



# *American School Directory Provides an Internet Home for All U.S. K-12 Schools*

The Survey of Advanced Telecommunications in U.S. Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, Fall 1996, reported that 65 percent of U.S. public schools had access to the Internet, and of those that did not have access, 87 percent were planning to be connected to the "Information Superhighway" by the year 2000. While most schools on the Internet provided teachers and staff access to e-mail, only about a third (35 percent) made it available for student use.

All that has changed recently, thanks to an initiative by Computers For Education (CFE), a leading provider of technology fundraising solutions for kindergarten through 12th grade (K-12) schools. Through its American School Directory (ASD) division, CFE has teamed up with IBM Global Services to build and manage a Web site for each of the 106,000 schools in the U.S.

The Web sites, which are located at <http://www.asd.com>, provide information about the schools and will offer free e-mail service, so that students, educators and parents can communicate with each other, and with other schools, over the Internet. In addition, visitors to the ASD Home Page can access The Education Connection, a Web site developed and maintained by Vanderbilt University, which provides online interactive curriculum and links to high-quality education sites.

## **Building a 53-million-page Web site proves a tough assignment**

CFE worked with IBM to develop the high-performance software code for predesigned Web page templates that provides schools with

a basic school Web site. The site features similar functionality for all schools, provides uniformity for data entry and organization of information, and reduces the need for technological expertise.

CFE's successful six-year-old fundraising program, designed to help schools purchase technology through sales of magazine subscriptions, generated a significant database of school names, addresses, and other pertinent information. Although CFE had the general information to set up 106,000 individual Web pages, the company turned to IBM for help in building a directory with the capacity to host more than three million teacher home pages and 50 million student Web pages.

Elijah Collard, vice president of marketing for CFE, says, "We chose IBM to help us develop

<b>Application</b>	Online school Web site directory
<b>Software</b>	IBM DB2 IBM AIX
<b>Hardware</b>	IBM AS/400 IBM RS/6000 SP
<b>Services</b>	IBM Global Services Web application development, Web site hosting

and host this site for two reasons. First, IBM has the depth and breadth of products to provide a total solution for all of our technology needs. Second, and perhaps even more important, IBM has the name and reputation



*The American School Directory provides students and teachers their own place in Cyberspace.*

in the global marketplace to give schools the confidence they need to venture onto the Internet.”

### **Online software, custom tool kits simplify Web site updates**

ASD's online software makes it easy for every school to update its basic Web site, featuring the school's location, size, administration, honors, awards, monthly calendar and more. In addition, schools can purchase ASD's easy-to-use tool kits, which come with "fill-in-the-blanks" forms. Teachers can use these forms to set up Web pages for homework assignments and classroom policy. ASD also provides identification labels, which can be attached to the student art and yearbook photos that will be included on the site. Because most schools don't have the equipment needed to convert these materials to electronic format, ASD does the scanning for them. All materials arriving at ASD are entered into an IBM DB2 for AIX relational database and are available on the Internet the next morning.

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*—Elijah Collard, Vice President of Marketing, Computers for Education*

“We worked with IBM Global Services to make these products as bulletproof and robust as possible,” explains Collard. “They have to be easy to use and work right the first time to give educators and students confidence in their ability to master Internet technology.”

### **Convenient remote online update**

The ASD Web sites are hosted by IBM Global Services on an IBM RS/6000 SP Massively Parallel Processing (MPP) server configured to handle two million hits a day and upgradable to more than 10 million hits a day by adding additional nodes.

“One of the more interesting aspects of this configuration”, says Collard, “is that we feed information into our IBM AS/400 in Tennessee, which communicates with the Web servers at IBM Global Services in Connecticut, which then feeds information back to our AS/400. Being able to transfer data between remote systems thousands of miles apart is very convenient. For example, a company can use IBM Global Services to provide remote online update services. Updated information can then be transferred to corporate databases around the world.”

### **Online Alumni Directory, school store expand possibilities**

Since the American School Directory went online, 80,000 schools have added information to their Web sites, and over 12 thousand sites now include pictures and student art.

CFE has also worked with IBM to develop the American Alumni Directory (AAD), a fully interactive Web site that connects past students with the activities and needs of their former schools, and provides them a way to locate and communicate with friends and former classmates. Every school Web site in the ASD has a link to the AAD.

In addition to the AAD, CFE is using IBM's electronic commerce solutions to enable schools to include their magazine subscription fundraisers and other items from their school stores on their Web sites for online purchases.

Collard says that CFE's American School Directory would not have been possible without IBM's Internet technology. “Their products are scalable and secure—two features essential for ASD's continued success. They provide total e-business solutions that enable us to leverage their infrastructure, bundle our software and services, and thus provide a more comprehensive solution to the technology dilemmas confronting American schools today,” he says.

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IBM Corporation  
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Somers, New York 10589

Printed in the United States of America

7-97  
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