



---

## Australian Business Goes Online

---

Submitted by our Contributing Jo-anne Fisher. Note that the JIBC Editorial Board reserves an unrestricted right to shorten any original document submitted for publication.

Jo-Anne Fisher  
Monash University, School of Business & Electronic Commerce  
[Joanne.Fisher@BusEco.monash.edu.au](mailto:Joanne.Fisher@BusEco.monash.edu.au)  
<http://www-mugc.cc.monash.edu.au/cec/index.html>

---

Australian Business Limited has revealed ambitious plans to provide the business community in Australia with a comprehensive online business intelligence and communications service. Delivered through its wholly owned subsidiary, Australian Business On-Line Pty. Ltd. (ABOL), this service will provide a wide range of business and market intelligence, access to on-line databases, gateways to international services, email and electronic facilities.

The information available through ABOL will be particularly targeted at the needs of small to medium sized enterprises. To this end, Australian business is establishing an electronic network in cooperation with all of the major chambers of commerce and industry throughout Australia. The network, known as ChamberNet, will ensure that the needs of SMEs are not lost in the `razzle dazzle of the superhighway infomaniacs'.

"Australia's industry associations are in the information business and ChamberNet provides the means to deliver information in a modern, value-added manner relevant to the needs of the business community" said Philip Holt, Managing Director of Australian Business Limited.

Australian Business recognises that in the near future, successful companies will be those that are leaders in the use of electronic networks to help develop and deliver innovative products and services, to gain access to business intelligence, to collaborate in manufacturing and to conduct financial transactions. It is therefore essential that Australian companies are given the means to participate and that the entry hurdles are kept low.

Many of Australia's larger companies are already taking advantage of the technology revolution currently taking place. The challenge is to ensure that smaller enterprises are not disenfranchised in this process by a lack of skills or technology.

Electronic commerce, in particular, represents a massive change but holds enormous potential to improve the efficiency and quality of business transactions. ChamberNet will assist enterprises reengineer to take advantage of electronic commerce applications.

The overall focus of ChamberNet will be to ensure open access to all and to minimise barriers to entry in terms of both cost and technology. The system will be hardware platform independent and not attempt to impose proprietary solutions on the business community. The interest of this community will not be well served by the establishment of a closed club of electronic commerce connoisseurs. ChamberNet will utilise as its core systems, several Internet technologies thus making it a true "Intranet".

The aim is to use Australian technology and know-how wherever possible and avoid a situation where the intellectual property is imported and expensive license fees flow overseas.

ChamberNet will be designed to integrate with the Commonwealth Electronic Commerce Service, the Federal Government's electronic trading project, and will be well positioned to develop a critical mass of trading partners

without which such initiatives will fail.

Agreements are being negotiated with international service providers to ensure that ChamberNet has an international focus and will allow local enterprises to communicate, trade and obtain information from around the world.

The Federal Government is providing funding support for ChamberNet which will assist with the rapid roll out of the service over the next few months.

**For more details contact:**

*Mr John Murgatroyd,  
Australian Business Limited  
Private Bag 938  
North Sydney NSW 2059  
Australia  
Ph: +61 2 9957 5792  
Fax: +61 2 9956 8014*