

BACKCHANNEL

THE INTERACTIVITY NEWSLETTER OF THE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF ADVERTISING AGENCIES

"I don't know how to speak to everybody," said Howard Luck Gossage. "Only to somebody." Gossage's work for Eagle Shirtmakers, Quantas Airlines, Irish Whiskey Distillers, and the Sierra Club put him in the Copywriter's Hall of Fame. He spoke to a lot of somebodies very well. But there is a huge difference between his time, during advertising's Creative Revolution in the 1960s, and what is beginning to happen. The somebodies can, and do, speak back instantly, with ease. They speak back on the backchannel. And they demand response.

If people couldn't talk back, if they couldn't talk to each other and compare notes, if there were no backchannel, then there would be no need for advertising to be much different than it has been.

The backchannel is what makes interactivity possible, and interactivity is what makes this new medium unique. It is what this newsletter is devoted to covering. It is acknowledging that consumers have a major voice in this new media. It is declaring that advertising, which is vital

H O M E P A G E

People will not be content with pushing remote devices to order movies and products. One critical driver in the growth of online communications — just as it was with the telephone — has been the rediscovery that people like to talk with other people. Early videotex products died, and Prodigy's initial business plan flopped, because they were insufficiently two-way.

Interactivity — beyond turning on or off a TV or radio; buying or not buying a publication; or cueing up a particular movie or videogame — is what separates the new media from the traditional media. The traditional media are, essentially, one to many. The new media are many to many.

to the growth of affordable media, embraces this change and will explore ways to create effective dialogue between its clients and their customers.

"We're going to have to develop ways to bring the consumer to us," said Procter & Gamble chairman Edwin L. Artzt at the Coalition for Advertising Supported Information and Entertainment (CASIE) task force's "Report to the Industry" in New York earlier this month. "The whole process is going to change." Artzt later added at a press conference: "I think this is going to explode rather quickly."

In a message to an online discussion group that tracks new-media developments, a writer recently quoted someone who had quoted someone who had quoted Wayne Gretsky, the hockey player.

CONTINUED PAGE 6

March 1995

Vol. 1 No. 1


INSIDE THIS ISSUE:


Webvertising... Group Cortex's short Marathon run. Page 2


One On One... With Web consultant Mary Morris. Page 4

>>Chat Room <<... Quips and Quotes. Page 6

Pointers

 Voyager Company, which has been publishing CD-ROMs, laserdiscs, books on Floppies, and multimedia development tools for 10 years, maintains an innovative Web site at <http://www.voyagerco.com/treetest.html>. Two Voyager CD-ROM titles of interest to multimedia designers and marketers are Donald A. Norman's "Defending Human Attributes in the Age of the Machine" and Rick Prelinger's "Ephemeral Films: 1931 - 1960," a multimedia collection of company-sponsored shorts that the author calls "advertisements for a lifestyle." See also the transcript of "Don't Fence Us In," a speech Prelinger delivered on intellectual property rights at <http://bliss.berkeley.edu/impact/speakers/prelinger/prelinger-talk.html>.

 Check out the Fidelity Investments financial-services site at <http://www.fid-inv.com/>. Although there's more planned, there's plenty there now — and the site doesn't have an annoying "under construction" feeling to it. Take the "Guess the Dow" quiz. It's nicely constructed and you may snatch the prize, a NEC triple-speed CD-ROM, right out of our hands. Compare it to the Fidelity area on Prodigy, **jump: fidelity**, and the Merrill Lynch Business Center at Time Magazine Online on America Online, **keyword: time**.

 Upcoming events: The A.A.A.A. and Adweek are sponsors of "Vista West: Branding Through Interactive Media," a one-day workshop with four programs at the Fairmont Hotel, San Francisco, on May 8. The cost is \$445 for A.A.A.A. members after April 1; \$495 for others. Call 1-800-676-3387. . . Jay Chiat and Martin Nisenholtz will be keynote speakers at Jupiter Communication's two-day "Online Marketplace '95" at the Sheraton Chicago April 18 - 19. The cost is \$1050. Call 1-800-488-4345. . . Mecklermedia's "Spring Internet

CONTINUED PAGE 6



webvertising

Marathon's Short Run on Group Cortex's Netweb

When the official Marathon World Wide Web site went live last December with College Pro Painters as a sponsor, it looked like a perfect combination of content, advertiser, and medium. Marathon, a 3-D shooter game for Macintosh that was drawing great word-of-mouth reviews on Internet newsgroups for its demo version, would no doubt attract the attention of college-aged males.

