

What are others doing?

A good way to become an effective WWW content provider is to be an active WWW user because most of the information needed to develop and maneuver around the Internet actually lies within it.

Visit as many existing sites as you can to see how other people in organizations like yours have dealt with the issues outlined above. Use directories and search engines to locate existing sites that seem to have a purpose or audience or product similar to yours. Search engines and directories are Internet tools that help you locate Web sites that match certain criteria or fall into specific categories. There are many to choose from, but it's a good idea to become very familiar with a few good sites. Here are our favorites:

- **Directories:** A directory represents information resources in an organized, categorical fashion. Directories often contain a great deal of information about specific topics. **Yahoo!** <http://www.yahoo.com/> is a very good directory that provides links to all the different types of information on the Internet. **A Business Researcher's Interests** <http://www.brint.com> is another directory service, sponsored by the Association for Information Systems, that focuses on several specific fields of interest: information processes, systems, and technologies that are relevant to contemporary organizational issues. **StateSearch** <http://www.nascio.org/stateSearch/index.cfm>, sponsored by the National Association of State Chief Information Officers, (NASCIO) is a directory of many kinds of information systems applications in state governments.
- **Search Engines:** A search engine gives you the ability to search for keywords on World Wide Web pages. There are hundreds of search engines available, and a good site to visit to get access to the best ones is <http://www.search.com/>. Two good search engines are **Lycos** <http://www.lycos.com> and **Altavista** <http://www.altavista.com/>. Take some time to learn the searching process that these services use. You'll soon be able to narrow your search terms to ones that find many useful sites (and fewer not useful ones).
- **What to look for when you visit other WWW sites** Now that you know how to find sites that deal with topics that interest you, what should you do when you get there?. As you visit others of your kind on the Web, and peruse their sites, ask yourself:
 - Do these people know who their customers are?
 - Do they make it easy for their customers to navigate and find useful information?
 - Have they made it easy for people to contact them or ask questions?
 - Do they waste their visitors' time?
 - Are they providing a useful service?
 - Are you glad you found them?
 - Would you visit this site again?