

Web Tech

The pioneer mercantile information site

RIDWAN A KABIR

A private sector company has taken yet another step to further converge the country's on-going effort to join the global shift towards computerization. ACE Data Products, at BSRS Bhavan, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka, has recently launched www.bdtender.info, where up-to-date information covering nearly all the invitations to tenders and sectoral trade published in the media is provided.

According to existing government regulations in our country, all contracts in the public sector estimated at Tk 10,000 or above require competitive bidding achieved generally through responses to tenders advertised in the media and the print media in Bangladesh



exceeds a count of a hundred. Thus securing all daily newspapers is too much of an effort for any business enterprise.

This site has made a successful effort to collect all invitations to tenders published in the daily newspapers, making it possible for business administrators to access current information at the stroke of a few keys, reducing the chance of missing out the competitor to nearly zero.

The site categorises the tender invitations from construction to procurement, enlistment, consultancy, evaluation, survey, auction, sales, supply and other business opportunities. The user also has the option to browse each category to find information on the organisation, eligibility, deadline, availability and related information.

Many other useful features including a search engine to browse

through the companies submitting tenders are available with this site. Sub-categories such as 'notices added today', 'submission deadlines within 24 hours or 7 days' sure reduces an user's effort to attain a particularly effective tender through the site.

The site administrators specify how they make every attempt in the shortest time to enlist all the information collected from the daily press into the website database so that a user has access to all the data by afternoon the same day.

The services of the site come with a deposit fee and a user fee of Tk 300 each a month. However, the user may choose to pay for a collective number of months in advance and save a few hundreds. Members already range in double digits.

The site also offers a free-of-charge demo (demonstration) page where it lists five of the major tender

categories and the user may as well take full advantage of the information stored. Featured advertisements from 'google' and an associated search engine will further enhance a user's experience through the site.

Dr Abdus Sattar Syed, pioneer and proprietor of the site, gladly states how the government has given office space at the BSRS Bhavan at a low rate. Facilities such as essentially uninterrupted power and a broadband net connection have yet made things easier for the company, which currently holds about 10 employees working on regular basis.

The site also offers advertisement facilities, where the advertisements are customized according to the client. "Our major sustaining revenue will come from private advertisements, just like a newspaper," said Dr Sattar, who has high hopes for the future of the site and its prospects.

Surfing for tutors made easy

master-r-bari.com

SYED TASHFIN CHOWDHURY

WITH the e-commerce fever catching on to most entrepreneurs of the nation, the independent web-site developers, are coming up with innovative sites to facilitate and improve the efficiency of the day-to-day search activities of the various internet users of the nation.

Most of these new sites are adaptations of foreign web-sites but the effort put toward the implementation of such sites for local community should be complimented.

master-r-bari.com, is one such site which primarily aids browsers to seek for tuition as well as for tutors and also for To-lets.

The site has a very simple menu that links to *What is IS-Card, Cards available at, Send Message and About us*. The menu bar is prevalent all over the site but only the *Home* page links to the most important links such as the tutor, tuition and to-let.

A browser would need to buy an Information Submission card (IS-card) from some specific venues mentioned at the site, to insert and update their profiles and information. These cards are classified into Type A for Teachers, B for teacher seekers, and C for To-lets. The prices for the respective cards are also available from the *IS-card* page.

The *Tuition Available* option shows the list of all the tutors available and has information according to their name, educational qualification, subjects and classes that the tutor

Master-R-Bari.Com			
Home About Us What is IS-Card Cards Available At Send Message Mon			
Tutor Available			
Name	Educational Qualification	Subjects & Classes	
Ahmmad Tareq	B.Sc Completed.	Want to teach class (i) to (x). Specially Scince group.	Details
Mahammad Shah Jalal	Last year student of Soil, Water & Environment in Dhaka University.	Want to teach i to x both Bangla & English medium students. Specially Physics, Chemistry, Maths & English.	Details
Nicholas Kallol Halder	B.Com completed and now student of I.C.M.A.B (FL-Completed)	Want to teach Accounting of classes ix to xii & O'Level students.	Details
Ruhul Amin	B.Sc.Eng. (BUET) student of (ICMAB)CMA int. Complete H.S.C. From Dhaka collodge in 1998	O & A level Math, Physics, B.Math, Accounting, Cost Accounting. S.S.C. to H.S.C. Math, Physics, Accountnting, Cost Accounting.	Details

can teach and other additional details.