That's precisely the target that College Pro, which franchises house-painting territories to college students on summer break, was looking to reach. An explicit hotlink ("Please visit our sponsor," it said) to College Pro's testimonial-type advertising (<http://www.netweb.com/mall/collegepro/>)

was spread across the bottom of the Marathon home page. By late February, however, users saw the following message from Marathon marketer Bungie Software when they typed the home page URL: "Bungie

Software has decided that maintaining a World Wide Web site is not an appropriate investment of scarce marketing resources."

What went wrong?

"There are still a lot of people who are very scared and nervous about the Internet," says Brent Halliburton, director of business operations for Group Cortex (<http://www.netweb.com/cortex/>), which is the Internet presence developer and consulting service in Philadelphia that developed the Web sites for both College Pro and

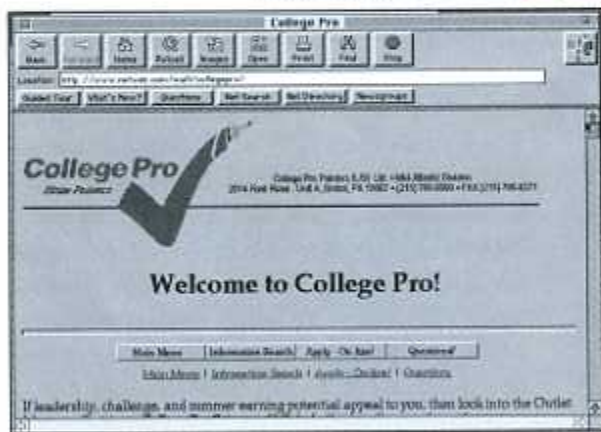
Marathon. "They're not sure if they're reaching their target market, and Marathon was one of those companies. They didn't want to spend money on this."

Group Cortex constructed the site for Marathon on spec after one of its part-time programmers told Halliburton that a pre-release demo version of the game was proving popular with his fellow students. The demo strategy is to give away a fully-functioning but truncated version of a game (e.g. four levels of a 40-level program) to whet users' appetites. For example, five-million copies of the demo version of Doom, a 3-D shooter game for the PC, were reportedly downloaded from the Net. Hundreds of thousands of complete versions were later sold.

Besides offering a demo download, the Marathon site offered breaking news about Marathon ("scooping the world by eight hours on its official release date"), contained information on strategy, content, and storyline, and provided hotlinks to related information. Halliburton says that the Marathon site was a hit, but that Bungie bowed out when he proposed upgrading the site with features for which Group Cortex wanted to charge less than \$1,000 a month.

Web commerce must evolve

Bungie CEO Alexander Seropian says that from the beginning he was "skeptical" about using a Web site as a marketing vehicle. First, Marathon's core audience already knew about the product before its mid-December release because of the "enviable" word of mouth generated on Internet newsgroups like comp.sys.mac.games, alt.games.marathon, and alt.mac.games.marathon. Second, people are still reluctant to order products over the Internet, Seropian says, primarily because of the fear of credit-card fraud. "I've read very few success stories, and a lot of tragic



stories, about people making large investments in Web sites and nobody places orders." But Seropian also says the experience showed him the value of the Web for exchanging information, and that Bungie will bring back a Marathon site under its own control.

As "cool" as the Web is, though, it's not quite ready for prime-time commerce, he feels. "I think there's another step to take," he says. "A little more structure, organization. A few more rules. With that kind of evolution, I think it can become a very powerful sales tool."

