

# BtoB

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## NETMARKETING

# 100 BEST B-TO-B WEB SITES

BY KATE MADDOX

**H**EWLETT-PACKARD Co., Palo Alto, Calif., was named No. 1 in this year's NetMarketing 100, *BtoB's* annual ranking of the top b-to-b Web sites.

The site, which was re-launched last May at [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com) following Hewlett-Packard's merger with Compaq Computer Corp., scored 98 out of 100 possible points. *BtoB* judges evaluated the sites based on quality and presentation of information, ease of navigation, design, e-commerce and site extras such as online chat and e-newsletters.

HP's primary Web development agency is Agency.com, New York, and it uses a variety of software and services for functions ranging from Web site usage to analytics.

"We want to create the best-in-class, full life-cycle experience for all of our customer segments," said Marius Haas, VP-eBusiness at HP, who is in charge of HP.com. Those customer segments include home and home office users, small and midsize businesses, enterprises, government and education users, and partners and developers.

One of the biggest obstacles the site has overcome is the integration of data after its acquisition of Compaq. The combined site has 2.5 million pages and roughly 1,900 site areas. HP collects 13 million records a day from events taking place on the site, such as users clicking on links or purchasing products.

"The integration with Compaq was a big challenge, and they handled it really well," said Rob Rosenthal, senior analyst at research firm IDC. "You have two very large companies with a lot of information on both sites, and you have to present it coherently. HP has put a lot of work into content management."

It shows.

Through the use of extensive data analytics and a commitment to the customer experience, HP has designed a site that is streamlined and efficient for its various audiences. The site presents content in an organized, compelling way.



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#1 Hewlett-Packard Co.  
[www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)

Upon entering the site, users can click directly into their customer segment, such as enterprise, and then search for information by product or by solution. Or they can go from the home page directly into a product category, where the experience is customized for each customer segment.

"We want to build a long-lasting, personalized customer relationship," Haas said. To that end, HP has developed many tools on its site that build and extend customer relationships.

It offers several ways to buy HP and Compaq products online, including a home and home office store, a small and midsize business store, a parts store, a refurbished products store, and HP.com Business to Business—an extensive site that allows HP business customers and partners to conduct e-business in a secure environment.

Among the features on the HP.com b-to-b site are online purchasing (integrated with software from Ariba, Commerce One, SAP, Oracle, PeopleSoft and RightWorks), navigation tailored to IT purchasing, and product configuration.

The b-to-b site also allows companies to create customized catalogs for frequently purchased products, set up automatic approval routing for orders (which specifies who can make purchase decisions) and conduct end-to-end transaction processing.

To further build relationships with customers, HP.com features Flash demos that show customers how to use the site, e-newsletters,

live chats with sales reps, online classes and real-time customer support. Customers can personalize the content they receive, as well as the frequency of the newsletters and alerts.

To support the HP.com site, Haas has a Web site staff of more than 300 people, spread out globally. The e-business group partners with various HP business groups, such as desktops, portables and workstations, to develop and maintain content on the site. Product marketing teams work with the business group teams to create product messaging, and regional teams provide translation and localization of content for 64 country sites. The HP.com content is translated into more than 35 languages.

Haas reports to Michael Winkler, exec VP-CMO, and to Jeff Clarke, exec VP-global operations.

One of the biggest projects has been to optimize the site's navigational path through the study of clickstreams and online behavior. Through tagging, HP can look at backtracking, which occurs when users click to one area but then go back, usually as a result of not finding what they're looking for.

HP is also using analytics to optimize sales of products online through functions such as shopping cart analysis.

While the Web site is budgeted primarily out of HP's e-business group, it is governed by various business units to ensure the site is meeting the needs of the units, Haas said. If a particular department, such as marketing, has a specific Web project, such as an integrated marketing campaign, the project will be partially funded by that department.

HP's efforts seem to be paying off; roughly 55% of the company's total sales come from the Web site.

Recently, a business customer was looking for a product on HP.com and instigated a live chat session with an online sales rep. The HP salesperson followed up with a live call, resulting in a \$3.2 million order. Haas declined to name the customer, although he said it was one of HP's largest retail customers.

HP was also recently named No. 1 by The Customer Respect Group in its 2003 Online Customer Respect Study, which ranks the top 100 U.S. companies on online customer service. □

# NETMARKETING 100 BEST B-TO-B WEB SITES

BY MARY E. MORRISON

EVERY YEAR, *BtoB* evaluates about 800 Web sites in 14 industry categories to determine which have earned a spot in the NetMarketing 100, our list of the best b-to-b Web sites. On the following pages, you'll find this year's list, ranked in descending order of points awarded.

