

The Nicer Side Of The Net

By Jonathan Davis

Over the last year, particularly this last summer, the Internet (or the Information Superhighway as some twits call it) has gotten a lot of bad press. A prime example of this would be the issue of Time magazine with the cover of a very young child staring into a computer monitor with the title "Cyberporn". This image is in error, and to prove this I am here to show anyone interested in using the Internet as the useful and mature information resource it is and should be.

I have been on the Internet for about three years now, with occasional access dating back even further. In my time spent searching through the vast resources of the Internet, I learned a lot about it. As well as pointing you to items of use and interest, I will also endeavor to pass on to you what I have learned of the Internet society.

I will go into my reasons for considering the Internet and its populous society another time. For now, for the benefit of the frosh and the unlearned, I will offer some guidelines to help you keep out of trouble. Why should you listen? Well, Internet Service Providers (such as the Computer Centre, which houses and controls our network and internet access), won't blink at the thought of removing someone's account if they start causing trouble.

What kind of trouble? Well, here we go.

1) Never borrow passwords and play with other people's accounts. If you have any idea how, you could incite a riot

on the Internet, and loose internet access for all of us. Also, if you are caught using someone else's account you will risk loosing your own, as well as the other person's.

2) Take it easy with the E-Mail. Sure, it's neat to send a message saying "Hello" to your friend sitting next to you, but this got really out of hand two years ago. Last year a delay was added, so any outgoing mail from the student mailserver was delayed for anywhere from 10 to 60 minutes before it was even sent. This is a real pain for anyone who ever had to send a message and get a response in a limited amount of time.

3) NO NETWORK GAMES!!!! I cannot stress this one enough. Network games are games you play with other people over the network, like the much-heard-of Doom and Doom II. The system administrator can find out what programs you ran, and when, for how long, and what the files were even days after you played the game and deleted the files. The reason why these games are so hated is because they will slow down the operation of the entire network. This can really hurt people trying to do assignments and other school-related work. Remember, the student network is for educational purposes. Games and the like are prohibited.

4) No chat programs. Sure, it is fun to have real-time (like a telephone, only

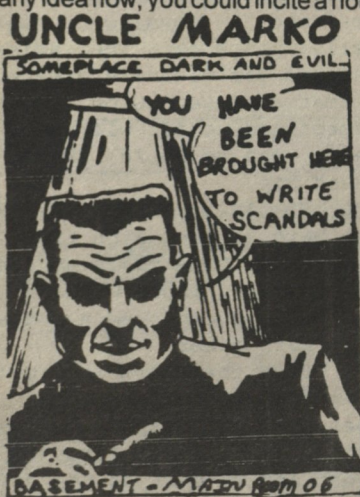
typing) chats with people, but these are banned for the same reason the games are. It isn't really educational, and it takes up a lot of the network resources that other students are fighting for.

5) Stay off the MUDs and other internet games. Sure, they are fun, but I have personally seen more than five people flunk out because of the MUDs, MUSHs, and other Internet games they played. It really isn't worth it.

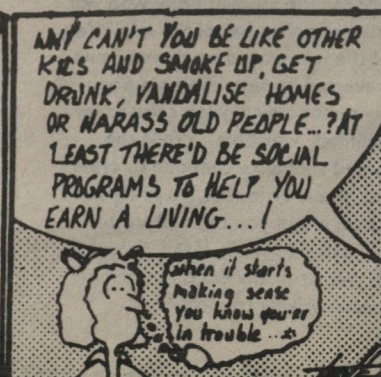
6) I'll only mention the Usenet, or newsgroups, in passing right now. When reading Usenet, basically sit back and shut up for a while. Read what the other people are saying, and learn what is allowed, and what isn't. Also, look for postings (messages) labelled "Frequently Asked Questions" or "FAQ", this is a file or set of files which may answer whatever questions you have, as well as setting acceptability ground rules for the newsgroup.

Sure, it may sound like I am killing your fun here, but believe me, if you keep these rules in mind, your time on the Internet will be less rocky than that of your predecessors.

Comments, suggestions, and questions are welcome at jdavis@bud.peinet.pe.ca or drop them off at the X-Press office.



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