Tech/Focus

Making life easier for job-hunters

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

WITH Bangladesh struggling to meet demands of an increasingly dynamic web-propelled world, most IT firms are inclined to designing and maintaining job-based websites, aiding current job seekers as well as employers.

All these sites provide news and advertisements about vacancies in firms and companies. To be notified of such vacancies, job seekers should sign in as members of each site. Besides advertisements, the sites aid seekers with curriculum vitae and resume writing. Some sites even have options for customised curriculum vitae.

jobsbd.com, for example, has an innovative set of choices, usually sought by job seekers. Such choices would be the options of '*Immigration*', '*H1B Visa*', '*Foreign jobs*', '*Enrollment to foreign universities*' and so on besides the usual being '*Career*', '*Resume*', '*Interview*', '*Career Guide*', '*Consultancy*' and so on.

The problems with such sections is that, the '*Immigration*', '*H1B Visa*' and other such options lead to information about immigration to the United States of America, which could be easily obtained from the US Embassy in the city.

Also the '*Foreign jobs*' option lead to further information about job prospects in Germany and also through a link back to the '*H1B Visa*' choice. As could be the case, most individual while clicking on such options, would be anticipating information about potential job vacancies in any foreign country, or information about immigration procedures to such countries and so on. The developers should further look into such details and try to improve the web site, by solving such potential 'confusions'.

Otherwise, the '*Enrollment to foreign Universities*' provides links to various colleges and universities of USA, Canada, Australia, Bangladesh, India and the UK, which is a commended effort on the part of the developers of this site. Also, the '*Customized CV*' section, which contains curriculum vitae of job seekers along with their photographs, is a great addition to the site.

"Our portal was the first ever job-based site to be launched in Bangladesh," said Kamruzzaman, business executive, Daffodil Web & E-commerce Limited.

"Within the next three months or so, we hope to present the site with a whole new look, hopefully," he added.

jobsbangladesh.com is a much simpler site than the previous one. The site contains the usual choices of '*Vacancies*', '*Employer's Link*' and so on.

Alongside these, the site has a range of worthy sections like '*Jobs Today*', '*Walk-in Interview*', '*Deadline Tomorrow*' and others which would be quite effective to help out any individual in dire need of a job.

"We have been receiving steady responses and are still busy with the promotion of the site," said Masudul Islam, executive member of the site. "By December, we plan to market and improve the site as much as possible, with more sections and other options," he said.

