the chapter. The second type, Exploration Exercises, are hands-on exercises that take the student into the Internet and provide an opportunity to practice Internet skills. Answers to these exercises are contained in Appendix C.

For the instructor, a printed test bank (available on disk as well) is available.

HOW TO USE *HANDS-ON INTERNET FOR WINDOWS*

Before you get started, just a few notes about the conventions used in this book.

1. When you are supposed to type or click something, it will appear in color in the step, such as

   Click File.

2. When you see press Enter, it means to press the Enter (or Return) key.
3. IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT! Throughout *Hands-On Internet for Windows* there are many illustrations of what the Internet looks like. But, since the Internet is changing everyday, what you see on your screen may not be exactly the same as what you see in the book. The differences should be small and relatively insignificant. Don't panic. You should have no problem understanding what's on your screen and how it relates to the material in the book.

A SPECIAL NOTE TO STUDENTS

Learning any new endeavor is not easy, but it's always worth it. Here are some Do's and Dont's that will help you as you work through *Hands-On Internet for Windows*.

Some Do's

- *Do* browse through the entire book to get some idea about what material is covered and in what order it is presented. Everything covered is important for you to learn.
- *Do* browse at your leisure, and don't worry about reading each chapter in detail, taking notes, or memorizing the meaning of terms or important keystrokes. As you work through the individual chapters, you will get a chance to concentrate on detail.

- *Do* read through each chapter before you begin working on your computer. Try to visualize what might happen on the screen as the activity is described in the book. Also, read through the examples and exercises so you can get some idea of what you will be expected to do when you begin your "hands on" training.
- *Do* follow the directions in each section closely, and do exactly what the instruction asks you to do.
- *Do* try the examples as they are presented in the text.
- *Do* keep trying to get the example correct before you move on. While every effort was made to make the examples "fail proof," you might find yourself confused and not comfortable with the material. If this happens, go back to the beginning of the chapter and start over.
- *Do* the exercises at the end of each chapter and check your answers with a classmate. You might also want to form a study group to review material and practice using the Internet. This way you can check your work and help each other generate new ideas about the Net.

Some Don'ts

- *Don't* fall behind. It is very difficult to catch up. You don't need the extra pressure along with your other classes and work. By the way, this is good advice for any class.
- *Don't* study or work for too long a time when you first begin to learn about the Internet. You will end up tired and frustrated. Instead, work in small chunks of time, giving yourself ample time between work sessions. You know your own pace. One suggestion is to cover no more than a chapter a day, including exercises.
- *Don't* jump around. Each part of *Hands-On Internet for Windows* is organized in a sequence of chapters that will get you started using the Net. Try to follow the chapters in the sequence presented.
- Finally, be adventurous and explore the Net every chance you get. As you will learn, the Internet is full of treasures waiting to be found. You may have to do some digging, but along the way you are certain to find interesting, useful, and fun things that make the trip worth while.

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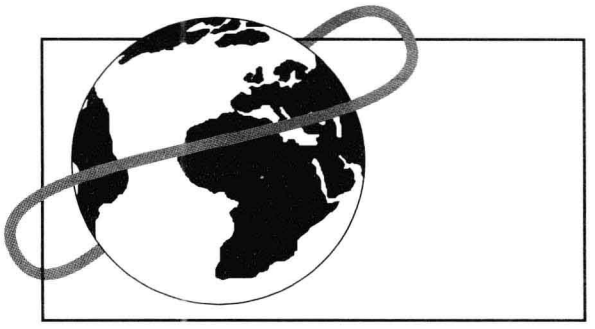

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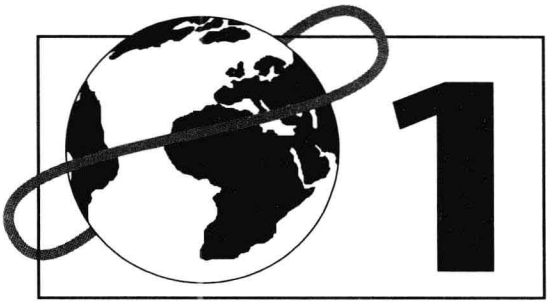

