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Web site eDrive revamps its content, chat lines

By KATHARINE STALTER

Showbiz-themed World Wide Web site Entertainment Drive has revamped, adding a wider range of content and chat capabilities.

According to eDrive founder and CEO Michael Bolanos, a highlight of the relaunch was a live chat session with Cindy Crawford, who was slated to answer questions Monday night about her new book "Cindy Crawford's Basic Face."

Crawford's participation was especially significant, Bolanos said, since it will likely serve as a draw for other celebs who want to do chat sessions, launch online fan clubs or promote projects on the Web.

Currently, he said, chat lines and message boards are more robust on proprietary online services such as CompuServe, where eDrive originated. On the Web, it's unusual to find lively chat sessions and ongoing message boards, something Bolanos is hoping to change.

"We want to bring that sense of community that people find on CompuServe or AOL to the Internet," he said.

Though eDrive had already been on the Web, Bolanos called that version "a small preview. This is a more robust and full-fledged version of what we want to do on the Internet."

Featured site in kit

He said Microsoft has included eDrive as a featured site in its Internet Starter Kit, the introduction to the Net that will be packaged with all Windows 95 software sold for this year's Christmas season.

Bolanos added that eDrive is also working with Microsoft to incorporate the software maker's ActiveX and Normandie products into eDrive content.

CompuServe has a minority equity share in the company, but, according to Bolanos, plays no role in eDrive's day-to-day operations. Bolanos said he is the company's largest individual shareholder.