

**Advanced VCE**  
**Business**  
September 2000

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Authorised by Sue Parker

Publications Code G009048

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## UNIT 24: E-COMMERCE

### ABOUT THIS UNIT

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This unit introduces you to the rapidly developing world of e-commerce. It focuses on the vast potential that e-commerce offers to business organisations and to the economy as a whole. You will learn that e-commerce is an increasingly important way of 'doing business'. You will find out that businesses have differing levels of involvement with e-commerce. They range from those trading entirely on the internet to using the internet only as a sales channel or for advertising. Some businesses do not use the internet at all. You will learn that in some cases, this is because the internet offers no potential for them, whilst with others the potential benefits have not yet been appreciated.

This unit examines some of the barriers to realising this potential and how these barriers can be overcome. You will also learn that business organisations need to examine the costs as well as the benefits of an e-commerce strategy. The unit also examines the basic requirements for the implementation of e-commerce into a business. You will learn that some businesses fail in their attempts to develop the use of e-commerce and that this could often be avoided by more careful planning.

You will find out that the development of e-commerce has also led to the emergence of new kinds of businesses, namely those that offer web design and strategy and domain name registration.

You will not be expected to become a technical expert in e-commerce but to have a broad understanding of its impact and implications.

This unit links with Unit 1: Business at work (Advanced), Unit 3: Marketing (Advanced), Unit 6: Business planning (Advanced), Unit 7: Marketing and promotional strategies (Advanced), Unit 8: Marketing research (Advanced), Unit 9: Sales (Advanced), Unit 10: Customer service (Advanced) and Unit 15: ICT in business (Advanced).

**The unit is assessed through your portfolio work. The grade on that assessment will be your grade for the unit.**

### WHAT YOU NEED TO LEARN

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#### The scope and impact of e-commerce

In order to understand the development and scope of e-commerce you need to have an understanding of what it means. One useful definition is:

*'Electronic Commerce' (e-commerce) is the exchange of information across electronic networks, at any stage in the supply chain, whether within an organisation, between businesses and businesses and consumers, or between the public and private sectors, whether paid or unpaid'*

(from e-commerce@its.best.uk, – a cabinet office report – September 1999).

This is a wide ranging definition from which you will see that e-commerce has a greater scope than its popular image of dot com businesses. You will find out that the growth has been rapid and that this growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future especially as internet access is enhanced by such factors as:

- ÷ WAP phones
- ÷ speed of future access
- ÷ digital TV
- ÷ shop kiosks (terminals in shops).

You will need to know about these and other developments which are facilitating the use of the internet by individuals and by business organisations.

You will learn that business organisations have differing levels of involvement and potential in e-commerce.

- ÷ Some do not trade on the internet but may use it as:
  - . another advertising medium, eg banner adverts
  - . a 'brochure' to provide product details for customers
  - . a means of keeping customers up to date on product developments eg through e-mail newsletters
  - . a means of gaining market research data from their customers
  - . a means of providing contact details
  - . the potential for an extranet.
- ÷ Others will use it as just one of several sales channels. Examples include supermarkets and travel agents (payment will either be on line or at a later date).
- ÷ Some businesses trade exclusively on the internet eg letsbuyit.com.

An organisation's involvement in e-commerce might be progressive (that is a business might start using the web for advertising, and then progress to selling on line).

You will learn that businesses which are prominent in e-commerce include:

- ÷ travel agencies and ticket agencies eg Lastminute.com, Expedia.co.uk, ebooker.com, Thomas Cook.com, ticketmaster.com
- ÷ on-line banking eg Natwest.com, Halifax.co.uk
- ÷ grocery retailers who offer shopping on 'the net' eg Tesco.co.uk, Iceland.co.uk
- ÷ companies selling books and music eg Amazon.com., CDNow.com and Jamcast.com
- ÷ companies offering e-commerce services such as website design and strategy, domain name registration and software eg Nominet (www.nic..uk), Apache (www.apache.com) Netscape (www.netscape.com).
- ÷ ISP (Internet Service Providers) eg BT Internet (www.btinternet.com), Demon (www.demon.co.uk), Virgin Net (www.virgin.net)
- ÷ recruitment agencies eg jobserve.com, jobsite.co.uk, netjobs.co.uk, jobs.ac.uk, stepstone.co.uk
- ÷ estate agents eg reallymoving.com.

