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Subject: Japan Window--HEY, RYAN!!!!
Date: 1995/03/31
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Collaborative Web Site Opens Window to Japan
WEBster
by Dianna Husum, managing editor
March 21, 1995
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JAPAN WINDOW
http://jw.stanford.edu

There's an awful lot of talk in the real world about electronic commerce, Internet security problems, pornography and all the other ills that make for snappy newspaper headlines and suave political pontificating.

But, let me tell you about something that might not make it into the annals of popular press or political speeches, not because it doesn't deserve it, but because it's one of those "feel-good-about-realizing-the-human-potential-of-technology" kind of stories that usually gets buried in favor of the three Ds of journalism -- death, doom and did O.J. do it?

THE JAPAN WINDOW PROJECT

I was first alerted to the existence of the Japan Window when WEBster reader Michael Bayle forwarded a press release to my e-mail box. Always a little skeptical about the praises sung in press releases, I fired up my browser software and ventured forth to explore this latest HOTlist tip.

The Japan Window, produced in a collaborative effort by Stanford University's US-Japan Technology Management center and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. (NTT), is incredible. Its design is slick, visually appealing and easy to navigate. And the amount of quality information it provides is inspiring.

Japan Window is segmented into six major information categories: Living and Travel; Japanese Government; Science and Technology; Business Economics and Finance; Kids Window; and Daily News and Updates.

Those planning on going to Japan either for a visit or for an extended stay will find practical and useful information in the Living and Travel section. There are detailed maps and guides, instructions on filling out visa forms and other tips designed to help you settle into the Japanese lifestyle.

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According to the press release, Japan Window started when Stanford graduate researchers Burton Lee and Mike Bayle began playing with the Web. Then, as that spark of enthusiasm and potential ignited other minds, the project grew, potentially expanding the horizons of thousands of others.

"Japan Window provides an international, pre-competitive laboratory for U.S. and Japanese organizations to come together and research and learn about multi-lingual Internet technologies. Most importantly, we seek to achieve improvements in the balance and exchange of information about

Japan for the American user in industry, government and academia," explained Richard Dasher, acting director of the US-Japan Technology Management Center.

COOL TECHNOLOGY TRICKS, TOO

Far be it for Japan Window to offer all information and no technological tricks. This site showcases some interesting innovations sure to pique the interest of Web page developers. Among those innovations are a Japan Events Calendar that features an interactive keyword search capability under WAIS, the system "Cockpit" -- a central control panel for easy Web site administration, multiple entry points for information access and retrieval, subject area entryway, interactive maps and database searches and custom user interfaces.

The Japan Event Calendar, originally authored by Jack Hong, a PhD student in mechanical engineering, can be viewed and updated by the general public. .... To deal the dynamic nature of the event information, calendar pages and input forms are "virtual" pages generated on the fly. So, instead of being stored as HTML files on the server, the events and sponsor information is stored in database files from which data is extracted and reformatted to display information of interest.



CREDITS

The Japan Window is a collaborative research project of Stanford University and Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp. It has been designated an official Smart Valley Project. WAIS Inc. is providing technical support. The U.S. project manager is Burton Lee and the Japan project manager is Atsuhiro Goto. Project initiators are Burton Lee and Mike Bayle.

WEBster says: "This, my friend, is what the Web is all about."

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