

Good Morning.

I am Kren Clausen and will be the Chair of this very timely and informative Web Hosting Conference, produced and organized by The Strategy Institute, in Toronto. It is with great pleasure and honour that I have accepted this role.

Having graduated many years ago with a business degree from Bishops' University, the business and marketing world has transformed itself greatly for me since that time. I have held senior positions in a handful of companies, some of which I founded, and for which involved international markets in some 40 countries over the years.

My experience was gained from traditional economy businesses providing products, services and technologies to various vertical markets such as Healthcare, Apparel/Textile, Environmental, and from new economy businesses providing Computer Networking Products, Systems Integration, Digital Media services and recently Convergence Strategy and Productions.

I have also contributed to industry through my activities on committees and on Boards of Associations, and companies, by which I came to learn of the IMAT association a few years ago. After becoming a member, and later a Board Director, I was elected President last year. I am very pleased to be a part of this conference in my capacity as President of the Interactive Multimedia Arts & Technologies Association, referred to as IMAT.

In the course of preparing for this conference, I had discussions with David Laird and the staff at the Strategy Institute in regard to the objectives and the intended results for the delegates of this conference. I quickly realized from their committed and determined approach, that one of the amazing opportunities of this 2-day event is for the delegates and the speakers to assemble and learn together this invaluable subject matter.

As President of IMAT, I take delight in sharing some thoughts and themes for you to consider as you participate today and tomorrow. IMAT members and member companies are listed on our on-line directory at www.imat.ca. Our content producers and creators are a necessary and integrated part of the total solution of web hosting. They have the experience, skillsets and

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expertise in working from small to large scale projects. I invite you to consider IMAT as an added resource, and as an association that you may benefit from as a new member. We provide professional development events in both technology and business; referred to as SIGS and Biztraks respectively.

In continuance, effective Web Hosting today for Corporations is an all encompassing and demanding service to provide, because of the complexities in technology which are required to deliver the much evolved content, data, applications, transaction processes and telecommunications over the internet. In fact, convergence of technologies is as imminent an issue as convergence of content and as convergence of mediums is.

What I saw as the truly unique value proposition for the delegates of this conference, is you will be provided with relevant and specific knowledge which you seek whether you are in Sales, Marketing, Business Development, New Media, Technology, Research, e-Commerce, Security, or otherwise, as example.

In fact, the convergence of persons at this conference, simulates a real life scenario of IT operations working with marketing departments, with sales operations, with finance personnel, with Executive Management, with Vendors, with Clients, with Web developers, with content creators, with Telecommunication providers and with Web Hosting service providers. We are all interconnected and inter-networked with one and another.

The common denominator is we all have a need for greater clarification, less confusion and a stronger understanding of the networked business world, and how that affects our business, our product, our market position, our brand, our organization, our efficiency. More specifically, what do we have at stake? Is it our co-dependency on the networked business world or equally so is it our desire for independence from it.

Now and in the future, there is rapid development, deployment and faster time-to-market technology applications available over the internet with ASP (Application Service Provider) models which permit accessibility and availability of third party supplied products, services, applications and transactions.

Rich media email involving sound, graphics, video, and motion integrated with any one of these is widely becoming a new standard for direct marketing using permission based and opt in techniques. Database, archiving, storage for enterprise networks, back up, and security are all moving on-line rapidly as services. ECommerce transactions, e-business and content delivery is requiring more and more bandwidth.

What this means is that all of us are affected in an organization or corporation no matter what department we are in or position we hold, because of one essential ingredient called bandwidth. The more we pump through pipes the less room there is – as it appears. Switches, routers and intelligent network technologies assist in managing and optimizing the bandwidth in Local Area Networks. But the same issue holds true for the Wide Area Network -- the Internet.

This is when true concern needs to exist when choosing the right web hosting company for your needs, your security, and your dependency on the networked business world.

Managing content, networks, and applications is at stake now. As businesses seek to leverage the Internet, a growing number of protocols require support. The traffic growth on the Internet alone has increased at staggering rates. As recent as over a year ago, it was stated in a report by the Internet Research Group, that the traffic doubled every 100 days.

Internet service providers, web hosting companies and on-line service companies require to remain competitive. Certainly, the reduction of dot.com companies over the last several months has created challenges to our industry. However, the traditional economy companies and the industrial/commercial/educational sectors are migrating to the Internet quickly and utilizing the web for e-learning, e-Strategy and fulfillment.

Television and the Internet have made a convergence in respect to advertising and marketing for products. Persuading millions of viewers of a TV show to a sponsor's web site, and providing incentives for that viewer in the form of rewards, contest prizes or discounts then enables on-line commerce to follow. With the addition now of WAP enable devices, there is ever more ability for marketers to reach out to consumers using content over the Internet in wireless means of delivery or otherwise.

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Streaming media, films whether short films or clips from full feature length films, or even the full feature length film itself is being delivered over the web. Music downloads, and multimedia downloads are being downloaded. This traffic all draws down off the net and affects overall bandwidth availability for users whether at the company, organization, or school or at home where you may be on cable modem, dial up or high speed services through the telephone companies.

Speed, reliability, support 24 x 7, availability, quality of service are of utmost and essential requirements from your web hoster. In earlier years, common ground was a corporate home page, with information on the company, products, markets and perhaps self-updating features. Now the new common ground would include training, sales force automation, electronic customer relationship management, cataloguing, e-commerce transactions, direct on-line permission based marketing, business to business supply chain automation and multimedia content.

Internet sites therefore handle more traffic now. More servers are deployed. Back up, fault tolerance and redundancy are now issues and requirements. Transactions and user experiences must be 100% reliable. Prevention of overloading on a server is resolved by replicating data across many servers. Load balancing is then required where traffic is dynamically distributed across a group of servers running a common application, and the group appears as a single server to the network.

The traffic is now distributed through load balancing. This offers greater economy of scale, and provides greater fault tolerance. The health of the servers and of the Internet content is monitored and managed, and as a result users are ensured that they are connected to the most available server, and that the site performance is optimized, just as Quality of Services then becomes predictable.

Service Interruptions and guaranteeing availability are crucial concerns with today's web applications. Interruptions are costly. Content failures, and error messages become painfully frustrating to users. Dependability is obviously an apparent requirement of a web hoster.

Automatic failovers would be desirable. Content verification and traffic prioritization are further examples of availability characteristics, which you will want from your web hoster.

Hiding of server addresses and packet filtering will be examples of security that your web hoster may provide. Traffic prioritization can ensure high availability and should be a requirement.

At this conference, we will benefit in learning how to navigate our way through these obstacles I have noted as examples. The Industry Specialists and Experts have been selected to speak to you at this conference, and to assist with answers, methods, solutions, strategies and helpful advice in regard to choosing the right web hoster. The right web hoster for you will offer best of breed solutions and Quality of Services relevant and scaleable to your needs.

This conference is made available to you through the highly qualified and expert people that will be delivering presentations and speaking in panel discussions today and tomorrow. At this time I would like to thank each and everyone of our speakers and invite you the attendees to address your concerns, questions and thoughts to our speakers at the appropriate time intervals. Thorough, quality, and interactive dialogue, is a means by which learning and understanding may be augmented at this conference.