

DISC's E.Net: From Business Need To Product

by Ray Hrdy, DISC Vice President of Technology

The idea for Enlighten.Net was first conceived several years ago at DISC, a 20-year-old company providing business solution software and accounting systems tailored to industrial distributors. At the time, we were searching for a way to organize the vast amounts of information stored in various databases used by our own Technical Support Department. During the process of evaluating several expensive call-management software systems, we discovered that the solution best fitting our needs for centralizing and retrieving information quickly was an intranet.



With an intranet solution, regardless of the database source, we could view all of the information using a standard browser. And, best of all, the software was free! Well, not totally free. The configuration of the intranet components required networking skills, and the organization of the data required a Webmaster or someone with HTML programming skills. Fortunately, DISC had the ability to implement this intranet solution.

We quickly recognized that a corporate intranet could be invaluable to just about any business that had a need to share collective knowledge. We also realized that most businesses lacked the networking and programming skills to create their own intranets and that outsourcing the task was cost-prohibitive for most small- and mid-sized business. DISC responded to this marketing opportunity by developing a turnkey intranet solution that didn't require the user to know any HTML programming.

E.Net offers industrial distributors the benefit of having their supplier catalogs online through the Net.Catalog option. High-resolution images are created from supplier catalogs. The electronic catalogs are indexed and searchable. The user can also fax or e-mail the images. This can save the average salesperson up to an hour a day in having to photocopy and fax catalog pages to customers. E.Net also integrates with a company's legacy software by allowing the user to send reports to the intranet that can then be viewed using the browser.

This session will cover the technical aspects of how the hardware and software components of E.Net are integrated. You'll see how the product's interfaces allow a user to create his or her own framework of home pages without having to know HTML. How a user publishes content to those pages will also be discussed. You'll see demonstrations and learn about the E.Net product suite and its benefits: E.Net's navigation system, the Net.Search engine, Net.DISCreports, Net.Catalogs (which brings supplier catalogs to the desktop) and Net.Notes (for archiving important information or requests from customers).



DISC is also welcoming inquiries from interested resellers.

Ray has been with DISC for 17 years and has extensive experience programming in Business Basic, Microsoft Visual Basic Script, JavaScript, HTML and Active Server Pages. In addition to managing a programming staff of 25, he has been deeply involved in developing E.Net over the last two years.