

Internet accelerators will speed up access to Web

Making the Internet work faster is something high on everybody's wish list this holiday season.

The problem is, unless we live in one of the still limited areas served by cable TV Internet access or the new DSL service from Ameritech, we're mostly stuck with clunky old modems that all too often turn the World Wide Web into the World Wide Wait.

But there is some good news. There are some handy new programs that... pretty painlessly... can let you get a major speed boost as you surf the net. They're called net "accelerators."

If you go to one of the free download sites like www.download.com (www.download.com) and do a

key word search on "Internet Accelerators," you'll find plenty of offerings. But I have two that I can recommend.

The first is my favorite, something called NetSonic, available from the web3000 site

(<http://www.web3000.com/>).

It works this way: Since most Internet surfers return to the same pages again and again, NetSonic stores the main graphic elements of each page and only retrieves the content that has changed, cutting download time. Now that's good. And you



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can get it from the Web site for free. But a \$30 version of the NetSonic program does something else. Something much better. It... excuse the geek speak here... offers "a maximum transfer rate optimizer."

That's a very nerdy way of saying it fine tunes the way your Internet connection is configured, and then it does out more efficiency... often very noticeable efficiency. I've been noting a 30 to 40 percent improvement in accessing certain Web sites. And I'm not alone. More than 700,000 other surfers are using NetSonic, too.

If you regularly check in to certain sites that are updated a lot, there's a feature that allows you to exclude them from pulling up the old graphic elements. My page, www.pcmtalk.com, for example, is updated a couple of times a day. So I excluded it from NetSonic. That means that it automatically refreshes it

every time I log on, instead of first loading the old, stored images.

There's a similar program with an even nerdier name... Tweak-Dun (<http://www.pattersondesigns.com/tweakdun/>).

It's available for download on the web, too, and claims it can double your download speed by eliminating fragments of data packets... that's that same optimizing your internet connection whatchamacallit thing that NetSonic does. Tweak-Dun is shareware... meaning you can get it for free but, if you use it, they want \$15.

But hey, you wouldn't use it if it didn't work so... it's worth it.

As I said, it's been my experience that these web accelerators really do work. You try it and be the judge.

The e-mail I've received since talking about these on my radio show have convinced me that the programs are solid and not apt to cause conflicts with other

parts of your system. Real Audio Updates: Meanwhile, have you checked out my Web site (www.pcmtalk.com)? I've added a new daily briefing in Real Audio. You log into the site, and, with just a mouseclick, you can hear me reporting the top tech news stories of the day. Thanks to Altimedia (www.altimedia.com) and the BigNet (www.bignet.net) for making this service available.

Bottom line shopper: There's another free service on my site that's worth mentioning. It's called the Bottom Line Shopping Agent. Type in a keyword of something you're interested in buying, be it a book, music or computer hardware or software. The agent then searches the Internet and returns you a list of every online place that sells that item, arranged by price... thus allowing you to immediately see where you can get the best price.

Congrats to WDIV online - It's with a sense of real pride that I congratulate my friends at

WDIV ONLINE (www.wdiv.com) for being voted the "Best in the Industry" broadcast television Web site by the Web Marketing Association.

I founded WDIV ONLINE almost five years ago and helped nurture its growth until I left the station this past September. Among those who have worked so hard to make the site so great over the years is Adam Miller of Webcrossings (www.webcrossings.com); Paul Manzella, now of Mort Crim Communications, and Bill Young, who currently runs the site.

Mike Wendland covers the Internet for NBC-TV NewsChannel stations across the country. His "PC Talk" radio show airs Saturday and Sunday afternoons on Detroit's WXYT-Radio AM1270. He is the author of a series of Internet books. You can reach him through his Web site at <http://1www.pcmtalk.com>

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Michigan safety belt use up only slightly over last year's rate

Michigan's just-released safety belt use rate is up only slightly from last year, according to a survey conducted by the University

of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI). Use of safety belts is 69.9 percent in 1998 versus 67.6 percent

in 1997. The national rate in 1997 was 67.6 percent.

Historically, federal guidelines have required states to

base their safety belt use rates strictly on belt use in passenger vehicles. This is the first year Michigan and other states are reporting safety belt use rates as the average for passenger vehicles, sport utility vehicles, vans, minivans, and pickup trucks.

Lowest rate of usage is among pickup truck drivers, 64.1 percent.

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STATE OF MICHIGAN, IN THE PROBATE COURT FOR THE COUNTY OF OAKLAND, File No. 95-235,161-1E

ESTATE OF VIRGINIA E. FEHLBERG, Deceased, ISA 260-70-702

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS

Your interest in the estate may be barred or affected by the following:

The decedent, whose last known address was 6508 Summit Ridge, Clarkston, MI 48346 and 6-25-98. An instrument dated August 6, 1993 has been admitted as the will of the decedent.

Creditors of the decedent are notified that all claims against the estate will be forever barred unless presented to the independent personal representative, James E. Feilberg, 18125 Woodward Road, Suite 2324, Detroit, MI 48226-3247, within 4 months of the date of publication of this notice. Failure to file claims that the estate will be thereafter assigned and distributed to the persons entitled to it.

Attorney for Petitioner, C. Thomas Wilson, 719 Griswold Street, Suite 2324, Detroit, MI 48226-3247. Telephone (313) 951-0000.

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Published: December 13, 1998

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