

Oh, The Places You Can Go On the **INTERNET**

BY ANGIE STUMP

Grandpa would never have imagined it.

He never had a computer, let alone access to the World Wide Web (WWW). Today the options are endless at your computer screen. You can buy and sell cattle, buy hay, research a new bovine disease and chat with another cattle producer in Australia just by the click of a button on your family computer.

In Grandpa's day he sold cattle face to face and a handshake closed the deal. Today we can sell via the Internet without seeing the seller or even the cattle.

When Grandpa was my age the exciting new technology to him was an International F12 tractor that would assist him around the family farm. For me it is computers and the WWW to assist me around the world.

My generation lives with buzz words like cyberspace, information super highway, virtual community and Internet. They all mean the same thing but to many people the concept is mind boggling.

Just the other day Dad and I were talking about the Internet. Now to a Kansas farmer, who has learned what computer knowledge he has from his three daughters, this concept of cyberspace is hard to imagine.

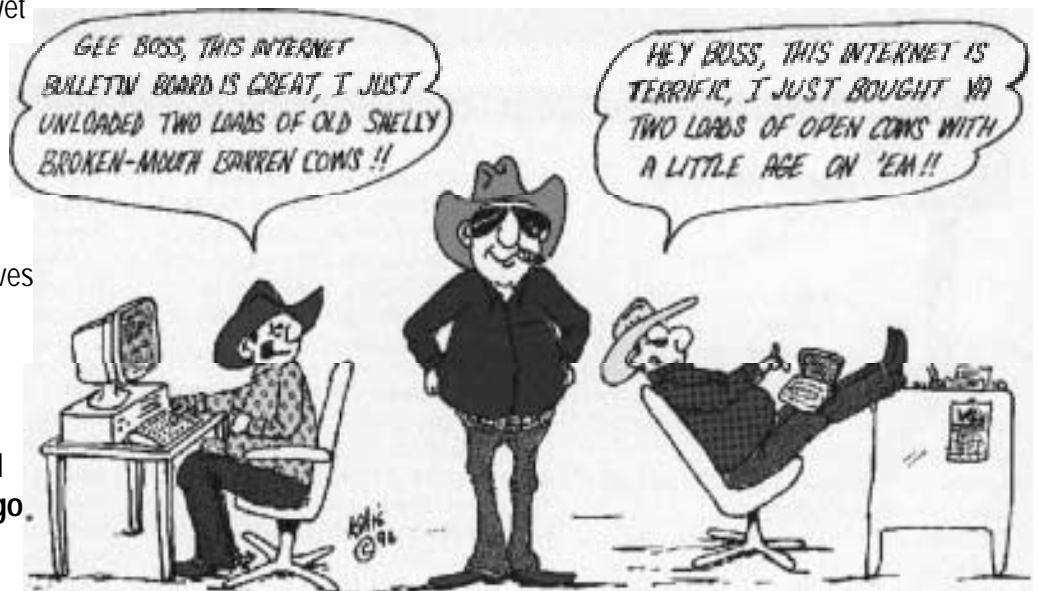
As I showed him copies of what I had found on the Internet he said, "I was born too late, I like things when they were not as complicated_"

I tried to explain to Mom and Dad the opportunities and the ease at which you can access information over the Internet. I think it may have excited Dad that his phone bill would go down if we would use E-mail to talk instead of our several weekly phone calls. Like any farmer, Dad enjoys hearing about saving money but believes there has to be a cost somewhere. I explained there is a monthly cost for an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and we would have to check and see if our home town has a local access number.

Just like my parents, many people believe using the Internet is hard and they have no training to do such a task. But that is the exciting feature of the Internet, it is user friendly. Using search tools such as Netscape you can find anything. Another feature is hyperlinks or links. Most pages have several links that will take you to another related address in cyberspace. If you know an address you can type it in and it will take you directly to that site.

Although Dad is not yet one of the more than 24 million users of the Internet today, hopefully by the year 2000 our family computer will be one of the estimated 100 million computers that serves as an Internet host in the United States.

Just give it a try. Call an ISP and get a free-month trial. You'll **be surprised at the places you can go.**





Stevenson/BasinInc.
<http://milton.sdm.t.edu/Angus/sba.html>

The response is overwhelming. Mike Stevenson, of Stevenson/Basin Angus Ranch, Hobson, Mont., says they have received more requests than expected since developing their home page in November. During the

first week they had more than 150 hits at their site.

The site was developed prior to their December sale. It will be updated with a sire directory in late February or early March.

"It is a new way of sharing information," Mike says. "It is cheaper than paper, ink and postage."

He says they receive between 15 to 20 requests a week for more information

about their ranch. Prior to the sale they had lots of requests for sale catalogs and about the sale cattle. Mike says at least five or six people were at the sale because they read about it on the Internet.

The Stevensons are planning to expand their home page in the future. "Using the Internet we want to have information more accessible," Mike explains. "And hopefully we will be able to sell some cattle because of it."