What Group Cortex wanted to do for Marathon

Halliburton says his parting with Bungie was amiable. He says that he wanted to upgrade the site to keep

it technologically ahead of "unofficial" sites that enthused gamers have established (<http://www.amug.org/marathon/index.html>). Group Cortex proposed creating an online ordering mechanism, as well as some cutting-edge interactive features, such as a Web discussion group, that would require greater bandwidth. "We wanted to invest a lot more time to upgrade the site and re-do a lot of the graphics. We thought that it seemed silly to have an 'official' Web site that might not be as good as something else," Halliburton says.

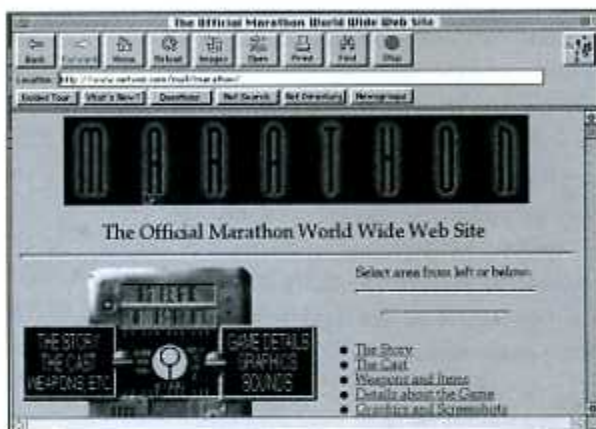
This illustrates an interesting phenomenon: In the many-to-many environment of the Web, you may not only have to keep up with your competition, but also with your customers. The day we talked to Halliburton, in fact, he had been up until 5 a.m. writing code and brainstorming ideas to take advantage of new interactive features offered in a just-released beta-version upgrade of the Netscape browser.

Tips, techniques, and the future

Like many Internet presence developers, Halliburton (brent@cccc.com or 215-854-0646) is working with agencies to develop sites for a variety of clients. "When we got

started there were five or six companies in the country doing this sort of thing," says Halliburton, who co-founded Group Cortex in December 1993 while attending the Wharton School of Business. "Now there are more than 200 businesses providing similar services." Halliburton suggests that marketers:

- Create awareness for the site. Contribute on-topic information to appropriate newsgroups and make references to your home-page address, for example.
- To draw people back, offer extraordinary content and services that are always changing.
- Stay on top of the technology as it develops, particularly to take advantage of interactive features. With the new Netscape release, Halliburton says, pages can be updated even as the user is looking at them. "Now we can virtually take control of the user's machine," he says, changing content on the fly.
- Use the multimedia and interactive capabilities of the medium to their fullest. "Content may be king, but it's a lot better to have exciting, compelling, interactive content than dead content," he says. The inevitable shakeout of Internet winners and losers, he feels, will revolve around this distinction as bandwidth and security issues are resolved. [Remember, however, that college students not only are technologically savvy, but also often use communication lines that are much faster than the ones normal consumers can currently access. —TF]
- Security standards still need to be developed so that customers feel secure making transactions. But Halliburton points out that Prodigy, CompuServe and AOL users are "very used to spending money online," and feels that they will bring a new enthusiasm for online commerce when all the commercial services offer gateways to the Web. ■





I N T E R • A C T I V E • V I E W

Mary E.S. Morris's "HTML for Fun & Profit" (\$35.95), will be published by SunSoft Press in mid-April. The book/CD-ROM package shows how to write hypermedia documents for the World Wide Web, and contains programs and utilities needed to create a Web server for the UNIX, Mac, or Windows NT environments. "It's written for the person who has no idea where to start," Morris says.

Morris is a self-declared generalist who has worked in various MIS positions for 13 years. She left Sun Microsystems last June to start the consulting firm Finesse Liveware, which provides evaluations of business opportunities and feasibility analyses of new technology for the emerging Internet commercial community.

"The skill that has set me apart from others isn't technical, nor is it creative," she says. "It is my business perspective." Getting inside your client's head and talking about what a Web site will do for business, she maintains, is critical. "Most creative things tend to yield a high-graphics, slow-as-molasses-on-14.4k site that contributes little content," Morris says.

