

: *What happened at DSSResources.COM in 2001?*

"It's NOT easy to make money with your computer at home!" I got this message in an email shortly after receiving a question about "how are you doing" with DSSResources.COM. So this is a status report.

During the past year, many things have changed at DSSResources.COM. An important change has been moving from an advertising-based business model to primarily a subscriber-based business model. On March 20, 2001 we created a Subscriber Zone and outsourced processing of transactions for subscriptions to Verotel. Some of the content at DSSResources.COM has been slowly migrated to the Subscriber Zone. Our approach is to maintain useful "free content" and provide exceptional premium content to subscribers. We have made this transition gradually and our plan is to move more content into the Subscriber Zone in the first quarter of 2002 and to add additional premium content. We also hope to begin marketing DSSResources.COM and to create more partnerships with DSS researchers. The number of subscribers has been increasing each month and we had more subscriptions in November than in any prior month. Subscriptions are slowing in December, but we hope to see a rebound in January 2002.

The results of this change to a subscriber model have been generally positive. Traffic at DSSResources.COM has been increasing throughout 2001. The number of subscribers to DSS News has nearly doubled from about 400 for the January 2, 2001 newsletter to 740 for this newsletter. The outsourcing of distribution of DSS News to Topica has been generally satisfactory, but the ad revenues are insignificant. The list management is easy, and we plan to continue that relationship. Our advertising agency, Burst! Media, served DSSResources.COM approximately 800,000 ads in 2001. However, only 230,000 of these were paid ads, the others were public service ads or ads for DSSResources.COM. The revenues increased in October and November, but the CPM payout is meager.

We contracted with Verio for another year of web hosting. Their reliability has been good and their server has been able to handle the traffic. Verio statistics provide us with a good view of our visitors. The statistics indicate that over the past three and a half months, we have served nearly half a million pages to almost 30,000 distinct IP addresses.

The DSS Career Center is off to a slow start. We entered into a partnership with TechEngine on July 23, 2001. The number of new jobs related to DSS is not what it was a year ago, but we encourage DSS News readers to visit the DSS Career Center and to recommend it to their friends. The DSS Book Store affiliated with Barnes and Noble.com receives about 150 page views per month, but the number of books purchased is not meeting expectations and we keep the page as a service to the DSS community.

In 2001, 26 issues of DSS News were emailed and posted at DSSResources.COM. The issues contained DSS Wisdom, Ask Dan! and more than 300 news headlines. The Ask Dan! topics included concepts like analytical software, business intelligence, knowledge management and document-driven DSS. The most controversial columns focused on business intelligence. Some new features at DSSResources.COM this year include the For Developers and For Researchers pages, featured cases and contributed articles, the Document-Driven DSS page, and the DSS Roulette page. DSSResources.COM promoted the AMCIS 2001 DSS Minitrack and the IFIP WG 8.3 conference scheduled for Cork, Ireland in July 2002.

Well from a personal perspective, I'm hoping that with some site redesign, group course

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subscriptions and the publication of my DSS book that subscriptions will increase. DSSResources.COM should have its first group subscription for Spring 2002. DSSResources.COM has been getting many one time subscribers and I'm hoping that too will change. On-going subscriptions can provide a much better revenue stream. DSSResources.COM is currently offering free two month subscriptions to faculty who are considering adopting the site for class use. Faculty that have students subscribe receive an annual subscription. DSS research labs can also partner with DSSResources.COM and receive a commission on each subscription transaction they refer to DSSResources.COM from their Web site.

So what's the bottom line? Running this site is fun and it fits well with my DSS research interests. My son and I have learned a lot about eCommerce and eBusiness first hand. The expenses are modest, but so are the revenues.

Many thanks to the following vendors who provided permission to post cases and articles at DSSResources.COM in 2001: Alphablox, Inc., arcplan, Artemis Intl., Brio, Inc., Business Objects, Inc., Comshare, Inc., DataBeacon, Inc., Decisioneering, Inc., Dimensional Insight, Inc., Expert Choice, Inc., Facet Decision Making, Microstrategy, Inc., Nucleus Research, and Palisade Corp.

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