The *details* option, when clicked opens a new window where the browser gets access on information of the particular tutor along with *contact numbers, e-mail, contact addresses* and another additional option through which the browser can write to the tutor directly.

The *Tuition Available* choice, takes the browser to a similar list projecting the information of students or guardians looking for tutors. The list is based on categories like name, academic qualification, last date, etc.

The *To-Let* shows a list of to-lets

available. The list is categorised according to the landlord's name, information on the place/house for rent, it's location and further details. On the upper left corner, a particular area based search option has also been provided.

The *details* option for this category once again opens a new window providing further information like flat size, number of rooms available, details, contact address, phone numbers and house rent.

To submit any of the above information, the interested individual would need to type in the pin number available from only the

IS-Cards.

Editing and updating existing information in the *teacher and teacher requirements* area is possible by logging in with authorised *USER Id and Password*.

Overall, the site has a lot of improvements to be made. Most of the functions in each sections are repetitive and after a certain period of time, a browser may lose interest in the site.

Also, the site lacks luster and glamour, which is very important for any such informative site during its initial years.

The developer also needs to simplify the home page with lesser but more effective choices.

Such sections can contain further sub-sections like *Input Information, Edit Information*, and *List of all available information*.

The availability of too many options may complicate things for most seekers.

Quick search engines for different sections would be a boost for those trying to rent their houses or are looking for either tutors or tuition.

As an informative site, master-r-bari.com, has a lot of potential since its initiation in early July, this year and with time, hopefully the site will improve.

"We would be adding information of other items that people usually look for like addresses of foreign universities, syllabi of HSC, SSC, Ordinary, Advanced level and other such necessary options," said Mahmudul Haque Masum, the developer of the site.

Photo Tech



Japanese IT venture AOS Technology employee Hiroko Iwai displays the company's remote controlled pet communication unit "iSeePet" which enables to provide food to pets from the remote through the Internet or mobile phone at the company's headquarters in Tokyo 16 August 2004. Owners can see their pets via an embedded CCD camera of the iSeePet, priced 60,000 yen (\$45 USD), and sounds music to call pets for feeding.

PHOTO: AFP

Web Tech

Public concern sites from TelesoftBD

STARTECH DESK

THE IT related attempts of the country are continually increasing along with the private sector interests and endeavors. TelesoftBD, one of the growing IT solution firms, has recently undertaken an attempt to launch two new web sites with a view to make the benefits of internet available to the common man of Bangladesh. Out of the two, one relays current information regarding all international and domestic flights, train,

TravelBangla	
Domestic Flights	Bus/Coach
Int'l Flights	Railway
Airlines Info	Launch
Embassy Info	Rent A Car
Passport & Visa	Taxi Cab
Travel Agent	Hotels
Money Exchange	Group Tours

bus and launch schedule, while the latter contains information on local and foreign educational institutions.

The travel related web location, sited at www.travel.telesoftbd.com, contains up-to-date data on various travel items. The site is divided in several sub-headings such as, 'international flights', 'domestic flights', 'bus, train, launch schedule', 'railway', etc. which provides any browser with the latest information on arrivals and departures. Contact numbers are also provided for interested parties seeking reservation of seats. There are also such links as to connect a user with informative web-sources on passport and visa related occasions. Other sub-sites under the web location are currently under construction, which once active will provide oneself with contact information for different embassies in the capital, hotels and rent-a-car locations, and money-exchange sites. These features will, for the first time compensate a traveler's time and will allow him or her to secure some essential data on the country's tourist accommodations and facilities and locations where these will be found.

The second site, located at www.edu.travelbd.com, essentially provides information on academic institutions of the

EducationBangla
Universities- Dhaka
Universities- Other Places
Study Abroad
Medical Colleges
Professional Colleges/institute
Colleges- Gen Edn
Schools Bangla Medium
Schools English Medium
Coaching Centers
Computer Education
BCS

country and also of international altitudes. The location covers mostly all the accredited universities, colleges, and schools of the country, including specialized institutions such as medical colleges and general education centers. It is a trend these days for an average student to knock on the doors of the

different coaching centers of the country; thus one will find it very useful that the site lists a good number of such institutions to facilitate these students. The site also lists web-locations of different international universities and their email contacts, in most cases.