grameenjobs.com, has options like '*Employer's Section*', '*Career Counselling*', '*Featured Employer's*' as well as sections containing the day's '*Additions*' and '*Deadlines*'.
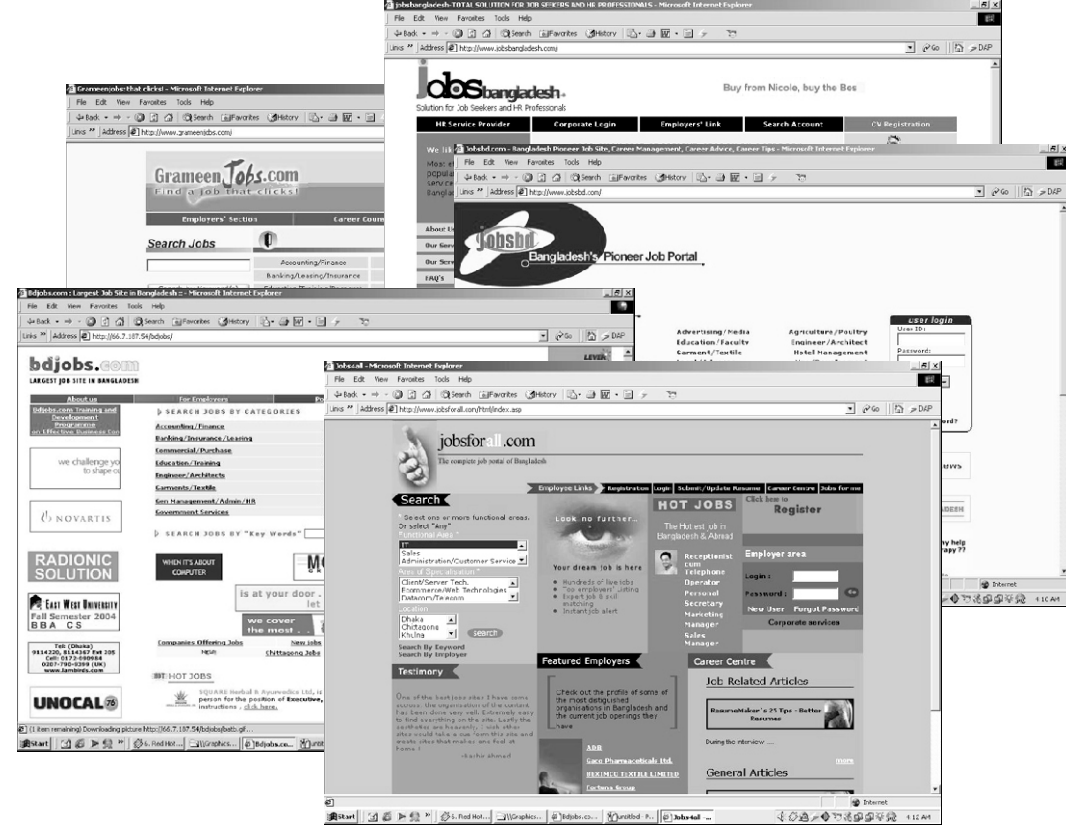
The site is quite attractive with a '*Top Click*' section, which sports short introductions of organisations seeking employees along with the job designation itself, which is helpful for seekers glancing through the site.

jobsforall.com, is a standardised job site, providing job searches, according to '*Functional Area*', '*Area of Specialisation*' and also '*Location*'. The site has a well-planned '*Employee Link*' with a very helpful '*Career Center*' containing '*General*' & '*Job-related*' articles.

The site has been extremely helpful for job seekers but has been undergoing renovations for the last few months. Recent updates and other additional and necessary sections would actually do wonders for this site.

Last but not the least, is **bdjobs.com**, which is invariably the most popular site for the Bangladeshi job market. The site has the usual range of sections like '*Employer's Section*', '*Post Resume*', '*Career Counselling*' '*Search Job by categories*' along with useful sections like '*Search Jobs by keyWords*', and '*Hot Jobs*'.

Rather than haphazardly listing the interest of most seekers, along with the rest of the services provided by the site, the developers have a different section called '*Career Resource*', which further contains extremely necessary details and tips needed during interviews. This section further contains '*Cover-letter*' and '*Resume*' writing tips.

Pop-ups informing seekers about helpful workshops in or around the city, also is a great new addition to this site.

"We have recently initiated the professional resume writing section to which seekers have been responding positively," said AKM Fahim Mashroor, chief executive officer, bdjobs.com. "We would hopefully be making improvement and additions to our site gradually," he said.

All these sites are more or less aiding most seekers as well as employers with the necessary details required in the extremely competitive job market of today. Periodic surveys and researches on what the job market demands and therefore updates and additions of sections to the sites, would actually lead to better accomplishment of the noble purposes, which had led the developers to initiate such sites in the first place.

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Microsoft exposes ASP.NET

STAR TECH DESK

THE ballroom of the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel came alive with approximately 300 local software developers as Microsoft held a special seminar aimed specifically at programmers entitled "ASP.NET Exposed" on June 23. Asia Pacific Regional Developer Evangelists, Edmund Quek and Yuri Misnik demonstrated the power and productivity benefits of the latest incarnation of Microsoft's computer application building technologies through several sessions, focusing particularly on how applications could be built for the Internet and network environments using ASP.NET.

