



the
talk
of Bloomer

FIBER TO YOUR HOME UPDATE

It is amazing to see the progress on our fiber to the home project. Over 38 miles of fiber optic cable and extensions were necessary. To date approximately half of the cable and 20 % of the extensions have been buried. When you consider the amount of buried gas line, electric cable, cable TV, telephone cable, dog fences to name only a few of the various services

already in the ground that the construction crews have to avoid....wow! We expect construction to wind up by early November.

One of the more interesting aspects of this project has been selecting the fiber optic electronics. When we started the selection

process one of our goals was to have the capability at each house of supporting the 1000 BaseT interface. Without boring you with the technical details, this is an interface that supports data rates of up to 1 gigabits per second, or put another way 1 billion bits per second. Talk about high speed.....it makes our current data speeds seem like they are standing still. One practical example of the use for this speed might be to provide off-site storage for your digital photographs, so that when your pc hard drive crashes, you don't lose everything.

We expect to start installing the fiber optic electronics in August or September, depending on delivery schedules. I think you will be impressed with the capabilities and services that we will be able to offer you as time goes on. Please do not hesitate to call our office at 568-4830 if you have any questions or concerns during this construction phase. We appreciate everyone's patience and understanding!



Jim Smart, General Manager

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How to design a great MySpace Profile... Icon's rule!

Adapted from an article by Ken Wilson

We live in the age of social networking. Every computer-savvy person has heard, at least a hundred times, of popular social networking sites such as MySpace, Yahoo! 360, or Classmates, and almost everybody uses online messaging services. If you want to get noticed on MySpace you need to create an impressive MySpace profile. This means using good content and attention to the graphics that MySpace allows you display – in particular your own image and a variety of other icons such as love icons.

Every one of today's applications uses icons. It is the easiest, simplest and most efficient way to create user-friendly interfaces. So, developers have come up with self-explanatory icons for their applications in order to catch the user's attention. They reasoned that the more users love icons, the more they would use those particular applications.

But people came to like icons so much that they began to use them all over the place. Not only do computer users keep their computer desktop full of colorful dazzling icons, but websites, buttons used for navigation and instant messaging services are also very much reliant on various types of icons. MySpace profiles contain lots of these graphical icon representations, because they enhance aesthetics. Instant messaging users can customize their list of contacts by using "buddy icons" or "away icons".

Buddy icons act as identities of the people under a contact list. Some people choose icons representing their personal photos, others wish to display an artistic image, while others prefer arbitrary icons chosen to be unique. "Away" icons are intended to convey a message when you are unavailable, so you inform the others that you have "stepped out", or you are "busy", "away from the desk" or "on the phone". These are default messages but everyone can create specific ones if they wish to let their friends know what they are exactly up to, such as "I'm out to lunch". After all, a MySpace profile is a place entirely dedicated to you; it represents you and expresses your thoughts, feeling, beliefs and ideas.



So, If you want that great noticeable MySpace profile, start looking for the best icons to use. Keep them simple and meaningful and in line with the overall theme of your profile. For instance, if you want a sports themed site then make sure you use sports-related icons.

Icons are great tools for self-expression, especially in instant messaging, and they are used to represent emotions and identities. Emotion icons (generally known as emoticons) make it easy to express a feeling with a click of the mouse, rather than typing out your thoughts.

If you are a teenager and love MySpace, then you probably already use icons. And if you love icons, you already know there are hundreds of websites offering icons on the Internet. When you choose to create your homepage with icon links, it's like having a desktop for web. So, show off to your friends. Start your own "love icon" mania and your friends will follow you. And if they don't share your enthusiasm and they don't love icons as much as you do, don't worry. You can make new friends online, who love icons and choose to design their MySpace profile by means of icons.

Icons are part of our Internet culture today they are of prime importance in the understanding and quick identification of a concept or in displaying emotions during instant messaging. Without them we wouldn't be able to express ourselves quickly in this day and age. So it's quite impossible to imagine a Myspace profile without a happy, sad or smiley icon 😊

Online Chat Rooms and Childrens' Safety *by Travis Klein*

It is almost a given that any child deemed old enough to use an Internet Chat Room is also mature enough to grasp there are some very bad people in the world. To help keep youngsters safe while still allowing them to enjoy the communication the Internet allows, many parents educate their children on chat room safety.

Whether the site in question offers homework help, or is designed for teens to share their personal issues or centers on a special interest or hobby, the reality is that chat room safety is a necessity. While many teens and children flock to these sites to talk it up, so too do predators looking for easy prey. With horror stories abounding as a result, chat room safety is deemed imperative in many households.

