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IBM Teams With Leading Telcos and Service Providers to Broaden Use of New Internet Appliance - Company Business and Marketing

[Cambridge Telcom Report](#), [March 13, 2000](#)

IBM Thursday announced agreements with several leading communication companies and application service providers (ASPs) to begin a trial roll-out of the company's new Internet appliance.

By combining the IBM appliance with an array of service options, including content and hosting from ASPs and broadband connections from telecommunications partners, the device will become part of a convenient end-to-end Internet access solution requiring little to no PC skills on the part of the end-user.

Easy-to-use, portable and compact, IBM's Internet appliance is comprised of two simple components: a 10-inch color monitor and a keyboard for direct Internet access.

SBC Communications and Bell Atlantic plan to trial IBM's appliance with their respective broadband services. The desired outcome of this initiative is to identify industries and associated end-users in various areas, such as insurance, finance, healthcare, small/medium business, travel and entertainment.

In separate market trials, two service providers, LaserLink.net and Planet Computer (planetuplink.com), have signed on to pilot the appliance with selected clients. LaserLink.net, a Virtual Internet Service Provider (VISP), enables large corporations and organizations to establish a branded Internet presence. The company will provide Internet access, fulfillment, customer service and technical support for pilot customers. In contrast to typical ISPs that are invested in building their own brands, LaserLink.net was founded to build the brands of their clients in industries, such as PC manufacturing, financial services, education and entertainment, through a VISP product. Planet Computer, as part of their suite of ASP services, will provide Internet access to their executive recruitment customers.

Planet Computer provides end-to-end solutions to on-line executive recruitment services and other industries that fits tailored to the life and workstyle of their customers. IBM partnered with these companies to help customers take advantage of the first-class, totally branded Internet access they provide.

"IBM is working with these companies because they offer the technological underpinnings needed for high bandwidth that support a range of rich Internet

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access to a range of exciting services online," said Brian Connors, vice president, Net Device Alliances, IBM Personal Systems Group. "The introduction of this exciting technology union underscores our further commitment to the Edge of Network initiative, which in turn will provide a new level of versatility to consumers."

"IBM has the vision and technology to make pervasive computing, e-business and most importantly the intelligent network become reality," said George H. McGovern, III, Chairman and CEO of LaserLink.net. "We are dedicated to reinforcing the relationship between an organization and its customers, and our partnership with IBM in this exciting pilot further complements that focus," added McGovern.

"IBM's strategy of providing managed services -- and not being just a hardware vendor -- allows us to provide our customers with a consistently managed set of solutions across a number of industries with IBM appliances that meet electronic workstyles and lifestyles," said Cori Fountain, CEO and President of Planet Computer. "This, and the fact that IBM is the industry's thin client leader, makes them the best possible technology and services partner for our business."

"Broadband networks stand ready to supercharge e-business transformation," said Gary Cohen, general manager, IBM Global Telecommunications Industry. "These initiatives with the Internet appliance exemplify the broad capability IBM can provide to help telecommunications service providers deliver new capability to customers and reap rewards from their unique position as the delivery infrastructure for e-business."

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