

19 degrees of separation

Notre Dame study illustrates interconnectivity of Internet

AP) — Any two randomly picked pages on the World Wide Web are on average just 19 clicks away from each other, researchers say. The findings, reported in today's issue of the journal *Nature*, suggest that the Web is so interconnected that any desired information is nearby even though there are 800 million documents available. The key is knowing which links to click. The study calls to mind the movie and Broadway play *Six Degrees of Separation* — which holds that all people are connected to one another by no more than six individuals — and the party game "Six Degrees of Separation," in which players try to make a connection between actor Kevin Bacon and another celebrity using six or fewer other stars and movies. The study was conducted by Albert-Laszlo Barabasi, a University of Notre Dame physics professor. They constructed a robot that collected all the links

on a Web page and followed them to their destination. The process was repeated over and over again. Using statistical tools, they figured out the average distance between two random pages. And even if the Web grows 1,000 percent, the distance would change only from 19 clicks to 21. Search engine companies could use the findings to create programs that more intelligently figure out what's available. A recent study showed that even the best search engine scours only about 34 percent of the Web. "Knowing something about the topology lets you know how far you need to go to catch something that might be out there," Steve Lawrence, a researcher at the NEC Research Institute and co-author of a previous study on the effectiveness of searches, said. "The search engine companies are going to benefit from this kind of knowledge."

Congress returns to work

Lawmakers face spending issues, health-care questions

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Republican-controlled Congress returned to work yesterday, tugged by conflicting forces of compromise and confrontation with the White House on tax cuts, spending, health care, gun control and other issues likely to dominate the first months of the year. "I don't see any indication the president wants to work with us," Senate Democratic leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., told reporters after predicting a "action-packed" September and October. "What the president wants more spending, more spending, more spending for everything." Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., listed the issue as part of the Democrats' fall agenda, and House Speaker Dennis Hastert traveled to an elementary school to underscore Republican support. There, he issued a call to President Clinton to "work together in education. Let's take steps today that will make our nation's schools better."

Clinton, too, talked of compromise during the day, at the same time he prodded Republicans to move legislation on health care. "Ever since we've had this divided government, we normally have to wait till the 11th hour for really good things to happen. ... As I said a couple of days ago, it is now 10:30, we're ready for the 11th hour," he said. The House and Senate both spent the day debating routine spending measures during the day, preluding to larger clashes looming just over the horizon. Lott said tax cut legislation approved before Congress' break would go to the White House next week for its threatened veto. Clinton's rejection of the measure will present Republicans with an important decision: whether to set the issue aside until next year's election campaign or attempt to work out a compromise that also would cover issues as diverse as spending and Medicare.

"What the president wants is more spending, more spending, more spending for everything."

— Trent Lott
Senate Majority Leader

INTERNET JOBS

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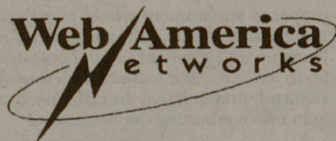
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 - Works well in a team environment
 - Windows 98 proficiency
 - Ability to clearly articulate to customers over the telephone
 - Part-Time Opportunities with Flexible Work Hours available with variety of 4 hour shifts, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.
 - Minimum of 24 Months Experience Using the Internet

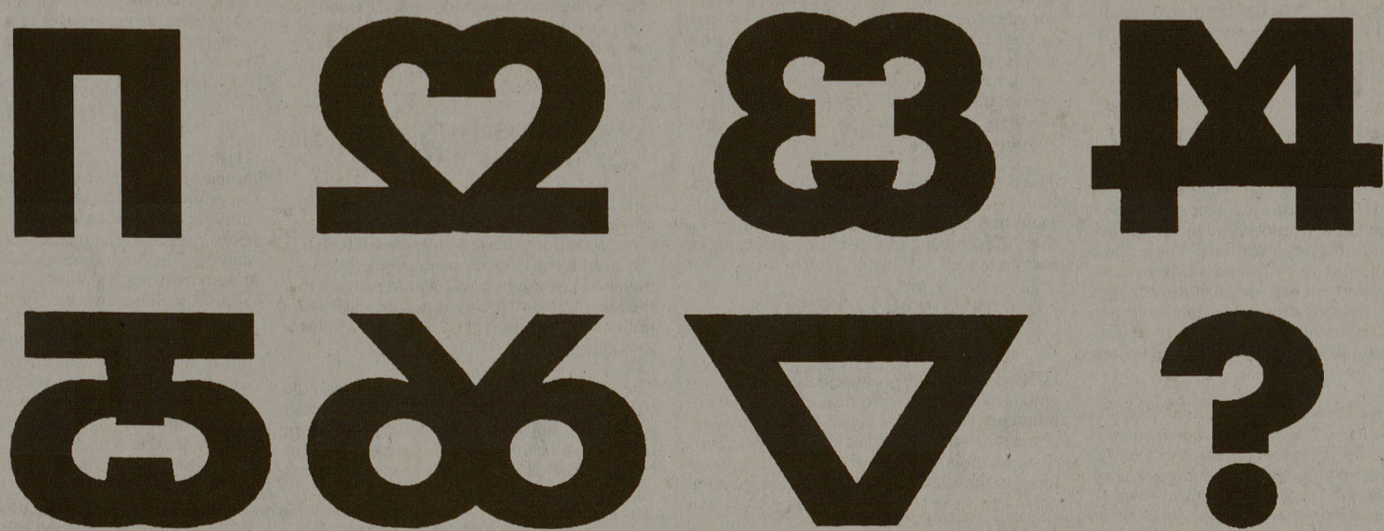
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