

COMPUTE'S GETTING STARTED WITH™

ONLINE COMMUNICATIONS

You might also take a look at *netguide: What's on in Cyberspace!* (Random House, 800-733-3000, \$19.00) and *The Whole Internet User's Guide and Catalog* (O'Reilly & Associates, 800-998-9938, \$24.95).

Should I Sign Up?

If you're toying with the idea of getting an Internet account, buying one of these books will show you right away if the net is a place you're going to like. If you're willing to put the effort into it, the Internet can be a rewarding adventure.

—Richard O. Mann

12 GREAT ONLINE PLACES

COMPUTE Online

(America Online)

America Online's Newsstand contains an electronic version of COMPUTE, including the full text of the articles and reviews for a year or so back. In addition, there are files for downloading that have been featured in the magazine's shareware columns and a robust message area.

Among the message topics are Ask the Experts, Talk to the Editors, and a variety of hardware and software topics. The Talk to the Editors topic is a lot of fun—it transforms the printed COMPUTE into an interactive medium where you can immediately go online with questions and comments for the editors (and many of the writers).

To become a participant in this magazine, drop by the COMPUTE forum on AOL. And if you need a copy of an article or review you remember from a recent issue, it's there on AOL, waiting to be downloaded and printed. Drop

by—the editors and writers would love to see you there.

—Richard O. Mann

Entertainment Drive (CompuServe)

It's billed as a "backstage pass to the entertainment industry." That pretty well describes E-Drive's wealth of information about movies, television, music, and theater—much of it direct from the movie studios, television networks, recording studios, and other entertainment companies. You'll find GIF files from recent film productions, up-to-date schedules for top cable channels, and the latest gossip from Hollywood columnists Marilyn Beck and Stacy Jenel Smith.

By browsing the libraries, you might learn how the Corporation for Public Broadcasting funds PBS and NPR, read trial summaries from the upcoming week on Court TV, chuckle at David Letterman's Top 10 lists going back to February 17, check out MGM's planned film releases for the rest of the year, and download the cover art for many recent hit albums.

There's also an active message area with intelligent and often highly opinionated discussions on such hot topics as how the cast of "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" is developing and what we might expect from the new Turner Classic Movies channel.

In short, E-Drive is the latest hot ticket for anyone who wants to closely follow the entertainment industry or make better-informed entertainment choices.

—David English

Executive News Service (CompuServe)

I admit it: I'm a news junkie. I don't feel right unless I've

seen the daily newspaper or watched the evening news. Something may have happened since yesterday, and I need to know about it.

If you're similarly afflicted, check out Executive News Service on CompuServe (type *GO ENS*). You can configure ENS to match your interests and have the system search through thousands of news reports while you're offline. ENS currently scans 20 news services, including AP Financial, Reuters World Report, UPI Sports, The Washington Post, and OTC NewsAlert.

In addition to the public folders provided by CompuServe, you can set up three personal folders with as many as seven search criteria for each folder. For example, if you set a single search criterion (such as *computer*) and choose all 20 news services, you'll fill your folder to its capacity of 500 news stories in a matter of a day or two. On the other hand, if you choose several narrow criteria, such as *programming*, *Windows utilities*, and *icons*, while selecting only a few of the news services, it may take several weeks to fill your folder.

One word of warning: To use the Executive News Service, you must pay a \$15-per-hour surcharge on top of CompuServe's base connect rates. And to create personal folders, you must become an Executive Option subscriber.

—David English

The Fiction Workshop (America Online)

This is a plug for a writers' workshop operated by my friend Mesotron (that's his screen name). Each week, a member of the workshop submits a story or a piece

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8 GREAT COLOR PRINTERS TESTED!

COMPUTE

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tough job, though, because it always involves searching records in distant places, often in other countries.

Using the Genealogy BB, you can post specific questions on topics that usually