

Topic:
CAD/CAM
Resellers

Visitor Attractions

Are UK CAD/CAM resellers providing the opportunities for customer e-relations to flourish? We analyse how 174 of them are using their websites.

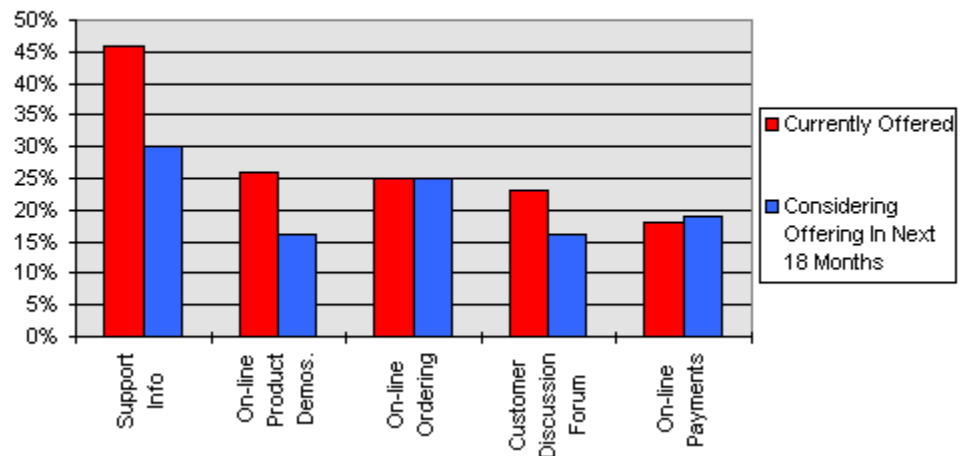
iCAD is produced by Business Advantage, a B2B research, business development and marketing consulting practice operating in the global IT, Digital and Telecommunication sectors.

Any successful e-commerce strategy must take account of attitudes of customers - but you could wait forever for them to come forward in numbers and say 'can we start paying on-line please?' So are resellers providing the opportunity for e-relationships to flourish? As part of Business Advantage's annual round of in-depth interviews with the UK's leading technical computing resellers, we quizzed them about their current and planned offerings.

On-Line Offerings

Of the 174 resellers who answered questions on e-issues, 89% currently have websites. Of this group, 46% provide support information of varying descriptions (e.g. FAQs). Over half therefore offer little in the way of value-added information that will encourage repeat visits. A quarter have a facility for on-line ordering, with 18% actually taking payment via their website.

What Features/Services Are Available On Your Website?

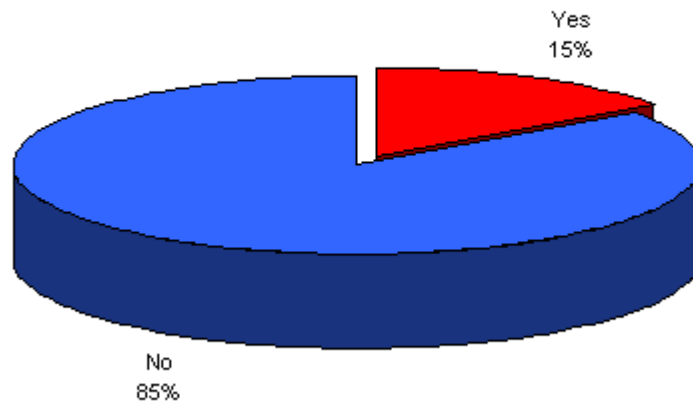


Three out of ten of those resellers currently with websites plan to introduce support information (either additional or for the first time) in the next eighteen months, while one in five expect to enable customers to pay on-line.

Minority Training

Overall only 15% of resellers currently offer any form of on-line training (17% of those currently with websites). This service is not seen as an opportunity in the next twelve months by the majority of their peers - only a further 12% are considering introducing it within this period.

Do You Currently Offer On-Line Training?



In the November 2001 issue of CAD SPAGHETTI we saw that although the proportion of CAD/CAM users who have used on-line training is very low, around one in five said they were interested in trying this option in future (see '[Web-Based Training Demand](#)'). The patchy availability of broadband is still an issue in the UK, and many resellers will be monitoring this alongside indications from their customers before launching into this field.

Conclusion

Overall there is a cautious feel about resellers' plans for web features/services. For example only a quarter currently offer on-line ordering, and a further quarter are considering introducing this option. However we've seen enough evidence in CAD SPAGHETTI to know that the Internet does not yet figure highly in the product development activities of most CAD/CAM using sites, so many resellers will feel justified in developing their web services at a steady pace. A word of caution however - in December 2000 CAD SPAGHETTI reported that although only 15% of UK CAD/CAM using sites had purchased hardware, software or peripherals on the Web, 60% of this group found a new supplier via this method.

'Build it and they will come' is one of the more nonsensical catchphrases associated with the Web; busy people need a good reason to revisit a site on a regular basis. Our article '[Website Wishlist](#)' in this issue of CAD SPAGHETTI reveals the sort of features that AEC CAD managers would use if available on their suppliers' websites. For suppliers considering the addition of new features to their websites, there are clear benefits in finding out from customers what they actually want.

The CAD/CAM RESELLER DATABASE is the product of in-depth telephone interviews with over 200 of the most successful resellers. It enables resellers to be targeted from a wide range of criteria, and for products to be channelled through the most appropriate and active companies. The information on each reseller includes:

- Full contact details, including company name, address, telephone & fax numbers
- Web site address
- E-mail addresses
- Senior decision-makers and job titles
- Type of reseller
- CAD/CAM software sold
- CAD/CAM hardware sold
- CAD/CAM peripherals sold
- CAD/CAM application expertise
- Value added services offered
- Size of company by number of employees
- Size of company by turnover
- Size of company by number of CAD/CAM systems sold per year
- When company first started
- When company first started in CAD/CAM sector

The UK CAD/CAM Reseller Database costs **£995 + VAT** and includes a 50-page report on the CAD market and an analysis of the reseller survey. The report is available on its own for **£250**.



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