Web sitings

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Portals have been around for a while, with various definitions abounding. Webopedia.com (2002) defines a portal as 'a Web site or service that offers a broad array of resources and services, such as e-mail, forums, search engines and on-line shopping malls'. Telecom (2001) defines a portal as 'a Web page that serves as a point of entry for surfers of the World-Wide Web'.

Very loosely, a portal is a site that should tempt you to make it your home page. It should provide you with services and links that you find useful, and be a starting point for your entry into the World-Wide Web. As Peter Hall, who runs the Parkhurst Village Site, points out: 'I want a site that meets my criteria and is very simple to navigate; I don't want to waste time and money or suffer an attack of web rage because I am required to enter keywords, fill in little blocks and further refine my search by giving 3 or 4 iterations which cause additional page loads.'

The Parkhurst Village Site (http://www.parkhurstvillage.co.za/) is aimed at people living in and around the Parkhurst area, providing local community information, business listings, columns and other local information. Additionally it provides access to the 'greater web' – through links to search engines, e-mail, banking, e-commerce and various other useful sites, such as news links. If you live around the area, it is easy to find businesses that are close to home.

As of January 2002, the site has been receiving 500 impressions a day. It also charges a fee to businesses to list. Peter Hall states 'the site needs to be packaged appealingly to attract a broad base of visitors, to offer news and views and … to offer very good deals to the businesses that list and have Web pages [at a] max[imum of] R 50,00 a month. The pages should offer individuality, not stereotypes.' Owing to business interest, some costs are being covered, making it more worthwhile to spend the time and effort needed to keep the portal fresh and up to date.

@brint.com offers a knowledge management portal, which provides an excellent collection of links and articles focused on knowledge management. If this is your field, this is potentially a valuable page to start with. It can be found at http://www.brint.com/km/. The home page (http://www.brint.com/) states that @brint.com is 'The Premier Business and Technology Portal and Global Community Network for E-Business, Information, Technology, and Knowledge Management'. They also charge a fee for businesses to list, and have been recommended by organizations such as KM World and Business Week.

If knowledge management is your main interest, MetaKM (http://www.metakm.com/index.php) advertise themselves as the 'knowledge management portal for practitioners, researchers, and solution providers'. They provide recent articles, case studies, events, training, research and so on from the site. This site is very focused on

knowledge management and does not have general links. Although it might not be the page to make your home page as you log onto the Internet, it is worthwhile checking on a regular basis.

References

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