The businesses identified above sell mainly to individuals and this is known as business to consumers (b2c). Some, such as Apache and BT Internet sell to other businesses and this is known as business to business (b2b).

Business buying online is known as e-procurement and forms part of supply chain management. You will need to know in outline the importance of supply chain management and that it includes:

- ÷ procurement (known as e-procurement)
- ÷ inventory management
- ÷ forecasting

- ÷ warehousing
- ÷ logistics/distribution.

Many of the businesses which are not successful in their e-commerce strategy fail because of poor distribution systems or stock levels that cannot cope with demand. Both factors might be a result of poor forecasting. Therefore, supply chain management is vital to the success of an e-commerce strategy.

You will also learn that some products and services are more suitable than others for selling 'on the web' and as such have a prominence there and are more likely to succeed. They include:

- ÷ products which have a 'known' content such as books, videos and music
- ÷ services such as banking, airline ticketing.

### **The opportunities and benefits of e-commerce for business organisations**

E-commerce has grown occurred because of the business opportunities that it can bring to organisations. These may include:

- ÷ individual access to customers (use of 'cookies' as a means of profiling customers who visit a web site so that the site can develop around customer needs)
- ÷ shortening of the supply chain
- ÷ possibility of 'global' access to the web site
- ÷ possibility of 24 hour a day and seven days a week access to the website
- ÷ business location becomes relatively unimportant
- ÷ increased information from customers
- ÷ two way interaction between customer and supplier means services and products can be customised and developed to meet specific needs
- ÷ addition to the revenue stream
- ÷ reduction or removal of the need for premises (retail outlets in particular)
- ÷ possibility of relatively low promotion costs
- ÷ the size of a business becomes less relevant (ie small businesses have access to global markets previously open only to large companies)
- ÷ maintains a competitive edge
- ÷ breaks down barriers to market entry
- ÷ reduced costs through by-passing of intermediaries (eg air travel passengers can buy directly from airlines over the internet).

You will learn that not all businesses realise the opportunities of e-commerce and that some consider the barriers to entry are too hard to overcome.

### **Barriers to the development of e-commerce within business organisations**

You will find that there are potential obstacles (perceived or otherwise) which hinder the development of e-commerce. You will also learn that in many cases these obstacles can be overcome. These obstacles or barriers include:

- ÷ inflexibility of internal business structure which can lead to lack of co-ordination and poor communication between departments
- ÷ lack of commitment to the project
- ÷ no clear promotional or marketing strategy
- ÷ failure to identify and meet customer needs for this new sales channel
- ÷ organisational culture might discourage change
- ÷ channel conflicts (i.e what will be the effect on other sales channels if this one is developed)
- ÷ scarcity of personnel with appropriate skills
- ÷ need for technical skills to maintain and keep the site up to date

- ÷ costs
- ÷ legal constraints
- ÷ lack of trust in the internet as being a safe and secure way of conducting business
- ÷ customer attitudes (which may include a lack of understanding of the internet)
- ÷ inability to cope with any increased demand caused by e-commerce
- ÷ difficulty in forecasting the effect on demand
- ÷ effect on company image of poor or slow site/service (eg estate agencies may not update sites when properties are sold and on-line recruitment agencies may not update when vacancies are filled).

### **Methods of overcoming these barriers**

You will learn that for some businesses, barriers to e-commerce may appear to be insurmountable eg when products cannot be sold electronically; or there are insufficient resources to meet an anticipated rise in demand or response rates. These businesses may still use a website for advertising and marketing purposes.