"ASP.NET builds on the foundation of Microsoft's core .NET programming platform, which is essential for connecting people, information, systems and devices," said Quek. "With our state-of-the-art tools such as Visual Studio .NET 2003, we believe that the modern programmer is empowered to build secure, reliable and scalable applications that meet the demands of the modern Internet environment. This series of talks today is specifically aimed at exposing how developers may become more productive at building applications for the World Wide Web using our ASP.NET technology."

"It was amazing to feel the excitement of the developers," added Misnik. "The response to the material was very positive, and the preliminary feedback that we have had from the attendees indicates that this kind of event was long overdue. The development community in Bangladesh is interested in the latest wave of Microsoft technologies and particularly how they can upgrade their skills to catch the wave away from older technologies such as Visual Basic 6.0 and older ASP."

The material presented at the ceremony covered many aspects of developing using ASP.NET Microsoft's latest technology for building Internet applications, ranging from introductory level sessions, to deep drill-downs into the security of web applications, developing web applications that target Mobile device such as SmartPhones and Pocket PCs, and various tips and tricks as to how to get the best out of the technology.

Quek also said, "Clearly there is a great deal of interest in Microsoft's programming platform and tools, and a great deal of demand ranging from the Academic community to the Independent Software Vendor community for information, instruction and technical support. We are just getting started here in Bangladesh and from the positive reception that we have received we definitely want to come here again to deliver more such seminars."

World's smallest fuel cell battery

Japanese electronics giant Toshiba unveils the world's smallest direct methanol fuel cell (DMFC) battery developed for small electronic devices such as digital audio players and wireless headsets at the company's headquarters in Tokyo on June 24. The DMFC battery, measuring 22 x 56 x 4.5 mm and weighing 8.5 grams, can put out 100 milliwatts of power for as long as 20 hours with a 2cc charge of methanol. Toshiba is expecting to commercialize the DMFC for portable electronic devices in 2005.

PHOTO: AFP

Tech/News

Scientist sees space elevator in 15 yrs

AP, Washington

PRESIDENT Bush wants to return to the moon and put a man on Mars. But scientist Bradley C. Edwards has an idea that's really out of this world: an elevator that climbs 62,000 miles into space.

Edwards thinks an initial version could be operating in 15 years, a year earlier than Bush's 2020 timetable for a return to the moon. He pegs the cost at $10 billion, a pittance compared with other space endeavors.

"It's not new physics nothing new has to be discovered, nothing new has to be invented from scratch," he says. "If there are delays in budget or delays in whatever, it could stretch, but 15 years is a realistic estimate for when we could have one up."

Edwards is not just some guy with an idea. He's head of the space elevator project at the Institute for Scientific Research in Fairmont, W.Va. Nasa already has given it more than $500,000 to study the idea, and Congress has earmarked $2.5 million more.

"A lot of people at Nasa are excited about the idea," said Robert Casanova, director of the Nasa Institute of Advanced Concepts in Atlanta.

Edwards believes a space elevator offers a cheaper, safer form of space travel that eventually could be used to carry explorers to the planets.

Edwards' elevator would climb on a cable made of nanotubes tiny bundles of carbon atoms many times stronger than steel. The cable would be about three feet wide and thinner than a piece of paper, but capable of supporting a payload up to 13 tons.

The cable would be attached to a platform on the equator, off the Pacific coast of South America where winds are calm, weather is good and commercial airplane flights are few. The platform would be mobile so the cable could be moved to get out of the path of orbiting satellites.

David Brin, a science-fiction writer who formerly taught physics at San Diego State University, believes the concept is solid but doubts such an elevator could be operating by 2019.

The space elevator is not a new idea. A Russian scientist, Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, envisioned it a century ago. And Arthur C. Clarke's novel "The Fountains of Paradise," published in 1979, talks of a space elevator 24,000 miles high, and permanent colonies on the moon, Mercury and Mars.