1

Say Hello to the Internet

After completing this chapter, you'll be able to

- Define the Internet
- Explain how the Internet started
- Understand why the demand for the Internet is growing at a phenomenal rate
- Understand how the Internet operates
- Understand the various ways you can use the Internet
- Explain why Internet etiquette is important
- Understand the rules of the Internet

Last night I sat down at my computer, learned a great new joke from this giant collection of jokes, wrote to President Bill Clinton about health care, talked to my friend Lew in North Carolina, found a synonym by consulting *Roget's Thesaurus*, and read about making my own beer in the *Homebrew Digest*. I was going to read a chapter of *Moby Dick,* but decided it was too late.

I did this all from my computer by accessing the Internet, the international highway system of the electronic age. The Internet is like the New Jersey Turnpike: it can be challenging to get on and navigate, but once you are there, there are literally thousands of places you can go.

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

In the most basic terms, the **Internet** (commonly referred to as the **Net**) is a **network** of networks. What's a network? It is a collection of computers that are connected to one another and can communicate with each other. For example, at your college or university, the members of the psychology department may be on a network where electronic mail (e-mail) can be sent and

received from office to office. The English, Spanish, and art departments may have networks of their own as well.

Imagine if all these networks were connected to one another, like you see in Figure 1.1. This is an example of how only a few networks can be connected. Now imagine hundreds of networks and thousands of computers of all different types connected to one another and millions of people using those computers—that's the Internet. The Internet's an amazing tool and throughout *Hands-On Internet for Windows* we'll tell you why and show you how to use it.