Since children (and even parents) cannot always ascertain if the person on the other end of the screen is credible and good, parents will want make sure their children understand and follow these chat room safety tips:

- **USE A PSEUDONYM.** *Most chat sites, e-mail accounts and other Internet functions enable users to pick a nickname or pseudonym. This is a very good idea to enforce. It helps make sure a child's identity isn't revealed. Take care when choosing this nickname, however. Anything too suggestive or revealing can cause trouble. For example, SexyLegs0000 would very likely go against the grain of chat room safety for a 12-year-old girl. In fact, it might not be wise for a 25-year-old woman to choose either!*
- **DON'T SHARE INFORMATION.** *Unless parents give their okay and supervision, this rule is strictly enforced in most households. It simply is not wise for children to share their real names, addresses, telephone numbers and even school names with those they do not know.*

- **NO FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS.** *While there are some wonderful stories of face-to-face meetings taking place and long-term friendship being forged, the horror stories tend to outnumber the positive ones. If adults want to meet and greet, that's fine, but children's safety is too precious to risk so parents, please, just don't allow this.*

- **CHAT ROOM ACCESS.** *Many parents set rules for or limit access to chat rooms when possible. This might not guarantee a child doesn't bump into a bad guy now and again, but when a youngster is only allowed to visit a private room a fellow (known) parent set up for neighborhood children, the chances for trouble are reduced greatly.*

Chat room safety is a concern that is raised in many households. As more youth access the Internet, the number of stories about predators lurking and actually pulling off face-to-face meetings seems to be growing. While most chat room safety rules suffice to help keep youngsters safe, the best tip is to simply supervise online activity.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Brigitte Rediger and Cody Bleskacek are the recipients of Bloomer Telephone Company's 2007 scholarships. Both Ms. Rediger and Mr. Bleskacek are 2007 graduates of Bloomer High School. Each student will receive \$1,000 to help further their education beyond high school. Ms. Rediger plans to attend Chippewa Valley Technical College in the fall to pursue a career as a cardiovascular technician. Mr. Bleskacek plans to attend U.W. Eau Claire in the fall to study Spanish with a business emphasis.

It is a pleasure to award these scholarships to Brigitte and Cody. Based on their success in high school, they are outstanding students who will excel as they move on to the challenge of college.

Selections are based on a number of factors, including academic achievements, extracurricular activities and professional goals. This is the second year that Bloomer Telephone Company has awarded these scholarships to Bloomer area students.



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COOL WEBSITES: Use your High-Speed connection to learn from these cool websites:

Google Earth www.earth.google.com Google's Earth section is like a globe that sits inside your PC. You point and zoom to anyplace on the planet that you want to explore. Satellite images and local facts zoom into view. The site brings up local points of interest and facts. Zoom to a specific address to check out your own property, or an apartment or hotel. View driving directions and even fly along your route. Google Earth is free for personal use. No registration is required.

- Google web site

Blinkx and Blinkx.tv (www.blinkx.com) uses a different kind of search technology. Blinkx automatically and intelligently links to relevant information anywhere and in any format: on the Web, in the news or on the desktop. Using Blinkx.tv (www.blinkxtv.com), you can search for TV news clips and other video bits from dozens of sources, including ABC News, BBC News, Fox News, ESPN and C-Span. Search for serious news to celebrity gossip and everything in between. Blinkx has its own way of indexing clips that makes it more effective than other video search engines for finding particular segments within a broadcast, and each video stream starts off at the point in the segment that's most relevant to your query.

- Blinkx website and Time.com

ENTERTAINMENT WEB SITES:

If you are ready for exciting, fresh and personal entertainment or have your own video masterpiece you want to share, these are some of the places that you will want to visit on the net:

Veoh Networks: www.veoh.com allows anyone to create and broadcast their own TV show or a Channel full

of shows. Not small streaming videos, but FULL Screen, TV Quality video.

-Veoh Networks web site

Brightcove: www.brightcove.com. Brightcove's technology makes it easy for any producer from home movie buffs to television networks to distribute their videos to multitudes of Web sites. All three parties: the video's maker, the site that shows it and Brightcove often will share revenue from the resulting advertisements or sales. "In the past, content owners had to rely on gatekeepers like cable companies to get to consumers," says Jeremy Allaire, Brightcove's founder ...Now they don't have to do that.

- Peter Grant, Wall Street Journal

Revver: www.revver.com. Revverize your videos. Share them with the world. Make money.

- Revver web site

QUICK TIPS

E-Forward for your Voice Mail.

You won't believe the convenience of having your voice mail messages drop into your e-mail accounts! Give it a try. Just call our office - all you need to do is choose Bloomer

Telephone Company's voice mail.