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Your guide to the internet with Carol Vorderman

the computer shop

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Khyber space

help desk

WEBSITE WINS BOYS A TRIP TO PAKISTAN

By LIZ THOMAS

FIVE teenagers are on their way to Pakistan for the trip of a lifetime after creating a winning website design.

The year 10 schoolboys from The Billericay School, Essex, beat nearly 150 other school teams in a competition run by Experience Pakistan (www.experiencepakistan.org).

The purpose of the charity's project is to foster understanding between the youth of both countries and urges youngsters to use technology to find out about the world.

Each school team had to produce a 15-minute multimedia presentation all about Pakistan.

"We decided to use the web because it is an easy, straightforward way to share information," says Charlie Thompson, 15.

Charlie and his team-mates James Shearer, Tom Crawford, James Rix and Joseph Bear used their own time after school to work on the site.

"We have been studying the web as part of our IT GCSE and so knew roughly what we were doing already."

The site www.billericay.essex.sch.uk/pakistan/index.htm focuses on the military history of Pakistan and Britain and uses audio as well as internet links to delve into the history of empire and armies.

"We had a choice of subjects but we felt this was the most interesting," says James Shearer, 14.

"We used the net to pull together all our research and then set about laying it out in the best way possible.

"We used Microsoft's Front-Page software to help us. Our teacher Debra Scott also helped considerably."

The boys, along with four other winning teams, are now on their way to Pakistan to meet the president, General Pervez Musharraf.

The young ambassadors are also expected to visit the historic Khyber Pass, the scenic Swat Valley, the museum in Lahore and local schools. Closer to home the boys have also won a prestigious tour of the House of Lords. "We're really chuffed," says Charlie. "It'll be the trip of a lifetime."

Project co-ordinator Zahid Hamid of the Akhter Education Trust, which runs the competition, says: "We hope that by experiencing Pakistan first hand they will be able to understand it better. Often there is a negative view about the country so we want to help young people have a clearer picture, untainted by politics."

"In 10 or 15 years when these young people are in senior positions, they will be able to speak about Pakistan with the authority of their visit."

BUILDING SITE: Web winners (from left) Joseph, Charlie, James Rix, Tom and James Shearer show their work alongside teacher Debra Scott

SOUND BYTES

TOM CRAWFORD
YOU should have at least a basic knowledge of HTML coding like JavaScript or Dreamweaver as these are very useful when it comes to creating graphics and general effects to make your website look cool.

JAMES RIX
IF you want to create your website offline, choose a software package that you are most suited to, such as Microsoft FrontPage. When transferring the files to your site, ensure that your files are protected against bugs or viruses by using a firewall and some form of internet security.

CHARLIE THOMPSON
DO your research first to make sure you can get enough information to put on the website before you create it. Also make use of lots of colour and JavaScript to make your site look good. If in doubt, there are loads of websites with helpful advice on how to do this, like www.javafile.com

JOSEPH BEAR
USE graphics to focus attention on the main feature of the page.

JAMES SHEARER
IF you want to make a website that looks professional and funky, use Flash!

WINNING SCHOOLS
THE four other school teams of five students who are joining The Billericay School teenagers on the trip to Pakistan are:

● Peterborough High School, Cambridgeshire

● Leith Academy, Edinburgh

● Ponteland Community High School, Northumberland

● Boswells' School, Chelmsford, Essex

Their entries were created in Power Point.

Q WHEN someone emails me with an attachment, I can open the message but not the attachment. The following message appears: "OE removed the following unsafe attachments from your mail."

A This is Outlook Express trying to be helpful by preventing you from opening an attachment that may contain a virus.

As long as you have anti-virus software installed, you can stop OE doing this by choosing Tools, Options, Security, and removing the checkmark beside "Do not allow attachments to be saved or opened that could potentially be a virus."

Q I RECEIVED an email from my brother saying we had been infected by a virus, which could not be detected by Norton or Macafee. The virus is called jdbgmgr.exe and is a grey teddy bear icon. The email also gave instructions on deleting it, which I did.

I then received another email from my brother saying it was a hoax, with a website address to enable me to reinstall the file.

I haven't reinstalled it yet, and my PC seems to be working OK, as does my brother's.

I would like to know what the file was, and was the original alert a hoax, or is the reinstall a ruse to get me to admit a virus?

A THE original message was a hoax. These are fairly common. A message tells you that if you have a certain file with a particular icon, it's a virus and you should delete it. Most PC users have Windows, so a hoaxer can pick most files and you'd be guaranteed to have it.

In this case, although the file isn't a virus, it's also not something you need unless you're a Java software developer.

If you receive similar messages always search for the filename at a Web search engine to find out what it is before you delete it.