However, you will find that many of these perceived barriers can be overcome by:

- ÷ taking advantage of current government support
- ÷ help from organisations such as AEB (Alliance for Electronic Business)
- ÷ commercial websites offering help and support eg PriceWaterhouseCoopers ([www.e.business.pwcglobal.com](http://www.e.business.pwcglobal.com)), IBM ([www.ibm.com/e.business](http://www.ibm.com/e.business))
- ÷ training and development of staff
- ÷ recruiting new staff
- ÷ customer education and awareness campaigns
- ÷ using case studies of success (many of which are available on the web)
- ÷ using businesses which offer services in such areas as web design, domain names and software to support the e-commerce function
- ÷ networking with other organisations eg First Tuesday North
- ÷ a sound business plan.

### **Planning an e-commerce strategy**

In order to understand the elements of an e-commerce strategy, you must know some key concepts in website design and development. You will not need to have an in-depth technical knowledge of these concepts to be able to build a website. The key concepts you should understand are:

- ÷ importance of compatibility with corporate/brand image
- ÷ fundamental requirements of a good website such as sustainability, fast access, intuitive features, ability to cope with demand, compatibility with all browsers/systems, integration with marketing function
- ÷ the difference between and importance of appropriate back-end (the processes that happen in the background that are never seen by customers) and front-end (what customers see on screen when they visit the website)
- ÷ the differences between internet, intranet and extranet.

You should be able to enhance this understanding by visiting sites on the internet and evaluating their effectiveness. You can also make use of case studies in trade magazines and in the press.

The development of e-commerce within a business has to be carefully planned and integrated into the organisation. People within the organisation must understand and accept the development. Some key elements of the successful introduction of e-commerce to an organisation include:

- ÷ understanding customer needs (this can partly be achieved by profiling customers through the site and obtaining feedback from customers)
- ÷ intuitive site navigation and design – ie customers can find their way around easily and naturally
- ÷ adequate financial resources
- ÷ integration of e-commerce into the business
- ÷ arranging for an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to host the website/buying own server and hosting own site
- ÷ plans for attracting visitors to the site
- ÷ promoting customer loyalty
- ÷ dealing with confidentiality and security issues
- ÷ awareness of consumer protection and legal issues, the following legislation may be of particular importance
  - . Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
  - . Computer Misuse Act 1990
  - . Data Protection Act 1998
  - . The Sale of Goods Act 1979 (as amended by the Sale and Supply of Goods Act 1994)
  - . The Trade Descriptions Act 1968
- ÷ implementing any plans for financial transactions on line, eg credit card sales to customers require a merchant ID number, business-to-business transactions require on line invoicing (see *Financial Transactions* on line on page ???????)
- ÷ ensuring that all staff involved are adequately trained and do not feel threatened by the development.

The fundamentals of good business planning that you learned about in Unit 6: Business planning (Advanced) is essential here as well. Any business developing e-commerce must ensure that it has:

- ÷ conducted adequate market research to ensure that the strategy is feasible
- ÷ produced a marketing plan
- ÷ produced a financial plan.

The financial plan should include a careful consideration of the costs of e-commerce in order to ensure that they do not outweigh the identified benefits.

It will be useful to look at case studies of businesses who have failed in their e-commerce strategy and to analyse the reasons for this failure. Reasons may include expanding too quickly; failure to anticipate costs; failure to anticipate demand; neglecting key parts of the market, inappropriate domain names; and slow sites.

### **Financial transactions on line**

When considering an e-commerce strategy in which it intends to sell on line, a business will have to decide whether to require payment later or when the order is placed. If the latter is chosen, the business must ensure that the payment process is secure. This will apply especially in b2c situations where the payment is more likely to be on line and where the customer is an individual rather than an organisation. You will learn that the use of secure web pages (pages which are only visible to the customer and the web server) reassures customers by displaying a locked padlock symbol and/or some other security logo. However, you will find out that setting up systems for facilitating and supporting on-line payments requires very careful planning and technical expertise.

## ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

You need to produce:

- ÷ a plan aimed at the management of an organisation for the introduction of e-commerce into that organisation which must include
  - . a rationale for the development or introduction of e-commerce within the organisation
  - . objectives of the strategy
  - . explanation of the potential for e-commerce within the business and how it will be used (eg full trading or as a marketing channel)
  - . identification of any problems and risks that might be encountered and how they might be overcome
  - . any legal or security issues affecting the development and how they might be addressed
  - . main features that the web site must contain in order to be successful
  - . analysis of the impact of the development on the business as a whole (this could include the effect on other sales channels)
  - . an outline marketing and financial plan to support the development.

| <b>To achieve a grade E your work must show:</b>   | <b>To achieve a grade C your work must show:</b>  | <b>To achieve a grade A you work must show:</b>  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>÷ an outline of the benefits to an organisation in introducing e-commerce and the impact that they will have on the business</li> <li>÷ clear objectives for the strategy</li> <li>÷ key disadvantages and risks of introducing e-commerce to that organisation</li> <li>÷ identification of major barriers to the development of e-commerce within the organisation</li> <li>÷ an outline of the main methods which could be used to overcome these barriers</li> <li>÷ identify the legislation that the business must be aware of in the development of e-commerce</li> <li>÷ the features needed by a successful website for that organisation</li> <li>÷ the main marketing and financial implications of the plan.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>÷ a valid comparison of the advantages and disadvantages of introducing e-commerce into the organisation</li> <li>÷ clear analysis of how the plan meets the objectives identified</li> <li>÷ realistic justification for overcoming the barriers and risks that you have identified</li> <li>÷ an analysis of the potential impact of e-commerce on the business in terms of marketing and financial implications.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>÷ evaluation of the potential impact of the introduction of e-commerce on the business including an analysis of the risk involved</li> <li>÷ a coherent plan which includes an evaluation of the marketing, and financial implications which clearly evaluates the costs and benefits of the strategy.</li> </ul> |



It would be useful for students to have access to the 1999 Government report 'e-commerce at its best.uk' The report gives a basis for understanding how e-commerce was developing at the end of the last century. It will be important for tutors/lecturers to keep up to date with the any papers or reports that the Government may issue on this topic. It is also essential for tutors to keep up to date on the ways in which the internet and hence e-commerce are becoming more accessible for more people.

The use of case studies is essential (there are numerous sources of these in the daily press as well as on the internet itself). It must be ensured that students have knowledge of businesses that are at different stages of e-commerce development.

A useful exercise would be for groups of students to identify fundamental differences between the sites they investigate. They could report back in groups on websites they have examined and produce charts which show what types of businesses they have looked at and their use of e-commerce (ie is it fully trading, just advertising etc).

As stated in the introduction, it is important that students know the difference between b2b and b2c organisations but need not follow the b2b route in any great depth. They will need to know what e-procurement is and how it fits into the supply chain and this, of course will lead to some discussion on b2b organisations. It is important to stress that only an outline knowledge is required. However, students will need to know the importance of control of the supply chain and should look at examples of businesses which have controlled the supply chain and those that have not.

Students should realise that e-commerce (beyond an 'information' website) is not suitable for some businesses. For example, customers are reluctant to buy some products on-line preferring to buy goods where the content is well known. It could be useful to have a class discussion on what students would and would not be willing to buy over the internet.

