

Software paves way for online meetings

Sigma Design has produced EZ Meeting, software that simplifies online conferences. (Who wants to go anywhere these days? Flying is for the birds.)

This program is full-bore: You can share photos, blueprints, diagrams, Adobe PDF and Microsoft Office documents, and can capture anything shown on screen and save it to your own computer. The initiating party retains control of whatever information is being shared.

The \$99 software creates an Internet-based network, either broadband or with regular 56k modems. During the conference, only traffic between EZ Meeting users is allowed to travel back and forth. It works with firewalls and virus protection programs, so no changes are needed there.

Each member of the conference must have a full copy of the program to be interactive; limited copies for those who just want to watch and listen are free. Up to 32 people can be connected at any one time.

This is impressive. There are lots of Internet meeting programs but none as easy and feature-rich as this. A professional version is available for \$199 per copy and provides support for sharing three-dimensional

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On
Computers



files like architectural and mechanical drawings. You can draw, highlight or type on any part of the images.

Trial versions are available free for 60 days from the Web site ezmeeting.com. After the trial period expires, the program reverts to "viewing only."

FREE U.S. ADDRESS CHECKER

Dymo Corp., which makes the Dymo Label Writer, has a free download addition for Microsoft Word that checks your addresses on letters and envelopes to make sure the spelling is correct and the address is part of a working number series. It fills in the ZIP code as well.

That's a lot of correction work going on, so you have to be online to do it. You go to Dymo's site and your software checks all the addresses and automatically fills in any missing parts (U.S. only). Web site: www.dymo.com/addressfixer.

INTERNUTS

■ Americandialect.org: Check out the new word coinages, such as "wall humping" (it's not

what you might think, but refers to the practice of rubbing against a door security scanner so you don't have to take the magnetic card out of your pocket), "shuicide bomber" for terrorists with shoe bombs, and "desk rage" for anger in the office.

■ Mph-nyc.com: This is the home site of a New York design studio, but the best part starts by clicking on "the history of paper dresses." The first paper dress appeared as a promotional gimmick from the Scott Paper Co. in 1966. It charged \$1.25 for the dress and sold half a million of them. That started a craze that moved on to paper dresses for celebrities, paper underwear, paper bikinis, and even paper fur coats (they couldn't be cleaned but you could just "snip off the dirty parts"). A fun site with clever ideas.

■ Halfbakery.com: This site is devoted to half-baked ideas, such as a semi-detachable rear end for your car so other cars would have to keep a safe distance behind you. You can vote on this and other ideas, like roast beef in sandwich pockets made of Yorkshire pudding, medicinal bacon, or, of course, submit your own half-baked ideas.