

# FastFacts

## E-Com To Hit \$1 Trillion

>> The explosive growth of business-to-business procurement and consumer purchasing over the Web will push online commerce to more than \$1 trillion by 2003, according to International Data Corp. ([www.idc.com](http://www.idc.com)). The research firm says the number of users who make purchases on the Web will jump from 31 million in 1998 to more than 183 million by 2003. Analyst Carol Glasheen says most of the purchasing today is being done in the U.S., but by 2003 65 percent of Web users will be international.

## Electronic Paper Chase

>> Xerox ([www.xerox.com](http://www.xerox.com)) says it will team with 3M ([www.3m.com](http://www.3m.com)) to help turn one of its more innovative research projects into a reality — electronic paper. The companies say they will begin working on ways to produce the paper commercially. Xerox's electronic paper is a flexible fabric that can capture and hold data images on a bed of tonerlike beads. The beads are half white, half black and change patterns when passed over with a positive or negative charge. Xerox says the paper will be used in a variety of businesses, including newspapers, which can be updated instantly.

## USi Forms New Units

>> Application service provider USInternetworking ([www.usi.net](http://www.usi.net)) announced the formation of two business units focused on electronic commerce systems, and the hosting of more generalized business applications. Steve McManus, a co-founder of the company, will head the E-Commerce Group, which offers companies software packages from such vendors as Microsoft and Broadvision to operate and manage their Web sites. The company says the new president of the Complex Web Group, which offers more general business applications, is scheduled to come on board early this month.

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BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS COMMERCE ON THE WEB

## Securing The Corporate Portal

Knowledge Track's portal product permits only authorized access

By Len Grzanka

Special To Inter@ctive Week

**A** new corporate portal product is said to allow e-commerce companies to improve document security and handling while cutting costs in half.

Knowledge Track ([www.knowledgetrack.com](http://www.knowledgetrack.com)) unveiled its latest corporate portal product, Knowledge Center, last month. The product has beefed-up security features that let corporations use an internal portal as an Internet Web site while blocking unauthorized access to proprietary data.

"The Internet people like Yahoo!, [Netscape Communications'] Netcenter and [Microsoft's] MSN [The Microsoft Network] are trying to move their portals behind the firewall to deliver customized Internet content," says Jack Porter, president and chief executive of Knowledge Track. "The difference is that we aggregate information from all external sources, but we also create interfaces to corporate enterprise resource planning [ERP] applications like SAP and PeopleSoft, and to Oracle, Informix and Sybase databases on corporate Unix systems."

Authorized users can personalize the Knowledge Center portal for dynamic updates with new information appearing in corporate and external sources.

Installed behind an organization's firewall, a corporate portal provides e-mail and easy search and retrieval of data to internal users on an intranet and to business partners on an extranet. Users access corporate portals, which provide the look-and-feel of Internet portals, through a browser interface. Because corporate portals

provide links to proprietary data, most of them are limited to internal use.

A 1998 Merrill Lynch & Co. study predicted the market for corporate portals would grow from \$4.4 billion in 1998 to more than \$14 billion by 2003.

Porter says that along with direct competitors, such as Glyphica and Plumtree Software, which are creating

portals for corporate intranets and extranets, Internet portal providers are

modifying their products for use behind the corporate firewall. "Document management firms like Documentum and PC Docs are also rushing to put Yahoo!-like interfaces on their products, but they still lack integration with ERP and interfaces to corporate databases," he adds.

Knowledge Center uses Windows NT's security features to limit

vide the same authentication, which protects online data in real-time. "Even if someone grabbed the packets and tried sending them back, the server would not respond," Porter says.

For Windows 95 clients, it uses Secure Sockets Layer encryption for security.

Knowledge Center, priced at

A look into Knowledge Track's portal

[www.interactive-week.com](http://www.interactive-week.com)

\$25,000 for a 50-user license, includes a unique feature for collaboration on documents. Before being published on the site, documents are routed to one or more "moderators," the company's internal experts or managers with authority to approve posting. The company can also allow anyone to post text without approval.

ShareDocs, a San Francisco publisher of merger agreements, prospectuses, annual and quarterly reports and other sensitive financial documents, is a Knowledge Center user.

According to Liam Brown, ShareDocs chief operating officer, clients and others involved in collaborative production of a financial document dial in to the corporate portal, provide authentication and

receive links to a document and related materials, such as collaborative discussions. "We have to be able to manage each individual securities attorney, investment banker, company executives

and others involved with the document," Brown says. "They need to be able to access only that document which they are authorized to see."

Brown says online collaboration cuts days to weeks off document production. This in turn cuts production cost in half. "For an IPO [initial public offering], printing expenses typically run from \$200,000 to \$250,000," Brown says. "We can do it now for \$100,000 to \$120,000." ▲



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access to files. An unauthorized user does not even see internal, proprietary links to data or receive pointers to the data from a search.

The server receives an authentication number based on the client's password, time-date stamp and network interface card serial number. The server does not respond to data requests from any other system that cannot pro-

EXCERPTS FROM DEPHI'S CORPORATE PORTAL REPORT: [www.dephigroup.com/events/corporate-portals/corporate-portal-excerpt.htm](http://www.dephigroup.com/events/corporate-portals/corporate-portal-excerpt.htm) // IDC report: Portal Mania: Who Will Lead the Way to Convergence?: [www.idc.com](http://www.idc.com) // HotData White Paper, "The High Cost of Low Quality Data": [www.hotdata.com/whitepapers/wp\\_improving\\_data.asp](http://www.hotdata.com/whitepapers/wp_improving_data.asp)

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