

3D desktop in the works

Interface can help computer screen mimic office workspace

A Toronto software company predicts within 10 years that people will interact with their desktop computers through virtual three-dimensional worlds, and believes it is at the forefront of the race to shape that future.

3DNA founder Ken Deaton says the 2-dimensional desktop metaphor doesn't work for many computer users and that instead of simplifying things, it has made them more confusing and complex.

He says these difficulties were identified in the early 1980s when he was a student at MIT's Media Lab and Apple's Macintosh became the first major computer to use a graphical interface instead of typed commands to control it.

"Even back then, we foresaw major issues with menus and the desktop metaphor," the 42-year-old Deaton says. "It doesn't work: you have to navigate menus that are non-standardized from program to program, desktops are cluttered with little icons that don't resemble anything



DICK LOEK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The days of the 2-dimensional computer desktop in the workplace could be numbered, a Toronto software company says.

real, and you can't tell one from another."

Deaton believes his two-year-old company has found a solution. 3DNA has built an interface for Windows that enables users to move about rooms in virtual 3-D building to manage their files, programs, and Web sites in a more natural way, interacting with objects such as printers and calculators that look like they do in real life.

Dubbed the 3DNA Desktop, the software is attracting attention from high-

profile graphics hardware makers such as Toronto's ATI, and Taiwan's MSI, which are shipping the software with their latest PC graphics cards.

The software lets users load different themes or "skins" to change the look of the interface to anything from a Soho loft to a modern office to a futuristic space station. Users can also create their own skins to mimic their real-life (or fantasy) workspaces.

Eventually, Deaton thinks that just as people

create their own homepages on the World Wide Web for anyone to browse, they will similarly put their 3-D "homeworlds" online and let others browse the digital version of their workspaces.

Combining entrepreneurship with technological innovation is nothing new to Deaton, who launched his first company, ISG Technologies, when he was 13 and listed it on the NASDAQ and Toronto stock exchanges and five years later.

The company, now renamed Cedara Software, is a world leader in 3-D medical imaging technology that uses data from 2-D MRIs, CAT scans and sonograms to construct 3-D models and images. The images help surgeons plan operations or let parents see the face of their child while it is still in the womb.

3DNA will launch the first full version of the 3DNA Desktop before Christmas. To get the latest free version, go to www.3DNA.net.

SALEEM KHAN
FOR METRO TORONTO

office party tips

The following are some tips for making a good impression at the company office party:

- Reach out. Make a point to meet at least two people outside of your usual circle. Those from other departments can be valuable contacts.
- Wear festive attire, but don't overdo it. If appropriate, dress up for the event, but keep it conservative and don't wear anything overly flamboyant.
- Eat beforehand. You don't want to be anchored to the hors d'oeuvre table. Snacking prior to a party will enable you to focus on mingling instead of munching. It's also wise to limit your alcohol intake to one cocktail or less.
- Brush up on table manners. If the function is a formal dinner, make sure you're current on etiquette for such occasions. If you're not sure which bread plate is yours (the one on your left), or what to do with your napkin when you're finished with your meal (place it neatly next to your dinner plate), find a reference source to review.
- Offering to take photos of co-workers is a good way to break the ice. Follow up by giving your colleagues copies of pictures that include them.
- Know when to say farewell. Make your exit with the bulk of the crowd. Be sure to express your appreciation to those who planned the party and to your manager before you leave.

Source: The Creative Group (www.creativegroup.com)

ORACLE⁹ⁱ DBA

Certified Success

>>> In 2002, Ontario will add 38,000 new IT jobs but 10,000 may go unfilled due to a skills shortage.* Humber College offers the programs you'll need to fill the gap! Full & part-time programs available.

*ITAC study May 6, 2002

- Official Oracle University curriculum
- Hands-on training in a lab environment
- Certified Oracle⁹ⁱ DBA Instructors
- Tuition includes all learning materials and exam vouchers for OCP certification
- Humber is an official Oracle Workforce Development partner
- 25 weeks, 300 hours of instructor led training



HUMBER
School of Information
Technology

416.675.6622 ext. 4937
www.it.humberc.on.ca

We've got a career waiting for you...

>>> Humber's **School of Hospitality, Recreation & Tourism** offers you an exciting career as a chef, food and beverage manager, hotel or restaurant manager, tourism professional and more! Work with industry leaders and obtain hands-on training in state-of-the-art training facilities. Over 90 % of our graduates find employment in their related field within 3 months of graduating.

**Beat the double cohort -
begin classes in January.**

Programs offered:

- **Chef Training:** develop culinary skills
- **Culinary Management:** learn the latest food preparation & presentation skills
- **Food & Beverage Management:** obtain the basics of food production & management
- **Hotel & Restaurant Management:** learn about the essential operations of this sector
- **Tourism & Travel:** study international travel destinations and current travel trends



HUMBER
School of Hospitality,
Recreation & Tourism

416-675-5000
www.humber.ca