Choosing the best sites is a task that has

grown increasingly difficult as companies devote larger portions of their staffs and budgets to building and maintaining a strong Web presence. For sites to make it into this year's NetMarketing 100, they had to have an overall score of 88 out of 100 points. The cutoff score last year was 87; in 2001, it was 86. The criteria for the NetMarketing 100 haven't changed, but the Web sites we reviewed have—continually adding functionality and improving usability.

Though many sites have gotten better, many still have a long way to go. To the latter group, we offer the NetMarketing 100 as examples to follow. These 100 sites present product, service and corporate information in an intuitive and easy-to-find way. They use an ever-expanding array of design tools to effectively communicate their brand, just as they would in traditional media. And they engage visitors in a sale, or get them as close as possible to that point. Ultimately, these companies use their Web sites to better serve their customers.

This year, as a whole, the Web sites we judged are offering users more resources,

such as white papers, e-mail newsletters and in-depth customer case studies. More sites are enabling users to browse in different languages. And many are making more pronounced efforts to determine what customers want by surveying them. For instance, the Web sites of IBM Corp., Sun Microsystems Inc. and Sybase Inc. ask users to rate either individual pages or the entire site.

The best of the best this year, with a score of 98, is Hewlett-Packard Co.'s Web site at [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com). The site has many objectives—marketing a variety of products and services to numerous customer segments—and yet it excels at presenting a unified brand image, complete with in-depth information about the company.

All sites on the following list are examples of how progressive companies are taking advantage of the Web—arguably their most powerful marketing channel—to provide users with product information, brand interaction, resources and a place to close the deal. □

	Company	Web site	Cat.	Pts.	Comments
1.	Hewlett-Packard Co.	<a href="http://www.hp.com">www.hp.com</a>	MHT	98	Fantastic site with lots of useful computing tools and tips. First-class e-commerce function; customer service options abound, including online chat. Beautiful, modern design.
2.	3Com Corp.	<a href="http://www.3com.com">www.3com.com</a>	MHT	97	Last year's winner ranks near the top of the list again. Extensive, with loads of product info, presented cleanly and without clutter. Has valuable resources for visitor, such as industry-specific case studies.
3.	American Express Co.	<a href="http://www.americanexpress.com">www.americanexpress.com</a>	FSI	97	Easy to navigate, immediately guiding visitors to appropriate sections, relevant info and access to accounts. Nice extras include education guides, calculators, networking opportunities and option to personalize home page.
4.	Dell Computer Corp.	<a href="http://www.dell.com">www.dell.com</a>	MHT	97	Professional and sophisticated, with focus on e-commerce. Clean design with many images. Presents content and products in compelling way. Many tools and calculators to help users make buying decisions.
5.	Apple Computer Inc.	<a href="http://www.apple.com">www.apple.com</a>	MHT	96	Beautifully designed, with unique look and feel. Easy to navigate. Well-executed basics plus great animations, technical support and product demos.
6.	ArvinMeritor Inc.	<a href="http://www.arvinmeritor.com">www.arvinmeritor.com</a>	A	96	Attractive home page. Plenty of corporate info and many resources for suppliers. Has feature that allows users to search all car models to see which have Arvin Meritor systems.
7.	CDW Computer Centers Inc.	<a href="http://www.cdw.com">www.cdw.com</a>	WRD	96	Great site makes e-commerce easy. Powerful search capabilities. Other features include helpful library of Webcasts, extranet chat for customer support and in-depth info on technology services.
8.	IBM Corp.	<a href="http://www.ibm.com">www.ibm.com</a>	MHT	96	Well-designed architecture. Lots of extras to help businesses make decisions, including case studies, Webcasts and white papers. Thorough customer service and corporate info. Some pages' text can be overwhelming.
9.	Microsoft Corp.	<a href="http://www.microsoft.com">www.microsoft.com</a>	S	96	Vast site is segmented nicely for various audiences. Many useful, interactive tools, such as online demos and software downloads. Has product comparison features and tours of products. Resource center includes technical papers, case studies and communities.
10.	Nextel Communications	<a href="http://www.nextel.com">www.nextel.com</a>	Tel	96	Great interactive features. Good customer support and account management system. Also has great online demos. "Call me" button lets user specify when customer support should call.

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