### **The opportunities and benefits of e-commerce for a business organisation**

Again the use of live case studies will enhance the section *What you need to learn*. Students should be able to recognise from these case studies the benefits listed in the unit. Of course one example can include many of the benefits. A useful exercise would be for small groups of students to research some e-commerce companies, listing the benefits gained from e-commerce and then making presentations to the other groups. Guest speakers and/or visits to business organisations that have recently developed an e-commerce strategy would be very useful. Websites of organisations who offer help in e-commerce often have success story case studies and summaries of the benefits that e-commerce can offer to a business organisation.

### **Barriers to the development of e-commerce within business organisations**

Students may have difficulty in grasping that there are barriers to the use of e-commerce. They see the internet as part of everyday life even though they might not have had access to it themselves. It should be pointed out how rapidly the internet has grown and that to many adults it is still a modern phenomenon.

It is important that students realise that the implementation of e-commerce is not the easy process that is often implied in the media. They must also realise that it is not necessarily applicable to every type of business.

Again, the use of real case studies would be useful here. It would also be useful to try and arrange guest speakers from businesses who have recently developed e-commerce within their organisation. They could be briefed to talk about some of the barriers they faced in the development of their strategy.

### Methods of overcoming these barriers

Students need to know in outline how some of the barriers to development may be overcome. They need not show an in-depth knowledge but an overall understanding of the concepts. Again, reference to case studies of success stories would help. Equally useful would be reference to businesses that found these barriers were insurmountable, although this information might be harder to get if these developments were stopped in their infancy. However information on businesses that fail once they have established e-commerce is usually reported in the media. The case of BOO.COM would be worthwhile investigating.

### Planning an e-commerce strategy

The unit avoids technical knowledge and jargon as much as possible. The aim is to give students an overview of how e-commerce can be a key to the success of a business. However, they will need to know some of the jargon and concepts in order to have a greater understanding. It is important that they understand this before embarking on a strategy. (*Appendix 1* contains a glossary of the key terms that might facilitate the study of this unit).

Students should be familiar with the concept that planning is crucial to any venture that a business might undertake and is equally important in an area such as e-commerce. Students should understand that this development may bring major changes to how all or part of a business operates and as such should be planned as an integration into normal business activities. Again, case studies can be used to enhance learning here especially where the development of e-commerce has been problematic because of lack of adequate planning. It is important to emphasise that good business planning is a fundamental basis for success. Thus the marketing and financial aspects of the strategy should be carefully examined in order to ensure that the plan is viable. Students should be encouraged to find out the actual costs involved in the strategy and weigh them against the benefits. Students should refer to what they have learned or are learning in the Business planning unit. If they have not studied this unit, they should be given some guidance. *Sunday Times – E-Business St@rt-up* by Philip Treleaven would be very useful here.

### Assessment strategies

Students are required to produce a plan as part of the assessment. When grading student evidence you should consider the following general qualities that distinguish between the grades:

- + increasing depth and breadth of understanding
- + increasing evaluation, analysis and synthesis
- + increasing independence in planning, researching and carrying out the work.

### Grade E

In order to obtain this grade students should show a good understanding of why e-commerce is important to a business organisation. They should be able to outline the main benefits that it can bring to an organisation as well as its limitations. The advantages, disadvantages and barriers to the development of e-commerce should be appropriate to the business and not merely a list drawn from the unit or a case study. At this level the students will probably draw on some irrelevant material but this will not be substantial. It is expected that much of the work produced will be at a descriptive level. The language, format and layout of the plan should take into account the audience at whom it is aimed, (in this case, managers with varying levels of understanding of e-commerce). Students should also show a sound understanding of the financial and marketing implications of the strategy.

**Grade C**

Students should be able to realistically weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of e-commerce for the organisation and draw conclusions in an objective way. The methods suggested to overcome any barriers should be realistic and relate to the barriers identified. For instance, training and development may be a popular method but whatever is suggested should be possible within the resources of the organisation.

**Grade A**

In order to gain this grade students will need to show a coherent understanding of e-commerce, its potential and drawbacks. The strategy developed must clearly meet the objectives identified and be realistic and relevant to the organisation identified. It must contain a sound assessment of the financial implications of the plan and clear demonstration of its viability and any risks involved.

