

Where up by that  
particular service.  
random



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Where would we find ourselves without the Web today? It provides us with a vast amount of information and communication. The world is accessible to us with a click of a button. Maps, stocks, chat and news can all be found in a matter of seconds. Things have greatly evolved from the home PC of the 1980s - Commodore 64s and IBM 8088s, and a life of direct dialing into BBSs at all hours of the night. Every small town of the USA has Internet access; the world is interconnected. Upon dialing into your Internet service and launching your browser, you open up a gateway to a variety of information resources.

One resource available to you is the portal, Yahoo!. Found at <http://www.yahoo.com>, this web site includes a plethora of selections, including chat. There are different ways of communicating with this feature.

You may download Yahoo! Messenger, an application that works in conjunction with Yahoo! Chat web page. In chat, you can enter rooms of topics of your interest, such as sports, music, or business and speak with people all over the world. You don't need to download any web browser plugins to access chat. You may still converse with people using the Yahoo! Messenger program. Yahoo! Messenger is one of many different instant-messaging programs out there. Similar applications such as ICQ or EGN can be used, but they are independent of any web portal, like Yahoo!. There are advantages and disadvantages to each program. No instant messaging service can communicate with any other.

You have to have an account with the same service, as who you want to speak with. But in case you don't know someone on the service, you can

make friends by meeting people in chat rooms or random chat, set up by that particular service. Random chat gives you the ability to meet people, by random, based on what their interests are. Once you have acquired people on your contacts/friends lists, with multiple services (i. e.

: friends on AOL/IM and friends on ICQ), you may want to look into downloading Universal Messenger. This program combines your lists of people, from the most popular programs you may have. These include ICQ, AOL/IM, Yahoo!, PowWow, and MSN Messenger. This saves on memory (RAM), so you don't have to run each individual program on your home computer. You must know your logins and passwords for each service, when you first set up Universal Messenger. Universal Messenger is not a service itself, just an application that is capable of monitoring multiple instant messaging services. Other than live chat, there are other special interest groups that you can participate in online.

Yahoo! Clubs, for example, gives you access to message boards, which pertain to the topic of the club. Some examples of Yahoo! Clubs are the following: The Coffee Shop - a place for teenage girls to meet and discuss issues. Bible Code - where people from around the US meet and debate Biblical meanings. RochesterNYMoms - a local club, for mothers to post and chat about parenting.

After finding and using different services two-way messaging, such as the ones listed above, you will figure out what suits you best. Personally, I enjoy live chats via ICQ. I find that there are many more options with this application that I can better appreciate and use. Besides the two-way

communications that I have discussed, the Web is an abundant resource of information, news and daily practical applications.

However, sometimes finding this information can be difficult for most users.

One way of sorting what you need from junk is the use of search engines.

Simply type in your key words to search for and many listings appear. The use of conjunctions such as AND or OR can clarify your search queries.

Also there exists advanced search features where you may type your queries in plain text (English) and come out with results. An example of this is at [http://www. ask. com](http://www.ask.com). Many search engines aren't as clear as they need to be. Sometimes they may bring you results that aren't accurate. I suggest trying to clarify your wording, and try other related words to that subject.

In case you don't find what you need on one search engine,