

IS IT RAINING INTERNET URLS?

Do you wish someone would evaluate important Internet sites for you so you could spend your time more effectively?

The CyberSkeptic's™ Guide to Internet Research is a monthly newsletter for searchers who use online services and would like to add the Internet to their arsenal. We explore, describe and evaluate important sites and strategies to help you use the Internet as a serious and cost-effective research tool.

- Up-to-date (monthly issues)
- Critical focus on research sources
- Comparisons between Internet and online databases
- Page of sites organized by Subject Area
- Semiannual index

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Free Range Media's Lariat for Streamed Media Management

Free Range Media has announced the availability of Lariat, a Java-based software solution for managing streamed media. It is designed to increase productivity and improve performance by automating encoding, file management processes, and the recording and archiving of continuous media. The solution also includes the Lariat Stats product, which collects and analyzes data about streamed media delivery and content usage. According to the company, Lariat is the industry's first management system that enables operators, Webmasters, content providers, and other business users to effectively and easily administer and track this rich new media.

Collaborative efforts with industry leaders and the debut of Lariat enable Free Range Media to address immediate administrative needs, help accelerate development, and lower barriers to entry into the streamed media market. As a part of this cooperative approach and the product launch, the company has showcased Lariat at a number of leading industry events, including exhibiting with RealNetworks (formerly Progressive Networks) at the NAB Radio Show, as a participating developer at the Microsoft Professional Developers Conference, and exhibiting with Sun Microsystems at Seybold Publishing '97.

"Webmasters, Internet content pro-

viders, and corporate communicators—professionals in the business of delivering rich and comprehensive information and entertainment over the Internet—want an immediate, easy, and affordable solution for handling this new media," said Andrew Fry, president and CEO of Free Range Media. "With Lariat, we can deliver an integrated and complete system for seamless administration and performance analysis."

"Webmasters and Internet publishers need to understand and leverage the usage and demographic patterns Lariat captures in order to attract advertising revenues," said Bill Correll, worldwide market development manager of media and publishing for Sun Microsystems.

To operate Lariat, users must be running a RealAudio/RealVideo server and using Java JDK 1.02 and a Java-enabled browser. Versions for Microsoft Windows NT and for Sun Solaris and other Java-supported UNIX platforms are currently available for download at <http://www.freerange.com> or by calling Free Range Media at 800/570-3873 or 206/340-9305. Support for Microsoft Netshow is under development. Lariat is priced at \$1,195 and includes 1 year of upgrades and 30 days of free technical support.

Source: Free Range Media, Inc., Seattle, 800/570-3873, 206/340-9305; <http://www.freerange.com>.

ClassiFind Network Launches Multimedia Classified Ad Web Site

ClassiFind Network has announced the launch of the first full multimedia classifieds Web site, ClassiFind (<http://www.classifind.com>). The new site allows people to place classified ads with streaming video, audio, color photos, and 200-word descriptions. The site also has special functions for searching the classifieds such as Direct Notify and a multiple keyword searchable index. ClassiFind is the first classifieds site to offer streaming video and the only one to offer such a variety of functions to its customers, according to the company. In addition, the site works with traditional and online publishers rather than competing with them.

Every ClassiFind ad includes a 200-word description and is entered into a comprehensive database that allows users to search under multiple categories. For a few more dollars, advertisers can add up to five color photos, RealAudio, and 30 seconds of streamed video at 15 frames per second. Prices begin at \$4.95 a month for the basic 200-word description, and advertisers do not have to have online access to advertise. All materials can be sent through the mail and ClassiFind will post the ad on the Internet. The site also offers tips for placing an effective advertisement.

Another feature of ClassiFind is Direct Notify, which keeps users abreast of new ads as they are entered into the system. Users are notified via e-mail every time an ad for the product or service they want goes online. With this feature, users do not have to remember to access the network in hopes of finding new leads.

The foundation of ClassiFind Network is the Partnership Program. Instead of competing with all the traditional classifieds sources that are going online and the current online classifieds sites, ClassiFind works with them to provide their service. Since ClassiFind says it is the first to have multimedia ads, they offer this service to other classifieds sources to use as a value-added extension. Joining the network is free. ClassiFind makes money on a revenue-sharing basis, sharing ad sales. ClassiFind's partners receive not only technical and sales support, but generous profits on all ads they place with ClassiFind Network. The company is currently securing partnerships with newspapers, magazines, and service resources such as car dealerships and real estate organizations.

Source: ClassiFind Network, San Diego, CA, 619/874-3692; Fax: 619/874-3690; <http://www.classifind.com>.

WorldLink Teams with Digital Leaders to Webcast NASA Events

Houston-based WorldLink Corporation, a leading Internet service and media content provider, has announced that it and other leaders in digital technology, including Sony Electronics, Compaq, NextLevel Systems, and Microsoft, are joining forces to bring NASA Space Shuttle events to the World Wide Web, according to a recent release from WorldLink. The company described it as a coordinated effort that breaks new ground in both form and content.

Visitors to WorldLink's Web site (<http://www.wl.net>) will be able to not only read and hear interviews with the astronauts but also view live and archived footage created using Sony's DSR-130 DVCAM digital video camera and transmitted through the Web using Microsoft's NetShow 2.0. WorldLink will use the combined technologies to host and deliver content to the Web in an ongoing series of interviews, conferences, and space shuttle launches and landings.

According to Greg Johnson, manager of operations for WorldLink, the company contacted leaders in digital technology to assure that this highly innovative Webcasting system is powerful and reliable. System components include, among others, software from Microsoft Cor-

poration, server communications technology from Compaq, satellite data communications from NextLevel Systems, and digital video cameras and VTRs from Sony.

WorldLink Corporation is a leading provider of on-site live media production and hosting for the Internet, on-demand Web content hosting services, and digital production. Founded in 1994, WorldLink has become an expert of online media production and Internet services. WorldLink's extensive history of live and on-demand Webcast production includes radio, television, live concerts, press conferences, and many other events.

WorldLink's on-site production services include all audio/video equipment and expertise required for live events, including cameras, lighting, sound, and support crews, and can provide full production services anywhere in the world, the company says. Examples of current live and on-demand content are available at WorldLink's Web site and Microsoft's Web site, including several radio stations, an ongoing series of live concert events by popular recording artists, and other online multimedia content.

Source: WorldLink Corporation, Houston, 281/398-8000; <http://www.wl.net>.

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