INTERNET SERVICES

There are many ways to answer this question and how you choose to answer is really a matter of how you use it. To some people, it is a source of entertainment, to others it is a research tool, yet to some others, it is a gold mine of money-making opportunities. The most general answer, however, describes Internet as a `network of networks'.

In case, you do not know what a network is then this description would not help you much though we intend to elaborate on it in the later sections in a formal manner. The Internet, in a sense is anything you want it to be. If you use the Internet to get information about different systems of education or educational models in the world, that is what the Internet to you.

This is largely open and free, allowing users to communicate with each other for work and recreational purposes, and for corporate and personal reasons. Because the Internet is so vast and is without regulation or hierarchy, the network is a treasure-trove of information from many sources.

Resources are available in all subjects; mailing is possible for all the participants; documents can be forwarded and delivered across the world and directories and journals abound. Developments such as The World Wide Web (WWW) combine friendliness of user interface with enormously powerful information retrieval capability.

Electronic mail is one of the most important services offered through the Internet, with each person having a personal mail address, enabling them to link up to another user anywhere in the world and communicate within seconds. In other words, it is easier to view the Internet in two related but distinct parts: they are the communications network, which is the immense web of interconnected local and wide area networks, telephone lines, cables, fibre-optics and satellite links which provide the medium for the transfer of information around i e Internet, and the computers and computing sites which actually hold and process the data which is available to be transmitted across the network.

Internet Connections- It is important to know that there are different kinds of connection to the Internet which determine the way in which we will be able to work on it. In other words, connection to the Internet substantially affects its usefulness to the customer. Local area networks can be attached to the Internet by installing TCP/IP networking software on the LAN server and obtaining connection between the LAN and the Internet.

A wide range of different types of machines that are connected to the LAN can access the Internet, including DOS and windows-based personal computers (PCs) and UNIX workstations. Basically, there are two fundamental methods of connection. They are full connection or terminal connection.

It may be stated that the Internet is a massive, searchable, dynamic widely available, distributed, multi-platform information system having a great potential of resources. The resources available on Internet are changing constantly, therefore, any list is liable to be out of date. However, a brief review of the types of databases and services is furnished in this section to enable you to have an idea of Internet resources and services.

There are a number of different types of use of the Internet. Some of them are listed below:

• E-mail: allowing users to send messages or files to each other;

• News: to inform users of available information 59

• Internet and its Services Remote log in: allowing users to log in to remote sites;

• FTP (file transfer protocol): which allows users to access and retrieve files at remote sites.