Morris's email address is marym@Finesse.COM; her phone is 415-967-6338. For additional information about her book point to <http://www.sun.com/smi/ssoftpress/books/Morris/Morris.html>



Significant differences in Web advertising:

The Web is passive advertising. The Web is usually content heavy. Designing for the Web is critical — copying stuff directly over from other media isn't always a good idea. The Web is not WYSIWYG [What You See Is What You Get].

How to draw people in:

The most important thing to remember about using the Web is that it is a passive advertising medium, and it needs to be used in conjunction with some sort of active process to bring people in. There are several alternatives available for bringing the foot traffic to the ad itself, such as registering the Web site with worms and search tools, announcing it in What's New areas, using an Internet evangelist to bring attention, adding the Web site to your email and newsgroup signature, and referencing the online site in conventional media.

The best example of referencing:

Look at Wired magazine. They routinely have around 20 ads per issue that have Web-page pointers in them. Take a look at the ad for my book on page 88 of the March issue. The ad agency had no idea how important the URL was so they made it infinitely small. Regardless of the size font they put the URL in, it has generated considerable traffic, and I have received several emails about my book, including one gentleman emphatically stating that he had a credit card, where could he call to get it Fed Ex'ed to him?

What a Web page should contain:

A lot of information, such as answering the questions a person would ask if they were considering buying the product in a store or via an 800 line. It is important to remember that a Web

page should always lead the person somewhere else. That place may be to an order form to complete the sale, or to a phone number, or to an email address to complete the sale or get more customized information. The Web page should also motivate the person to take that next step. The biggest problem that I have seen is that Web pages are either one way or the other. Either a lot of hype — motivation to take the next step without providing any significant new information — or a place that just provides more information and leaves the person wondering where to go or what to do next.

The first things to do:

Visit as many of your competitors as you can find, and at least 25 to 50 other sites. This will give you a feel for what is currently out there. Use the media that your customers will be using. If you expect to attract users from home, check out some of those sites from a Prodigy account, and use a 14.4K connection. Time has a very serious meaning on the Net, and you need to be considerate of their time.

What it costs to set up a site:

Determine how much you want to spend, and how much you want to do yourself, and how much to farm out. You can set up a site for about \$150 and maintain it for less than \$50 a month, or you can spend \$90,000 to set up and a few thousand to maintain it. Some of your big cost factors are:

- Setup/maintenance of the hardware and Internet connection (this part should be farmed out if you are new to the medium.)
- Design and creation of the Web pages themselves.

Coding and designing the pages:

There isn't that much to learn for HTML, or HyperText Markup Language, the coding format for Web pages. If you want to farm this out, get a high school or college student. As for the design, I am a cynic. I don't think that most of the design people are worth the prices that they charge. If you feel the need to farm this out, go for a computer/human factors person, or a usability person, instead of a standard media designer. The former do a much better job designing the interface for the medium.

When to call in a programmer:

For interactivity. If you are actually selling products — completing the transaction online — or if you want a highly interactive site, such as the talk area on HotWired, get a programming-type person.

Plan to change:

Make a plan of how your site will start out and how it will grow. You aren't going to get much repeat traffic from a static site, so plan on evolving it. You also want to make the evolution changeable as you find out how people respond to your site.

A list of Web service providers:

A Web service provider offers any one of a number of Web services. The most common services are Web-page serving (putting the Web pages onto a server on the Internet), Web-page creation/design, and CGI scripting (behind-the-scenes programming

for making pages interactive). I supply an electronic copy of over a hundred current providers. It can be obtained by sending email to LISTPROC@EINet.net with the message (in the body): "GET INET-MARKETING WWW-SVC-PROVIDERS," or by FTP: <ftp://ftp.einet.net/pub/INET-MARKETING/www-svc-providers>.

The best commercial sites:

I'm sorry to say this, but at the moment I only have three sites that I feel are really good.

HotWired

<http://www.wired.com/>

Blackbox

<http://www.blackbox.com/>

Computer Literacy

<http://www.clbooks.com/>

Each of these sites has different characteristics that make them good. Wired has renounced its highly graphical but not intuitive past and created one of the best interactive sites on the net. Blackbox is one of the best places to actually shop for something. And Computer Literacy is just plain overall good, with an extra "attaboy" for tying their site to their data so that they can tell people whether a book is in stock in their locales or not. **BC**

World 95" will be held at the San Jose Convention Center April 10 - 13. The cost for full-conference admission (not including tutorials) is \$595. Call 1-800-632-5537.

