

NEW UK MAGAZINE LAUNCHES AS ONLINE VOICE FOR VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

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Contributors from the BBC and Guardian write for first issue with focus on Culture, Lifestyle, Politics, Technology and Community

LONDON, 21st December 2004 – The Community Herald launches today as a brand new online publication devoted to all issues impacting virtual communities, with contributions from some of the UK's leading journalists and commentators.

The term virtual community was coined by Howard Rheingold as the title for his eponymously named book on the subject in 1985. As he described there: "Virtual communities are social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace. People who use computers to communicate form friendships that sometimes form the basis of communities, but you have to be careful to not mistake the tool for the task and think that just writing words on a screen is the same thing as real community."

Until now, there has been no publication dedicated to exploring all the issues raised by virtual communities in the 21st century. The Community Herald brings together many of Britain's leading journalists who will be contributing to this new title including BBC presenter Chris Long, The Guardian's Jack Schofield and leading freelance national and computing journalists Guy Clapperton, Danny Bradbury, Wendy Grossman, Huw Collingbourne and Davey Winder.

In the spirit of the new "Blogging" phenomenon, readers will be able to post immediate feedback and comments to articles – thereby providing a unique relationship between journalist and reader.

According to Editor Andrew Smith: "The purpose of the Community Herald is to provide a unique online destination where people can read, discuss and debate a wide range of issues relating to online communities. The journalists writing for the Community Herald are among the most knowledgeable and experienced observers of the online world. They have been given a free and wide-ranging brief to write about the subjects that they feel most strongly about. We're confident that the publication will

stimulate high calibre debate and interest from a highly thoughtful and passionate readership.”

The Community Herald is published by CIX Online, one of Britain’s oldest online communities. The history of CIX itself is a long and interesting one. CIX Online grew out of the Compulink Information Exchange, a company formed in 1985 and one that was the first in Europe to offer Internet Services. At the heart of CIX Online is the service that kick started CIX as a provider of computer based information services, CIX Conferencing. CIX Conferencing gave birth to the CIX Conferencing Community which continues to thrive today as an eclectic community of individuals with diverse interests and expertise, particularly in technology.

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