

CommerceNet Canada Promotes Business on the Internet

Canadian companies interested in tapping into the leading forum for discussing issues related to doing business on the Internet can now have access to CommerceNet Canada, designed to help create an open electronic marketplace.

What is CommerceNet?

CommerceNet Canada is a consortium of Canadian companies and organizations formed to facilitate the use of an Internet-based infrastructure for electronic commerce, in order to allow efficient interactions among customers, suppliers and development partners and reduce the costs of doing business.

Affiliated to California-based CommerceNet, the Canadian organization was created last November, one month after CommerceNet Japan became the first affiliate of the U.S. consortium.

While many transactions and services already occur electronically — such as browsing catalogues, soliciting bids and placing orders, credit reporting and financial transactions — they require dedicated lines or prior arrangements.

The use of an Internet-based infrastructure — such as CommerceNet Canada — reduces the cost and lead time for participating in electronic commerce, and makes it practical for both small and large businesses.

CommerceNet Canada objectives

Specific CommerceNet Canada objectives include: fostering international trade by estab-

lishing worldwide standards for Internet-based electronic commerce; encouraging understanding of country-specific issues among all CommerceNet members and affiliates to better deal with global trade issues; and promoting broad participation from small, medium and large companies in the consortium activities.

Like its counterparts in the U.S. and Japan, CommerceNet Canada will also establish working groups focussed on dealing with specific issues and on testing technology and applications for transacting business electronically.

Here are some of the potential pilot and working group projects that have been discussed:

- Internet Electronic Data Interchange (EDI);
- virtual Post Office services;
- secure payment trials within the Canadian Banking System;
- tourism, book publishing, retail applications;
- using secure transactions internationally to boost export potential.

Origins of CommerceNet

The CommerceNet Consortium was created one year ago as a non-profit corporation through a \$6-million, three-year co-

operative agreement with the U.S. government Technology Reinvestment Project. It boasts over 140 member companies and organizations in the U.S. alone.

As for CommerceNet Canada, 17 organizations have joined and lent their full financial support since its inception — under the leadership of CYBERManagement Inc. — just over two months ago. They include the Bank of Montreal, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Industry Canada, Canada Post Corporation, Ernst & Young, and IBM Canada Ltd. Ontario's Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism was also an active player.

Membership

CommerceNet Canada, a non-profit corporation, is open to public and private Canadian organizations, and offers two membership levels — Sponsoring Member and Associate Member — depending on the organization's interest and financial commitment.

For more information on CommerceNet Canada and how to become a member, contact Walid Mougayar, President, CYBERManagement Inc., Toronto, Tel.: (416) 929-1011; Fax: (416) 929-1552; E-mail: walid@cybermanagement.com; Web site: www.commerce.net.