🔍 "Cyber-" and "morph" tied for "Word of the Year" honors among the members of the American Dialect Society. "Infobahn" was voted "Most Promising." To join the ADS email discussion group, which discusses words and their origins, send the message "sub ads-L" to listserv@uga.cc.uga.edu. Precise usage is critical to online dialogue, which is — currently — free of voice inflections or facial expressions.

🔍 Now it can be said: The Web has everything including the kitchen sink. The Faucet Outlet is at <http://www.faucet.com/faucet/faucet.catalog.html>.

🔍 Two new biweekly magazines — Interactive Week and Interactive Age — broadly cover the industry. Circulation is controlled for both. Point to <http://techweb.cmp.com/ia> for the online version of Interactive Age, or call 708-647-6834 for a subscription. Interactive Week offers an email update service on breaking news stories. Send email to iwupdate@ix.netcom.com and type "subscribe" in the body. The Web version of the magazine is at <http://www.interactive-week.ziff.com/intweek/>; it's also on CompuServe's ZiffNet. Call 609-829-9313 for a subscription.

🔍 For great agency house ads from the heyday of print, see any Fortune magazine from the 1930s. For a great agency house ad at the dawn of interactivity, see Chiat/Day's Idea Factory at <http://www.chiatday.com/>.

🔍 Mountain Travel - Sobek, which books exotic vacations such as hiking tours of Patagonia, is on to something (but we're not sure what) with its electronic postcard feature at <http://www.mtsobek.com/postal/> and its email newsletter, "Hotnews." There's good follow-through: a CD-ROM and print catalog ordered online arrived via two-day mail. Be ready for some thumb-twiddling, however,

as the site is heavily graphic. It was constructed by the Synapse Group, which offers other interesting demos of its work, which it calls Active Document Design, at <http://synapse-group.com/>.

🔍 Baffled "completely" by the asterisks that sometimes surround words in online messages? Wonder what happens when you Bcc: someone? These and other online mysteries — as well as tips on email structure, jargon, and etiquette — are covered concisely in "The Elements of E-mail Style" by David Angell and Brent Heslop (Addison-Wesley, \$12.95).

🔍 Three "research" sites of interest: BBDO's TechSetter Hotline on CompuServe, go: [BBDO](http://www.bbdo.com); American Dialogue on AOL, keyword: [BKG](http://www.american-dialogue.com), and VALS on the World Wide Web, <http://future.sri.com/vals/valshome.html>. There's also a very traditional packaged-goods-type survey at <http://192.160.127.230/cgi-bin/vmarket> for a decidedly Gen-X agency (also check out <http://cybersight.com/cgi-bin/imi/s?main.gnml>).

🔍 Thomas Ho's Favorite Electronic Commerce WWW Resources Home Page is like that gunmetal-gray file cabinet that contains any record you'd ever need — if you could remember what folder you filed it in. Ho's exhaustive list of links and documents on all manner of marketing has moved — and expanded — since its URL was published in the Winter issue of Agency. Check out <http://www.engr.iupui.edu/ho/interests/commmenu.html#JumpStn>. And if your agency has a home page, get it added to Ho's list.

🔍 General Motors is the first advertiser to "commit to supporting" the Interactive Information Index, a service for tracking "clickstreams" — or the online path a consumer takes by clicking on a remote device, mouse, or keyboard. The index was developed by ASI Market Research, Next Century Media, and Arbitron New Media. Call Arbitron's Carol Edwards at 410-312-8431 for information.

➤➤ "Knowing what I know today, this is going to be far more exciting than I even imagined six months ago," Microsoft's chief operating officer Bob Herbold told Michael Schrage (Adweek, 2/5/95). Six months before, of course, Herbold had been Procter & Gamble's senior VP, advertising and information services. BackChannel asked Herbold what agencies should be doing right now to get ready for interactive advertising.