**Resources**

- ÷ websites of commercial organisations who offer 'e-commerce solutions'
- ÷ websites of retailers, banks, travel agencies etc
- ÷ print outs of websites
- ÷ newspapers which feature e-commerce, e-business or e-finance supplements eg *The Guardian* features e.finance on Tuesday and the *Daily Telegraph* features e-business on Thursday
- ÷ journals such as e-business review, e-business, Revolution, Create On-line and New Media AGE
- ÷ visits to businesses involved in e-commerce
- ÷ marketing materials from businesses involved in e-commerce.

**Useful websites include:**

PriceWaterhouseCoopers [www.e.business.pwcglobal.com](http://www.e.business.pwcglobal.com)

IBM [www.ibm.com/e.business](http://www.ibm.com/e.business)

Yahoo [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

TradeUK [www.tradeuk.co.uk](http://www.tradeuk.co.uk)

British Computer Society [www.bcs.org.uk](http://www.bcs.org.uk)

National Computing Centre [www.cssa.co.uk](http://www.cssa.co.uk)

BT internet [www.btinternet.com](http://www.btinternet.com)

Virgin Net [www.virgin.net](http://www.virgin.net)

Demon [www.demon.com](http://www.demon.com)

Nominet [www.nic.uk](http://www.nic.uk)

Altavista [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com)

Apache [www.apache.com](http://www.apache.com)

Exploit [www.exploit.com](http://www.exploit.com)

There is a wide range of textbooks aimed at Advanced VCE Business students. This includes materials published by schools and colleges, educational consorti, as well as the major educational publishers.

Printed materials from companies, especially large ones, are often presented well for young people. These materials may be part of a marketing and public relations strategy. Company reports can be used, but because of the complexity of technical language, edited sections might be more appropriate.

Consortia of schools and colleges can work together to produce common materials. Local Education Business Partnerships may facilitate such activity and also provide opportunities for teachers to spend time with local companies to produce resources useful for case study work.

FEDA has published an extensive list of materials for Business GNVQs/VCEs that is available by calling 020 7962 1006.

### **Key skills**

Students and teachers may explore further opportunities for developing Key Skills. This guidance gives broad indications of where the Key Skills are particularly relevant. Centres will need to check Part A and Part B of the Key Skills specifications and will need to develop additional evidence elsewhere to ensure that the requirements of the Key Skills units are fully achieved.

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**COMMUNICATION, LEVEL 3**

**Key Skills  
Reference**

| <b>WORKING WITH OTHERS, LEVEL 3</b>  |   | <b>Key Skills Reference</b> |
|--|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>When students are:</b>  | <b>They should be able to develop the following Key Skills evidence:</b>  |                             |
| ÷ collecting information for plans, they may need to work with others within the group and/or business organisations | WO3.1 Plan complex work with others, agreeing objectives, responsibilities and working arrangements.  | S                           |
| ÷ regularly meeting colleagues and/or organisations in order to develop the strategy                                 | WO3.2 Seek to establish and maintain co-operative working relationships over an extended period of time, agreeing changes to meet objectives. | S                           |
| ÷ reviewing the strategy developed with the organisation with whom they are working                                  | WO3.3 Review work with others and agree ways of improving collaborative work in the future.   | S                           |

**APPENDIX 1 – Glossary of terms**

Not all the terms listed below appear in the unit but students may come across them whilst conducting their research.