A TRIP ON THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY

Your Internet Vehicle

- | A computer with a performance rating of at least 486 megahertz
- | A modem connects the computer to a phone line
- | Internet service provider

Prodigy: DOS, Windows and MAC format. The original online service. Monthly charge of \$9.95 which includes 5 hours, Each additional hour costs \$2.95 or 5 cents per minute. Call 1-800-776-3449 for a free membership kit,

Your On Ramp

These are just a few examples of internet service providers.

America Online: DOS, Windows, and MAC format. Monthly charge is \$9.95 which includes 5 hours of use. Each additional hour is \$2.95. Initial enrollment gets you 10 free hours. More than 150 cities have high-speed AOL connections using local-access telephone lines. Call 1-800-827-6364 for a free membership kit.

CompuServe: DOS, Macintosh, Windows or OS/2 format. Monthly charge is \$9.95 which includes 5 hours of use. Each additional hour is \$2.95. Option to join super value for an additional \$15 monthly membership fee and receive 75 hours of free online time each month and for each hour after that \$1.95. Initial enrollment gets you 10 free hours. Call 1-800-848-8199 for a free membership kit.

Direct Internet Access: Some areas have local or state Internet providers. Look in your yellow pages or call your local phone company for further information.

Your Speed Limit

The quickness of your computer will determine the speed at which you access information via the WWW. There are two ratings to evaluate when you are purchasing or upgrading your computer. The first is the performance rating, megahertz. This causes the speed at which it accepts and processes data from the Internet.

You should also consider the performance rating of your modem. It is rated by bits per second (BPS). The higher the BPS, the faster you'll reach a site.



Waffle Hill Farm
75010.107@compuserv.com
Angusbull@aol.com

"Because there is so much information out there!" This is the reason Ned Sayre and his family joined two Internet Service Providers (ISPs). The Sayres own Waffle Hill Farm near Churchville, Md.

Ned spends 1 to 1 1/2 hours a week on the Internet, most often using CompuServe. He enjoys participating in the ag forums with discussion of livestock issues.

He says they have thought about designing a home page, but it is on the back burner because of the lack of time.

They are one of the five producers who write a monthly diary in the National Cattlemen's Beef Association's Internet site, CowTown America.

They have not received a whole lot of requests or response, but Ned says as people get into the Internet more, cattle people will be out there using it and begin using E-mail and other Internet benefits.

"It is something that is going to become more and more prevalent," Ned says.

Developing a home page would be a good gateway for the American Angus Association, Ned says.

Instead of calling St. Joe and waiting for someone to call back or to get the information you requested in the mail they can get the information right in front of them. "It would be a good service," he says.

Angus breeders could benefit from the Association developing a home page in many ways. "To me if the Association (or *Angus Journal*) had a classified ad section on the Inter-net that would be a useful marketing tool," he says.



ALOT Home Page <http://www.ernet.com/carl/alot.html>

The Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas (ALOT) Angus Association was one of the first Angus related addresses on the Internet.

ALOT Angus Association secretary, Norma O'Bryan, says her daughter, Dodie, is the reason the association developed a home page on the Internet.

Dodie became discouraged one day while looking for information on the Internet related to the agricultural industry, so she decided to make her own information gathering device. Because her mother was secretary of the ALOT Association she decided to make her project two-folded — promote the ALOT association and serve as a gathering device.

She designed the first page and placed it on a free-site. This site was scrambled and she decided to search for someone to help her. Carl Bach, a specialist in WWW design, gave her space to put the ALOT page. She now develops the information and then sends it to him to place on the Internet.

"Our goal was to reach out to Angus breeders and other people throughout the United States and other countries," Norma says. "We try to promote the breed and point out the advantages of Angus on the ALOT page."

Dodie has developed a page of links that is linked to the ALOT page. These connect to other Angus breeders, restaurants that serve Angus beef and other agricultural related links.

She says they receive at least one request a day about tiormation on Angus cattle. They get asked a lot of questions about the American Angus Association and its programs.

She was recently E-mailed by a producer from Malaysia who requested information on Angus performance programs. They have also been contacted by producers from Argentina, Malaysia, Brazil and Japan. She explains that if the American Angus Association had an E-mail address, producers from the United States and other countries could request information through E-mail, saving a phone call and time.

Dodie spends hours on the Internet searching for new sites related to agriculture. She updates the page of links every two weeks, adding 30 to 50 new links. Before linking to another site she makes sure the site is capable of being loaded by a text browser. She explains that many rural users have text browsers that can only read text and not graphics.

Dodie believes the page of links is what is bringing people to the ALOT page. An Inter-net reviewer said the ALOT site has the most comprehensive set of beef related links on the Internet. Another reviewer said it is the richest ag-site on the Internet.

Want to develop a home page? Dodie suggests you contact someone like Carl Bach to get started.