"Getting more involved with the technology and where it might be going, and figuring out how they might relate to it. While a lot of that stuff is early in its development, the more you can anticipate the direction and contemplate how to deliver meaningful information — persuasive information — to consumers, the better off you are. There's nothing revolutionary in that thought, but sometimes just the fundamentals are what are important to do in a period of change." <<<

➤➤ Peter Sealey, the former Cola-Cola marketing executive who is now a consultant to management at Digital Pictures, spoke about the impact that interactivity will have on advertising during the A.A.A.A. Media Conference & Trade Show in Orlando in February. "This technology and interface will define the rest of your professional careers," he told an audience of more than 500 people. "Our children will not comprehend the world in which our parents grew up." <<<

➤➤ Nicholas Negroponte, founding director of MIT's Media Lab and Wired

columnist, expounds on his favorite themes in "Being Digital" (Knopf, \$23). Excerpts are at <http://www.randomhouse.com/knopf/index.html>. In the future, according to Negroponte, "the consumer may have an option to receive material without advertising but at a higher cost. In other cases, the advertising will be so personalized that it is indistinguishable from news. It is news."

At a lecture at the New York Public Library in February, Negroponte said that he senses less of a generational divide in cyberspace than he previously assumed. Older and retired people are getting online, he said. Negroponte was unable to ease copyright concerns that two questioners raised. "Copyright law," he writes in his book, "will probably have to break down completely before it is corrected."

Concerns about intellectual property rights — and questions like "but how do we make money online?" — are as troublesome to content providers as configuring a PPP connection is to non-Gen-Xers.

Negroponte also plugged a Media Lab site, <http://ringo.www.media.mit.edu/ringo/ringo.html>, that analyzes users' input about music and kicks back recommendations. "Nielsen just went out of business," he cracked. <<

>> "The inzie/clubby nature of online early adopters should be discounted as true advertising sponsors help raise editorial offerings and values. Sponsorship of online areas rather than their underwriting should be our credo," writes Fred Sattler, Chiat/Day's

Media Research Director, <http://www.chiatday.com/cd.www/explor/emerg/evolving.html>. <<

>> Words that have been bandied about on the Net for a while are morphing into second-generation concepts:

● **Interactive > Participation:**

Participation, such as getting involved in a message center or live-chat area is more intense than interacting, which may mean no more than choosing a movie (someday). Participation is the area in which Web browsers have been disappointing, but that's changing. Check out <http://judith.www.media.mit.edu/SocialWeb/SociableWeb.html>, as well as <http://sunsite.unc.edu/dbarberi/chats.html>, which points to other sites exploring enhanced chat capabilities.

● **Content > Context:** Conventional wisdom has been that no one will visit, or revisit, your site unless there's compelling, worthwhile content. But as more and more sites go online, there's a crucial need to put the barrage of information into perspective — the way, for instance, that a magazine or newspaper does in print. You'll also see this concept expressed as "branding information" or "providing point of view."

● **One to One > Many to Many:**

Relationship marketing takes on new meaning when everybody has something to say — and a channel to say it through. See the Computer-Mediated Marketing/Vanderbilt site at <http://colette.ogsm.vanderbilt.edu/> for one take on the subject. <<



>> "Don't be colorless and corporate. Don't be boring," says Saatchi & Saatchi's Erica Gruen. "Ban the word 'compelling'; [interactivity] has to do with being interesting and intrusive." (Gruen admits that "intrusive" carries a negative connotation of "annoying," but she redefines it as "spontaneous, surprising, unexpected.") Speaking as a member of the Online Marketplace panel at "Consumer Online Services II" conference in New York in March, Gruen told "content" providers to start thinking of themselves as "entertainment" providers; to think of "users" as "viewers"; to "put viewers and advertisers first and the rest will follow"; to "sell, not tell" (contrary to AOL president Ted Leonsis's admonition to "tell, not sell"); to deliver verifiable information about the value of online audiences, and to "start thinking about how to make the content FUN." Making cyberspace FUN, in fact, is one thing that the other four panelists, including Home Shopping Network Interactive's Jeff Gentry, absolutely agreed upon. <<

>> Ted Nelson, the conceptual architect of hypermedia, in *New Media* magazine (4/94): "Advertising is one of the great art forms of the century. Like religious art of the past, it shows us how we would like to be and makes us feel that way. Interactive advertising will really make us feel as we ought to — in control. We may only have the choices they give us, but we'll feel good about it." <<



Gretsky attributed his superior play to a simple concept: "Skate to where the puck will be."