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Acrobat</b>   | A product from Adobe Systems Inc for manipulating documents stored in Portable Document Format (PDF). Acrobat provides a platform-independent means of creating, viewing, and printing documents.                           |
| <b>Bandwith</b>  | The amount of data that can be sent through a given communication circuit per second.   |
| <b>Bookmarks</b> | A way of remembering specific websites. Most web browsers allow you to store the names and addresses of interesting sites enabling you to get back to them quickly. In some browsers, this facility is called 'Favourites'. |
| <b>Browser</b>   | A browser is the software used for viewing pages on the web. Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer are two examples.   |
| <b>BBS</b>       | Bulletin Board System. Computerised meeting place allowing people to download files, carry on discussions, and make announcements.  |
| <b>Cookie</b>    | A small piece of information stored on your web browser which is then sent by the browser to the server when you access a site. The server uses this to customise web pages for individuals.                                |
| <b>E-mail</b>    | The sending and receiving of messages by electronic means, typically associated with the internet.  |
| <b>Extranet</b>  | Private company-wide website on the internet, which can only be accessed by customers, partners, suppliers or distributors.   |
| <b>Firewall</b>  | A dedicated gateway machine with special security precautions to provide security from hackers.   |
| <b>Hits</b>      | The number of accesses to a particular website.   |
| <b>Hot link</b>  | A connection between two programmes that instructs the second programme to make changes to data when changes occur in the first program.  |
| <b>Hot spot</b>  | An area of a section of text or graphic which makes the application do something (eg display a picture or open a new window).   |
| <b>HTML</b>      | Hyper Text Markup Language. The most common computer language used on the web.  |
| <b>Home page</b> | The first page seen when entering a website.  |
| <b>Hyperlink</b> | A link on a web page that takes you straight to another page, document or to another site.  |
| <b>Internet</b>  | A worldwide network of interconnected computers used to support public access to the World Wide Web and electronic mail.  |
| <b>IP</b>        | Internet Protocol. A technology that enables information to move from one network to another when required.   |
| <b>Intranet</b>  | A private company-wide website usually only accessible by members of the organisation through passwords.  |
| <b>ISP</b>       | Internet Service Provider. The organisation which provides your internet access, usually via a local 'phone number'.  |

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>ISDN</b>                | Integrated Services Digital Network. A super-fast digital line that allows you to do two things at once, such as taking a phone call while you're browsing the internet. |
| <b>Java</b>                | A programming language specifically designed for writing programmes that can be safely downloaded to your computer through the internet.                                 |
| <b>Javascript</b>          | A scripting language which can be used to add on-line applications and functions to web pages.   |
| <b>LAN</b>                 | Local Area Network, usually joining several computers in the same office, enabling everyone to share.  |
| <b>Modem</b>               | A piece of software/hardware which allows your computer to connect to the internet.  |
| <b>Newsgroups</b>          | An electronic bulletin board devoted to a specific topic of interest where users can read and post messages.   |
| <b>PoP</b>                 | Point of Presence: the number you dial to connect to an Internet Service Provider.   |
| <b>Portals</b>             | Highly popular internet sites that are gateways to the World Wide Web, and therefore of considerable interest to advertisers. Examples are Yahoo and Alta Vista.         |
| <b>Secure transactions</b> | A development which allows for the safe transmission of financial details and credit card numbers across the internet and intranet.                                      |
| <b>Server</b>              | The larger computer at your Internet Service Provider to which your computer connects when you link to the network.  |
| <b>Spam</b>                | An inappropriate use of e-mail, by sending the same unwanted message to lots of people.  |
| <b>Streaming</b>           | The broadcasting of sound and video over an intranet or internet in real time.   |
| <b>URL</b>                 | Uniform Resource Locator. The address of a page on the World Wide Web. Each page has a unique URL.   |
| <b>WWW</b>                 | World Wide Web. One way of using the internet allowing users to view and retrieve information from various web sites.  |
| <b>WAN</b>                 | Wide Area Network. The networking together of a number of local area networks, computers, computers linked together using the telephone network, leased lines etc        |
| <b>Web page</b>            | A single file stored on a web connected computer containing formatted text, graphics and hypertext links to other pages.   |
| <b>Zip</b>                 | A compressed file encoded in zip format.   |

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