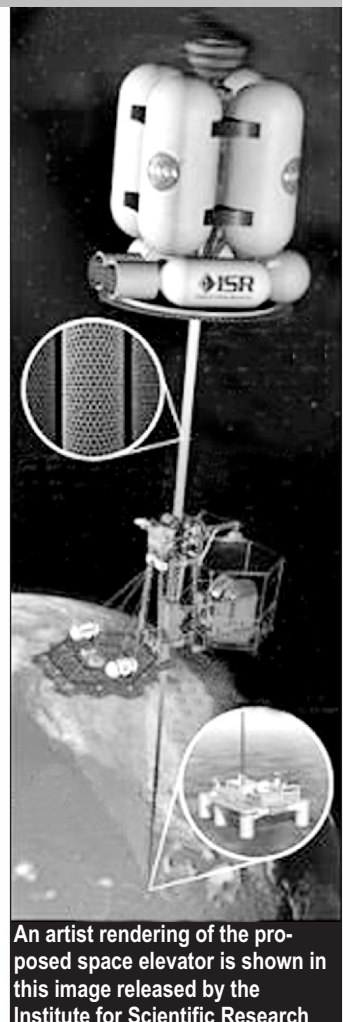The difference now, Edwards said, is "we have a material that we can use to actually build it."

He envisions launching sections of cable into space on rockets. A "climber" his version of an elevator car would then be attached to the cable and used to add more lengths of cable until eventually it stretches down to the Earth. A counterweight would be attached to the end in space.

Edwards likens the design to "spinning a ball on a string around your head." The string is the cable and the ball on the end is a counterweight. The Earth's rotation would keep the cable taut.

The elevator would be powered by photo cells that convert light into electricity. A laser attached to the platform could be aimed at the elevator to deliver the light, Edwards said.

Edwards said he probably needs about two more years of development on the carbon nanotubes to obtain the strength needed. After that, he believes work on the project can begin.

"The major obstacle is probably just politics or funding and those two are the same thing," he said. "The technical, I don't think that's really an issue anymore."

An artist rendering of the platform of the proposed space elevator is shown in this undated handout photo.

PHOTO:AP

An artist rendering of the proposed space elevator is shown in this image released by the Institute for Scientific Research

Tech/News

Apple previews next version of Mac OS X

REUTERS, New York

APPLE Computer Inc. on Monday previewed the latest version of its Mac OS X operating system code-named called Tiger, which Chief Executive Steve Jobs said was far ahead of rival Microsoft Corp.'s next major update to Windows.

Cupertino, California-based Apple also introduced a 30-inch flat panel display in a sleeker and trimmer housing, its largest display yet, which adds to the 20-inch and 23-inch displays it already offers. That puts it up against other PC companies that sell large flat panels, such as Dell Inc. and Hewlett-Packard Co.

Apple, best known for its sleek Macintosh computers and the popular iPod digital music players, last updated the Mac OS X in October 2003 with version 10.3, code-named "Panther."

With Tiger, Apple has pushed out five major releases of OS X since its debut in March 2001. The new version, which it discussed during its annual conference for software developers, aims to encourage them to write more applications that work with the operating system.

"We think we are years ahead of Longhorn," Jobs told about 3,500 software developers in San Francisco, referring to the forthcoming major Windows update. "The other guys have been talking about it and we're doing it."

Microsoft, the world's largest software company, unveiled Windows XP, the latest major overhaul of its Windows operating system in October 2001. Longhorn is due in the first half of 2006, Microsoft has said.

Apple has been on a roll lately with the iPod and its iTunes Online Music store. It has sold more than 3 million iPods and customers have purchased more than 80 million tracks from the music store.

As successful as those two ventures are, however, sales of its Mac computers, not surprisingly, are still its largest source of revenue.

The company's global share of the PC market has remained at 5 percent or below in recent years, but Chief Executive Steve Jobs has indicated the company is happy to be a profitable niche player.

Jobs, when asked to comment about Apple's small market share, often responds by comparing Apple to sports and luxury car maker BMW, which commands a similarly sized share of the automobile market.

