

Chapter VIII

Cybercafé Management Software

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ABSTRACT

This chapter is intended to provide an insight into cybercafé management software. Specifically, it gives the meaning of cybercafé management software, features of cybercafé management software, cybercafé management software systems requirement, criteria for selecting cybercafé management software, some examples of cybercafé management software, the role of cybercafé management software in enhancing Internet security, limitations of cybercafé software, future trends, and future research direction. It is argued that cybercafé management software has the capability of keeping a large client database with which it draws its strength for asset tracking, calculating client's bonus on patronage, and in keeping an audit trail thus securing financial transactions.

INTRODUCTION

Cybercafé was invented at the beginning of 1994 by Ivan Pope. Commissioned to develop an Internet event for an arts weekend at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London, Pope wrote a proposal outlining the concept of a café with Internet access from the tables. In June 1994, The Binary Café, Canada's first Internet café, opened in Toronto, Ontario. During the 5th International

Symposium on Electronic Art, ISEA, in August 1994, an establishment called CompuCafe operated in Helsinki, Finland, featuring both Internet access and a robotic beer seller. Inspired partly by the ICA event, a commercial establishment of this type, called Cyberia opened on September 1, 1994 in London. The first American Internet café, named Internet Café, opened in early 1995 in the East Village neighborhood of New York City (Wikipedia, 2007).

A *cybercafé* or Internet café is a place where people can get connected to the Internet while eating or having a cup of coffee, using a publicly accessible computer. While the main activity in the cybercafé is the Internet, such as e-mail, newsgroup, and Web site surfing, other applications usually available are office suite to type document, spreadsheet, games, such as online games and other utilities such as printing service, scanning, and digital photo service. Some Internet cafés also sell computer accessories and computer repair and training. People may have their food and drink at the computer table or at separate tables provide by the café. Modern cybercafés also have wireless connection in their local area networking (LAN), where people can bring their own lap top and get connected to the Internet by paying a small fee (CCAutoSoft, n.d.). This chapter is intended to provide an insight into the meaning of *cybercafé management software*, features of *cybercafé management software*, *cybercafé management software systems requirement*, criteria for selecting *cybercafé management software*, some examples of *cybercafé management software*, the role of *cybercafé management software* in enhancing *Internet security*, *limitations* of *cybercafé software*, future trends, and future research direction.

CYBERCAFÉ MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Software is a program that controls computer hardware. The two primary categories are system software (which governs the workings of the computer itself, such as the operating system and utilities) and application software (which performs specific tasks for the user, such as word processing, spreadsheets, accounts payable, and *cybercafé management*) (Gartner, 2004). On the other hand, *management* is a process that is used to accomplish organizational goals; that is, a process that is used to achieve what an organiza-

tion wants to achieve (Answers.com, 2006). An organization could be a business, a school, a city, a group of volunteers, or any governmental entity; here we are concerned about cybercafés which comprised of both man and machines. In this case it involves mainly the *management* of computer systems hardware, software, and processes with the objective of achieving organizational goals. In this context, *management* functions such as planning, organizing, directing, and controlling are not basically human oriented but a software concern. The four key functions of *management* are applied throughout an organization regardless of whether it is a business, a government agency, or a church group. In a cybercafé business, which will be the focus here, many different activities take place and the burden of *management* is on the *management software*, which comes handy in an integrated software that is most often referred to as 'billing system'. For optimum operation, this billing system runs on, and along side some other software such as operating system software and other application software.

Consequently, we may define a *cybercafé management software* as an application program or software installed in *cybercafé system* in order to ensure smooth operation of *cybercafé network*. It enables *cybercafé operators* or staff to monitor network traffic, client activities, billing, control of workstations, and so forth. *Cybercafé management software* therefore allows the staff of cafés to run the café in such a way that users can be able to derive satisfaction from the Internet services rendered.

Without *cybercafé management software*, the alternative is by using traditional method in accounting and keeping customer record. *Cybercafé business processes* are several steps forward from other types of business processes that do not need any advanced technology. So, an attempt to employ the use of a simple calculator and other manual means to calculate customers' bills and perform other routine accounting tasks common with a *cybercafé* will surely see the business to

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