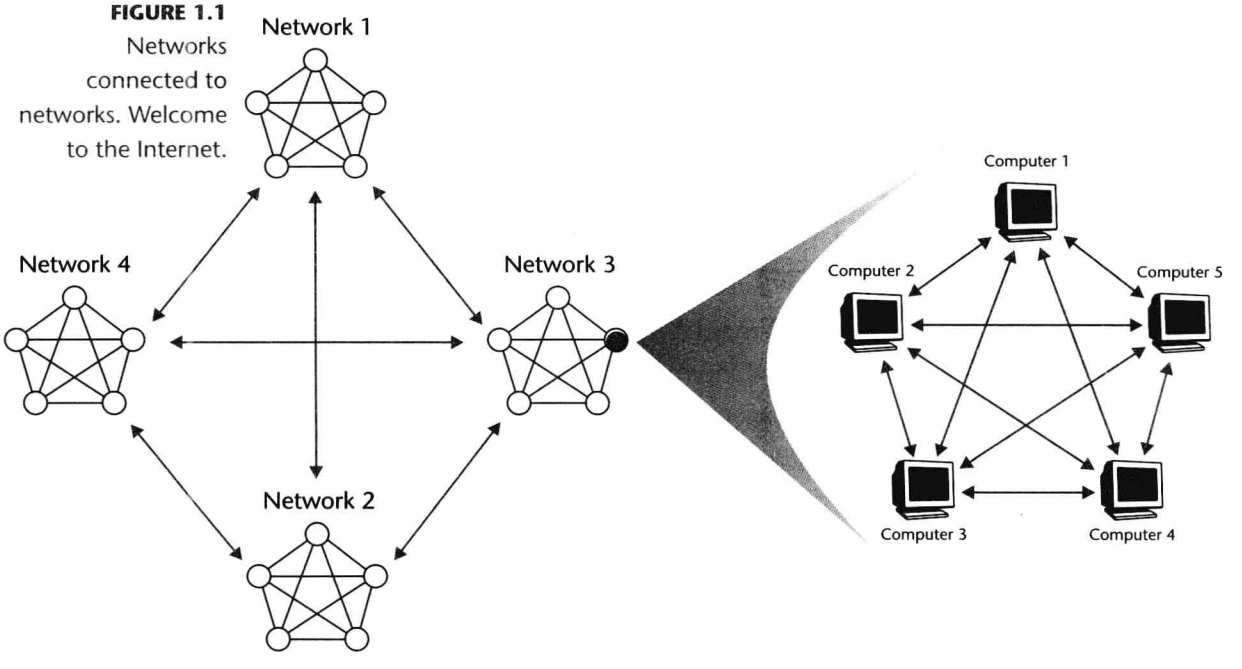

FIGURE 1.1 Networks connected to networks. Welcome to the Internet.

HISTORY OF THE INTERNET

In 1969, the Department of Defense developed a way to network or connect military contractors who were working on grants from the department. This initial network was called **ARPANET** (for *A*dvanced *R*esearch *P*rojects *A*gency *NET*). It is like a grandparent to the Internet.

Things went very well with ARPANET and before long, everyone (universities, private research labs, and individuals) wanted to be connected. While it was not entirely clear what the potential was, many people realized that being able to communicate electronically was the first step in the future growth of technology dealing with the flow of information.

ARPANET was so successful and grew so quickly that another network was needed to handle all the traffic. Hence, a new network named **MILNET** (*Mil*itary *Net*) was created in 1983. Although these were two independent networks, much of the work that went on within one was related to work going on within the other. It only made sense to develop a technique for sharing information between them. Once again, necessity was the mother of invention, and a tech-

nique for allowing network traffic to be routed from one network to another was developed. This tool came to be called the **Internet Protocol** or the **IP** (a protocol is a way of doing things). The business of the Internet Protocol was to make sure that information was not garbled as it was transmitted between **sites**, that is, the locations where Internet connections are made.

As you might imagine, once word got out that information could be quickly shared across thousands of miles with relative ease, many organizations and individuals wanted access to the information highway. With computers being so accessible and on-line connections only a phone call away, networks began to grow.

One of the first big networks, funded by IBM to connect universities and research labs, was **BITNET**, which stands for *B*ecause *I*t's *T*ime (some network humor there). Developed at the City University of New York as an electronic mail (e-mail) tool, it quickly found a home at most major colleges and universities. Since then, almost every school is on BITNET and other networks as well.

The U.S. government, in the form of the National Science Foundation, eventually realized the potential of what the electronic transmission of information could mean, and in 1986 dedicated five huge supercomputers to providing computing power to universities and research institutions. Before this time, these supercomputers were mostly used to design weapons. While large companies used them to model the weather and do geological research, these computers were not accessible to the average U.S. citizen.

With these new, more powerful machines available and on-line, e-mail and other documents were more easily and more efficiently sent from site to site. More sites became available and the growth of the Net really began to take off. The **NSFNET** (*N*ational *S*cience *F*oundation *NET*) linked thousands of computers and worked so well that the ARPANET was retired. How well did NSFNET work? Take a look at the graph in Figure 1.2 and see how in a bit more than 20 years, the descendants of ARPANET have grown from a handful of connections on a network to more than 2 million! And today, between 1,000 and 1,500 **hosts** (another term for Internet sites) are being added *every month*. The number of individuals connected to these sites is more than 30 million and growing every day. While nobody really knows how many people use the Internet, almost everyone knows that the Internet is an uncharted and very popular place to explore. By the way, the numbers for this chart came from the ultimate time line of the history of the Internet compiled and maintained by Robert H'obbes' Zakon. You can find out how to get the entire time line in Appendix A.

The increased demand for on-line communication has occurred for several reasons. First, information has become an important and valuable commodity. Companies, governments, research organizations, and private individuals recognize that having the necessary information about a particular topic, issue, or product can mean success. Information increases one's competitive advantage whether you are trying to find patents for a waterproof gizmo or the latest census numbers.

Secondly, where the Net was once the province of big organizations, individual users are now being solicited to join through commercial Internet services

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