Easy enough for The Great Gretsky, perhaps, but not for the rest of us. A hockey puck travels faster than bad information; five crazed opponents are also chasing it — in fact, our ankles wobble whenever we pull on a pair of skates. That's pretty much the story of interactive advertising. Someone knows someone who knows someone who's doing it. And although the concept is simple, the execution is something else entirely.

The main arena for interactive development right now is the Internet, particularly the area that contains the multimedia world of the World Wide Web. We'll scrutinize the Web, and try to separate hype from reality. We'll also look at CD-ROMs and kiosks, as well as interactive TV and whatever else develops as viable advertising, communications, or research media for A.A.A.A.'s members.

James Gleick, author of "Chaos" and founder of the Internet access provider Pipeline, was recently asked by NetGuide magazine if the Internet would remake society. "No, it's not going to remake society," he answered. "It's going to be society."

Whether or not we buy into the Internet becoming quite that significant, it's clear that something momentous is taking place. Interactive media won't replace the media of today, but they will transform the way consumers receive information and entertainment as surely as the automobile and television have, if not more so.

For example, the home page of a small European agency (<http://www.eunet.ch/werbal/experiments/>) states that "the rules in interactive advertising are upside down. What your customer doesn't want to see on the Web is . . ." We're shown a photograph of a woman in a sheer

blouse splashing water on herself at a fountain. There's a bottle of laundry detergent in the lower corner.

On the next page, we're offered what interactive customers supposedly do want to see in interactive detergent advertising. The effort combines elements of traditional mass advertising along with direct marketing, sales promotion, PR, door-to-door, catalog, sweepstakes, and infomercials.

The interactive, relation-based advertising that emerges from today's experiments, however, will probably be entirely different from anything that's out there now. But the fact is that this small Swiss agency and hundreds of other entrepreneurs worldwide, as well as established public relations, direct marketing, promotion, yellow pages and infomercial specialists, are all exploring and creating interactive models in anticipation of what many observers predict will be a multibillion dollar marketplace in a few years.

The member agencies of the A.A.A.A. will have a major role in creating and shaping the paradigms of interactive advertising, and in developing unique techniques for this unique media. At present, few agencies online are actually creating advertising. Most are using cyberspace for research and communications, both internal and with clients, according to a recent survey of 225 A.A.A.A. members. But most respondents also indicated that they soon expect to be deeply involved in interactive advertising.

Consumers and business people will flock to the Web in 1995 as the commercial services offer their own Web browsers. It's clearly time for the convergence of Net "culture," advertising agency creativity and pro-

duction values, and marketing accountability. CASIE is working "behind the scenes, not making headlines" to insure that advertising assumes a key role in supporting the emerging media, as O. Burch Drake, A.A.A.A. president, put it at the "Report to the Industry" meeting. For our part, BackChannel will:

- Talk with the people who are creating, selling, and marketing in the new media
- Look at what's working and what's not working
- Troll for new ideas and methods
- Report on breakthroughs and standards as they emerge
- Point to interesting sites and discussions.

Most of all, we will take this newsletter in the direction that you need it to go. Let us know. Our preferred backchannels are email, tforbes@westnet.com, and fax, 914-478-5064. BackChannel also will be up on a Web site soon. Interact with us, please.

—Thom Forbes, Editor

BC

BACKCHANNEL

BackChannel, the quarterly Interactivity Newsletter of the American Association of Advertising Agencies, is created, written, and edited by T.H. Forbes & Associates for the A.A.A.A. For information regarding BackChannel, please contact:

Thom Forbes
 email: tforbes@westnet.com
 Fax: 914-478-5064
 or

Joyce Harrington
 American Association of
 Advertising Agencies, Inc.
 666 Third Ave.
 New York, NY 10017-4056
 Voice: 212-682-2500
 Fax: 212-953-5665