"It is so easy to do," she explains. "My Labrador could put one up. Anyone can do it with a little bit of advice. There is no need to spend outrageous amounts of money to have someone do it for you."

She says she is disappointed in some of the web sites she has found because of the lack of information. They have lots of graphics but little information. "A site should be pretty and informative," she explains.

GLOSSARY

Chat session: A group of people having a conversation via the Internet.

E-mail: Electronic mail.

Home Page: The starting point for any organization or company's WWW site on the Internet. It provides a menu or table of contents and serves as a link to other documents.

Hyperlinks: Highlighted text or graphics in a WWW site that takes you to other areas when selected. Also known as link.

Information Super Highway: The expanding virtual thoroughfare that brings phone, video, interactive shopping, banking and other services on demand to the consumers.

Internet Service Provider: A network, commercial or otherwise, to which you can connect in order to get access to the Internet.

Newsgroups: In a newsgroup area on the Internet, messages about a certain topic are posted in a public forum. You can read the posting or post an article yourself.

Search Engines: Software that finds and retrieves data. Some examples are Yahoo, WebCrawler and Lycos.

Shareware: Software sold by individuals or small companies for a nominal fee. Buyers may try it before registering it.

URL: Universal Resource Locator. A naming or "address" system that aids in locating a site on the World Wide Web.

WWW: The web allows people to navigate from place to place along the Internet using connections called "hyperlinks."

How Cyberspace Was Started

The Internet was started a quarter of a century ago as a project of the US. Defense Department. It began in 1969 as a network called the ARPAnet, and it was designed to make sure their computers could connect to each other. It served as the basis for early network research as well as a central backbone during the development of the Internet.

In the mid 1970s the Milnet was developed for military use and a smaller ARPAnet for non-military use.

In the 1980s National Science Foundation developed the NSFnet. This served as a national backbone network used to interconnect regional networks.

In 1991 Vice President Al Gore, then a US. Senator, proposed widening of the NSFnet to include more K-12 schools, community colleges and two-year colleges. The resulting legislation expanded NSFnet and renamed it NREN, National Research and Educational Network. This bill also allowed businesses to purchase part of the network for commercial use.



NCBA

<http://www.ncanet.org/>
<http://www.cowtown.org/>

Beefing Up the Internet

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has developed two web sites. One directed for producers and those wanting to obtain statistical information, and one for the public.

Cattlemen On the Web (COW) was designed for farmers, ranchers and other professionals wanting cattle industry reference information.

"COW is not a final product: says Daniel Yu of NCBA's research and industry information department. "It is always an ongoing project looking to meet the needs of the people who access the information."

At this site you can access information on cattle and beef statistics, industry image material, judicial and legislative update, market watch, news releases, regulatory update and trade data. More than 7,700 people have accessed this site since October 1995.

CowTown America was designed for the public with lots of graphics and fun things.

Yu says one of the biggest hits within CowTown America is CowTown Diaries. Five cattle producers write once-a-month entries which describe the challenges of that month on their farm. People in New York can read these entries and follow what is happening on the farm.

CowTown America is registered in all of the search engines so anyone searching for information about cattle can access this site. COW is not registered and is mainly used by producers and state affiliates who have the address, Yu explains. COW has few graphics and is designed to get statistical and scientific information quickly.

WHAT TYPE OF USER ARE YOU?

Info-harvester— You use the Internet for research. You want to digest as much information as you can in a short time.

File Transferer — You transfer data to their own computer or disk. On the Internet there is freeware and shareware which you can download.

E-mail — You use the net as an avenue of communication. You can send any size of letter or note to a person on the computer next to you or to a person in Australia.

Chatter — You use the Internet to participate in real time conversations. Real time communication is interactive communication where you can see on your computer what someone else is typing on their computer as it is being typed. There are many types of chat or discussion groups on the Internet.

Yu has read statistics that predict by the year 2000 if an organization does not have access to E-mail and/or a web site they will be out of business.

"You can't predict what we will see in the next five years, but it is going to be exciting," he says.

ADDRESSES OF INTEREST

To access specific sites on the Internet have to know its URL or address. You must type in the address exactly as it appears or you won't get connected.

@griculture On-line (<i>Successful Farming</i>)	http://www.agriculture.com
AgriHelp	http://spiderweb.com/ag/
<i>Beef Today (Farm Journal)</i>	http://www.farmjournal.com
Cattlemen on the Web (COW)	http://www.ncanet.org/
Cowtown America	http://www.cowtown.org/
Oklahoma State	http://www.okstate.edu/~animsci/library
NetVet	http://www.netvet
Online Livestock Marketplace	http://crimson.com/livestock
<i>Progressive Farmer</i>	http://www.pathfinder.com/PF
Texas A&M University	http://www.savell-j.tamu.edu/vbm.html
University of Georgia	http://www.UGA.edu
USDA	http://www.usda.gov



The American Angus Association and Angus Journal are in the process of developing E-mail addresses and home pages. look for special announcements in the April issue.