

# R/C and the Internet

by Dick Sutton

## What is the "WWW?"

The 'Internet' (also known as the "World Wide Web or WWW) has become so pervasive that it has become a common term in our everyday life. For those of you who have not yet taken the plunge, the Internet can be thought of as a giant card catalog system for the world's largest library. You can search and locate hundreds if not thousands of articles on almost every conceivable subject. As such, the Internet can become an addiction: enticing you to spend countless hours perusing every imaginable topic. A warning is in order here however, just as with a library or newspaper, magazine, etc you cannot believe everything that you read. Since virtually anyone can declare themselves 'experts' on a subject, you must exercise caution and use common sense when reading the information presented on a web site.

To access the web, you must have an ISP (Internet Service Provider) and, at a minimum, a program known as a 'browser'. The ISP provides the actual connection to all the facilities that are collectively known as the Internet. There are many ISP's available providing a complete range of services. These include AOL, MSN, AT&T, UUNet, and Mindspring, just to name a few. The browser reads documents, and can fetch documents from other sources. The most commonly used browsers are: Internet Explorer from Microsoft, Netscape Navigator from Netscape, and the AOL browser from AOL.

The documents that the browsers display are known as hypertext documents (you don't really need to know this but it might come in handy if you're ever on Who Wants to be a Millionaire). Hypertext is text with items that appear underlined that when clicked on take you to other text or topics (this is known as "Surfing"). The browsers let you deal with these 'links' as they're called in a transparent way -- select the link (click on it), and you are presented with the text that is pointed to. You might begin reading a document that exists on a server in Florida and click on a 'link' and end up in Denmark! Actually, you rarely know exactly where you really are nor does it really matter.

The browsers can, in addition, access files by various other protocols: FTP, NNTP (the Internet news protocol), gopher and an ever-increasing range of other methods. On top of these, if the server has search capabilities, the browsers will permit searches of documents and databases.

## What is a URL?

URL stands for "Uniform Resource Locator". It is a draft standard for specifying an object (file, image, document, sound, etc) on the Internet.

URLs look like this:

<http://www.towerhobbies.com>  
<http://www.goldbergmodels.com/>  
<http://replanet.com/rcfu/>  
[http://www.horizonhobby.com/saito\\_folder/saito\\_engines.html](http://www.horizonhobby.com/saito_folder/saito_engines.html)

When you are told to "check out this URL", what is meant is that you should visit this site by typing in the URL given to you. If you enter

<http://www.towerhobbies.com/rcweb.html>

you will be taken directly to their info page where you are presented with a vast array of information (i.e. links) to other pages on airplanes, cars, boats, helicopters, etc.

Similarly, you might want to check out the following URL's:

- [www.dreamwater.com/sport/farm](http://www.dreamwater.com/sport/farm)  
- our club web site
- [www.modelaircraft.org/amapage.htm](http://www.modelaircraft.org/amapage.htm)  
- AMA home page
- [www.yahoo.com/Recreation/Hobbies\\_and\\_Crafts/Models/Model\\_Airplanes/Radio\\_Controlled/](http://www.yahoo.com/Recreation/Hobbies_and_Crafts/Models/Model_Airplanes/Radio_Controlled/)  
- the Yahoo! listings
- [www.mag\\_web.com/rc\\_modeler/index.htm](http://www.mag_web.com/rc_modeler/index.htm)  
- RC Modeler magazine

### **What is News (or more accurately Usenet News)?**

The Usenet News, or Netnews, system is a kind of distributed bulletin board system run on thousands of computers world-wide. Users of Usenet News exchange views and information by writing articles, which are then transmitted automatically among the computers in the network. Once posted, an article can be read by others days, hours, or even minutes later, depending upon their computer's type of network link to Usenet. Actually, you submit a question or a response as a special kind of email. The difference is that everyone can see the message and read it's contents. As each person responds, you can see a sort of conversation develop. Many times these 'conversations' become quite heated, especially, if the subject is about a controversial topic.

Articles are organized by topic area into newsgroups, of which there are currently over 10,000. If you have a question, this is a good place to ask it. You may even get back more info than you wanted! Be forewarned: if you ask a really stupid question you will get back a 'nastygram' (called a 'flame'). You must have a 'news reader' to access news. Today's browsers typically have a built-in newsreader. Naturally, a dedicated newsreader offers more features (bells and whistles). Outlook Express (which comes with virtually all computers) is a decent newsreader. There are also many free ones available (and for a price too!).

### **What is an Article?**

A message written by a Usenet News user and posted to the network is called an article or posting. Articles are similar to electronic mail messages, but are not private. They are meant to be seen by potentially hundreds of thousands of people.

### **Usenet R/C Newsgroups**

Please note that newsgroups are read from YOUR default news server. If your local Internet Provider does not carry these groups, you will not be able to view them with your browser from these links.

- [rec.models.rc.air](#) - R/C Models: Airplanes & Sailplanes
- [rec.models.rc.helicopters](#) - R/C helicopters
- [rec.models.rc.land](#) - R/C Models: Cars, Trucks, Motorcycles, etc.
- [rec.models.rc.water](#) - R/C Models: Boats, Ships, Yachts, Subs, etc.
- [rec.models.rc.misc](#) - R/C Models: General Discussions
- [rec.models.scale](#) - Scale model construction
- [rec.aviation.simulators](#) - Flight simulation on all levels.

I hope that this brief intro into the 'web' will spark your curiosity and get you 'on-line.' There's a vast store of info out there just waiting for you to drop by and peruse...happy surf'n.