Fazlur Rahman, CEO of TelesoftBD, pioneered the whole approach of such info-based websites. "TelesoftBD claims no commercial benefit from the sites and professes nothing but public interest through them," said Shafat Shahriar, the project manager of the firm. When asked about how the administrators of the sites vow to keep the data and figures presented within the sites up-to-date, Shahriar mentions how sister concerns of TelesoftBD has acted to provide the necessary information required to launch the sites. "Other than sister concerns we also have a team of three field workers who would go out there to fetch current data, while it is not always an easy job to get any help from these public concerns," he mentions.

At present TelesoftBD awaits response from other private sectors along with any feedback from the government to maintain an even better relay of information through such approaches.

Tech News

Microsoft to launch low-cost version of Windows XP

REUTERS, Seattle

MICROSOFT Corp. said it will begin selling a stripped-down, low-cost version of its Windows XP operating system in the emerging markets of Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand in order to spread the use of computing and develop technology markets.

The move comes as the world's largest software maker grapples with the twin threats of piracy and the spread of Linux, the freely available operating system, in developing economies.

Windows XP Starter Edition will be available in the three countries in South-east Asia from October as part of a one-year pilot program and includes most of the features found in Windows, which runs on more than 90 percent of the world's personal computers.

"It will be our most affordable Windows operating system offered to date," said Microsoft senior vice president Maggie

Wilderrotter, "We're very excited to see what the reaction will be."

Windows XP Starter Edition will be shipped pre-installed on PCs. Microsoft has not yet set a price for the newest edition of Windows.

Although some features will not be available on Starter Edition, the operating system will be localized for each country's language and also include extra features and tools to make it easier for first-time computer users to use their PCs and connect to the Internet, Microsoft said.

Microsoft, based in Redmond, Washington, sells globally two versions of Windows XP, which debuted in October of 2001, the Professional Edition for \$150 and Home Edition for \$80 on most North American store shelves.

Microsoft has long resisted introducing flexible global pricing for Windows and its other software programs, such as Office, although large corporate customers often get better prices through long-term licens-



PHOTO: AP

Microsoft's Product Manager Mike Wickstrand shows off the company's new Windows XP Starter Edition on August 11 in Bangkok, Thailand.

ing deals.

Microsoft said it is also talking to governments of two other countries and will be announcing them later this year.

The pilot program will involve a total of five countries, Wilderrotter said.

In some cases, Microsoft already offers Windows at lower prices for governments

that are offering cheaper PCs for their citizens in an effort to promote the use of information technology.

Many governments in Asia have also adopted Linux as a way to cut costs and address security concerns, since as "open source" software its basic programing code can be copied and modified freely by developers. Linux also runs on the same hardware as Windows.

Microsoft also faces the challenge of getting users in Asia, most notably China, to pay for its software, since much of it is distributed as pirated copies at a fraction of the price.

After the pilot ends, Microsoft said that it is considering the introduction of Windows XP Starter Edition for other developing markets, and hinted that it may even consider introducing the newest version of Windows on a wider scale.

"This doesn't preclude us from launching (Windows XP Starter Edition) in developed countries," Wilderrotter said.

Tech Tips

How to report spamming

Report spamming by sending the message plus the full header information. A full header looks something like this:

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Received: from xyz.com (popmail.xyz.com / xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx)
By www.MailServer.com with smtp (MailServer SMTPd/POP3dv2.01c-Linux)
X-MAILFROM-IP: [xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx]
X-MailServer-HEADER-AUTH-A:[xxx.xxx.xxx.xxx]
X-MailServer-HEADER-AUTH-B:[xbxxxxxxfcaxxxxbdcx...]
X-MailServer-ORIG-FROM:[abc@xyz.com]->1 RCPT(s)
Received: by xyz with PQR Mail Service (x.x.xxxx.x) Wed, 12 Feb 2003 09:31:24 -0345
Date: Wed, 31 Mar 1999 13:50:00 -0800
To: your_name@MailServer.com
From: abc@xyz.com
Subject: Subject line
Mime-Version: 1.0
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"
Message-ID:
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To find the full header, click on Show Header at the top left-hand corner of the message, then copy and paste all the header data into your message to us. Without this information, our support staff will not be able to track the source of the message.



"Today I bought everything the spammers offered to sell me. I thought that would make them stop!"