



For immediate release
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HKUST Offers Advanced Computer Networking Services to Public

Low cost access to the world-wide computer network known as 'Internet' is now being offered to the public, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology announced today.

Internet, which can be accessed with a personal computer and a modem (a device which connects computers to telephone lines), enables its users to reach the tens of thousands of information services offered by more than 12 thousand organisations in over 45 countries.

Access to the Internet will be offered by Hong Kong Supernet for prices starting at HK\$140 per month.

Internet users are able to send and receive electronic mail with any of the estimated 20 million other users; 'chat' by keyboard in real-time global conversations; read newspaper wire reports as they are sent; get and give advice on any number of special interest topics (there are thousands) and share computer software.

"The Internet can be thought of as the great public highway for computer communication," said Bob Coggeshall, Project Manager for Hong Kong Supernet. "It is the largest non-private computer network in the world and it is growing at a rate of nearly 100% per year."

Although the Internet had its beginnings more than 20 years ago as a US academic and government research project, private businesses have recently taken the lead in Internet membership as companies have realised its strategic importance. Companies use it to communicate with their customers and employees, and even to advertise products world-wide at very low cost.

"Cost is not the problem, it's know how," said Coggeshall, "and HK Supernet will address that problem by offering tutorials, help documents, and discounted books".

Hong Kong Supernet is the result of a research project funded initially by the Sino Software Research Centre of HKUST. It is now being made available to the Hong Kong community through the HKUST RandD Corporation Ltd., an independent business unit of the University whose mission is to facilitate the commercialisation of the University's research results.

Hong Kong Supernet will hold a press conference and demonstration on Wednesday, October 27, 4 - 5 pm in Lecture Theatre A of the HKUST Campus. For information please call the Office of Public Affairs at 358-6307.