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Chatting

By Fasih Hasan

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Chatting is a technology through which two persons sitting at a long distance come what may at the two ends of the world, can talk to each other, either in the form of writing and reading or through speaking and listening (voice chat).

Almost everyone knows that there could be anyone (an unknown) on the other end, but still people are engaged in chatting. Some people chat for entertainment, some chat for killing time or pastime, some chat for making friends, some chat for inquiring welfare about their relatives, some to gain knowledge and information and many more. There are a number of chat rooms, which provide the facility to connect the people around the world instantly. Some of most common are MSN, YAHOO, MIRC etc. At these chat rooms, one can share his/her feelings with the other people, make them friends, have fun, can get some relax and can do a lot of more things.

Nowadays almost 70–80% boys and girls are wasting their time in chatting over Internet. Even I (the writer of this article) am also included among these 80% and it is considered that no positive use of this modern technology is being exercised. As every thing has some advantages as well as disadvantages, chatting through Internet has also some advantages and disadvantages.

First of all, one advantage is for those relatives or friends who are living abroad. They can remain in touch with their families and associates and can talk to them instantly. It is useful for those parents whose children are abroad for studying or some other purposes. They become satisfied after talking to their children. There exists another kind of friendship and that is friendship over Internet. People also get some know-how of their Internet friends through the chatting technology. I took a big advantage of this technology when my teacher gave me an assignment to know about the culture of two individuals through the chatting. The Internet chatting helped me superbly. There are a lot of more advantages of chatting.

It has been a long time since I am reading stories about Internet chatting. Specially every Sunday in weekly SUNDAY MAGAZINE of Daily Jang, there is a page for these kinds of stories. Every week almost 3 to 5 stories are published continuously. And interesting thing is that majority of them have

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unique theme. Some tell about their tragedies, some tell about their love, some tell about the experience of making fun with friends, some tell about the experience of making new friends and losing friends, some try to betray and deceive the others but are trapped themselves.

The biggest disadvantage of chatting, in my opinion is the wastage of time. And majority of users do chatting for just pastime or cheating others.

Pakistani government is trying to minimize the wrong usage of the Internet technology including chatting and browsing but it seems that it is impossible to do that. Our majority youth has wedged in these kinds of wastages. Our youth have to realize that the future belongs to us. If we get engaged ourselves in these sorts of aimless things then what will be the future of PAKISTAN? May God bless Pakistan and Pakistani nation especially the youths!!!!

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New to the Net: Safe Chatting

By Linda C. Allardice

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One of the first places I visited when I signed up for my Internet service way back in 1993 was the public chat rooms. It was so fascinating to have all these strangers gather together and talk about everything from politics to just how much they really hated their bosses. My mouth gaped like a sea bass when I noticed some folks spilling their guts onto the computer screen and admitting to stuff that should be kept secret - such juicy gossip I couldn't get at my hairdresser on one of her busiest days.

Chat rooms are still enormously popular, but the rules of safety remain as steadfast as a palace guard.

If you're new to the Web, you've got to be extremely careful in chat rooms. There are some major don'ts you need to follow to keep your chatting an enjoyable yet safe experience.

- Don't ever for whatever reason enter your real name, address, city, phone number, password, or any other personal information into a chat room discussion.

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Oftentimes, a perpetrator who may want to hack into your computer — or worse your home — can come up with clever ways to get inexperienced Internet users to reveal personal information. They might get you to talk about landmarks, places of interest in your community, where you work or go to school to zero in on your location.

- Don't respond to Instant Messages if you don't know the sender.

Instant Messages are those private messages that pop up on your screen apart from the main chat room. Some are easy to detect as spammers when they send you an IM saying they are a model and want you to look at their pictures. That screams "yes, I am a porno perp" loud and clear. Some spammers have password sniffers on their end that can snatch your password if you reply to the message. One they have your password they can have a field day with your account. Spammers might send you an IM that says "Warning: you cannot continue in the Chat Room without entering your password here." This catches many new Internet and some veterans off guard and they mistakenly comply with the request.

- Go to a private chat room if possible.

Some Internet providers allow patrons to create their own rooms that are somewhat semi-private. It's a great place for family, friends or business associates to hang out without getting clobbered by unwanted intruders and spammers.

Another drawback with public chat rooms is that everyone Tom, Dick and Harry gets your screen name and clogs your e-mail box with junk mail.

If you dare enter a public chat room, be prepared to have an e-mail box full of credit card offers, specials on Viagra, and sites that promise nude pics of your favorite celebrities for FREE.

- If you don't want to fight, find another room

Stay in a chat room long enough, and the place begins to turn into a bar with someone eventually typing in capital letters (viewed as SHOUTING) claiming God doesn't exist. Or someone will spill enough racial slurs onto the screen that would even make Archie Bunker cringe. These arguments can get pretty heated because everyone is anonymous, shooting their mouths off, and taking some nasty shots at others. Don't engage in hate speech or get involved with those trying to make trouble. Some chat rooms allow you to ignore certain people, or even allow you to report those who are disrupting the chat room.

- * Don't let your children enter public chat rooms without supervision

Too many children are taken advantage of in these chat rooms and terrible things have happened to them. Sometimes, they believe they are chatting with someone their own age, when they are really chatting with an older person who spends his time on the Internet trying to lure children into a trap. Make sure your children never reveal their names, telephone number, address, school name, password, state, city, or where their parents work, in a chat room or IM.

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No one wants to be taken advantage of, so it's especially important that you keep your guard up when you enter public chat rooms. Enjoy chatting with folks from around the world, but remember to keep that line of not-giving-out-personal-information deeply drawn in the sand, and don't cross it. . .ever.

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