Apple Computer Inc. Chief Executive Steve Jobs previews the latest version of its Mac OS X in San Francisco, California on June 28.
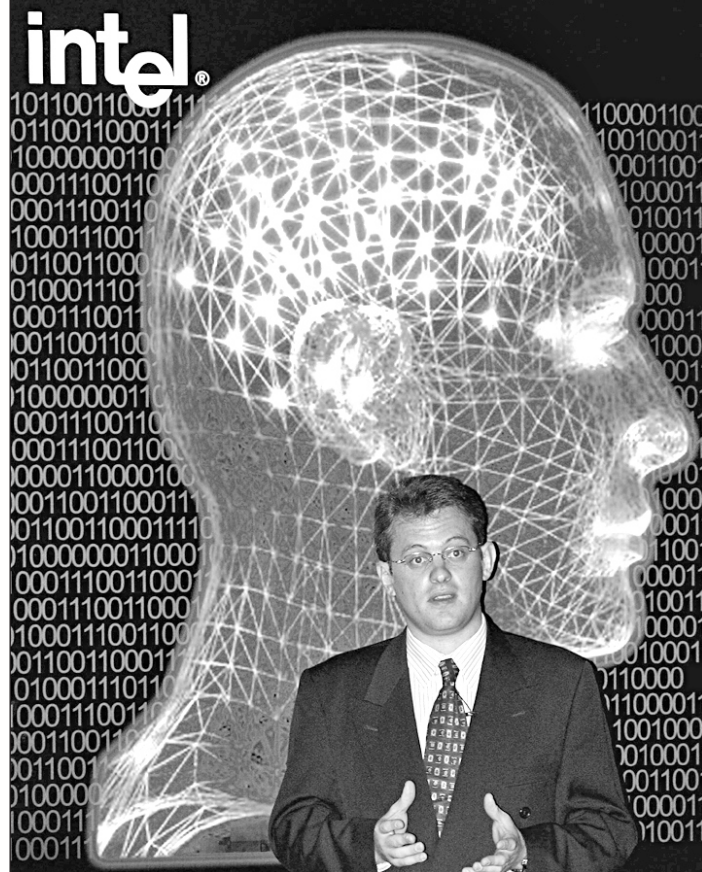
Photo/Tech

Dell Senior Manager, Product Marketing, Juan Vega unveils two Dell Business Desktop Computers during a product launch in New Delhi on June 29. Dell have announced two new corporate desktop computer systems with innovative, space-saving designs incorporating the latest available technology.

PHOTO:AFP

Tech/News

D-LINK receives WLAN Vendor Award

D-Link International Pte Ltd, one of the largest manufacturer of networking, data communications, structured cabling and digital electronic technologies, has been awarded the WLAN Vendor of the Year at the Asia Pacific Technology Awards 2004 ceremony, organised by Frost and Sullivan, the world-renowned Market Research Company on June 16, says a press release.

The award recognises the outstanding performance by D-Link in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) industry within the Asia Pacific region. A total of 24 awards were accorded to vendors, service providers and other industry participants at the award ceremony. The award winners were judged on their actual market performance within the region.

The parameters to determine market performance in 2003 were (1) Revenue growth and profit growth, (2) Market share and market share growth, (3) Demonstrated leadership in product and service innovation. D-Link has always been one of the market leaders in innovative and cutting edge network products with focus on "Building Networks for People."

"It is indeed an honour to be recognised by such a distinguished panel of judges from the ICT industry. It reinforces our standing in the region as a market leader," said Tony Tsao, president, D-Link International. The company received similar prestigious awards in recent years. Three to four leading companies were short-listed from each category, and through to a stringent selection process and detailed evaluation, D-Link International took the top place in the WLAN vendor category, securing its reign as the top provider of networking products in Asia.

Spectrum Engineering Consortium Ltd. (SECL) is the Sole Distributor of D-Link products in Bangladesh since 1995. The company provides LAN, WLAN, VoIP, enterprise routers, broadband products, backbone and Giga switches, ADSL, VDSL, and structured cabling systems of D-Link. The company, in association with D-Link, also provides value adding training and certifications for professionals, system integrators, resellers and corporate users.