HOW TO START A HOSTING COMPANY

PART III

OTHER HOSTING

MY HOSTING
COMPANY
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24HRS

InstantHost

When DDoS Attack

Guy's Hosting

WINDOWS VS. LINUX
The Battle Continues

Hosting66

Alliance ISP Solutions

One of the many ways to increase company revenue for your hosting company is diversification. Many of you have already done this by offering services or products beyond the standard hosting solutions such as, domain registration and web design. Some companies have even gone as far as to offer dialup ISP services for their local area and nationwide. But how do you compete with companies like AOL, Earthlink, NetZero or a local company already offering full-featured services?

If you want to start small, you can find companies offering reseller packages with low-end basic features and low startup costs. But speaking from experience, it's just not enough of a product to sway the masses that are receiving free AOL offers in their mailbox daily. You may signup enough customers to cover the minimum sellers fee, and I bet most of those will be to friends and relatives. But how do you compete against the big boys? One answer is to get help from a big boy himself.

Alliance ISP Solutions has been offering virtual ISP solutions to the public since the mid 1990's and helped many companies succeed in starting and branding their own ISP service. To better understand the company and the services offered, we received a demonstration disk that ran a complete tutorial for most of the features.

The first tutorial led us through the "Portal Pro from the Subscribers Prospective". It was interesting to see all of the features included for the subscriber on the portal page that gives competition to many of the top custom portal pages on the web. The ability to add, move and delete sections in each column was very self-explanatory and given the Internet experience of most new dialup customers, this is a major asset. The web mail features broke barriers by offering calendars and contact lists similar to what you might find in hotmail or outlook express and the account even offers an online WYSIWYG template based web page program. With most options just a click away, this gave us the impression of a low support group of features that the subscribers can run by themselves.

The second tutorial is the "Portal Pro from the vISP's Prospective "and walks you through control panel to setup options for the portal page, view site information and manage accounts. What impressed me the most about the vISP's area, is not only the ability to modify the portal page to better suit your own company's design, but the option to create new sections of the portal page that better enhances the target users experience. The options seems limitless and in comparison to the low cost competitor, the Portal Pro makes selling the dialup access that much easier.

The heart of the system is aptly named the Internet Control Panel or ICP for short. This control panel is loaded directly on your computer and contains many options to service your clients. It has invoicing and bookkeeping features to manage your billing solutions and works seamlessly with your merchant account provider to approve and process your accounts in real time. You can monitor the usage of your clients as well as any problems they may encounter during their use of your services. The Diagnostics feature is a major plus, as it will check an individual account almost instantly while you are discussing the problem with the client IP. My experience with other ISP solutions has always caused frustration due to the fact that I couldn't offer multiple products and services to better fit the needs of multiple target customers. Alliance seems to have opened up that area and allow you create many products as well as promotional codes for specific groups or resellers. Unfortunately, the demonstration for the ICP only briefly touched on the various features available for the user but what I was able to see left me impressed and excited about what else is offered.

Ok, now that you can have everything to manage your clients at your fingertips, all you need to do is go out and get the customers. This was the biggest challenge for me because I knew I had a great idea to sell dialup Internet in my area but no clue how I was going to compete with AOL, Earthlink or any of the others that flooded my area with high-powered marketing. Alliance ISP Solutions offers marketing advice and creative ideas to get your product out to the public and even bring in resellers to market your product for you. Fundraising, Affinity Groups and Affiliates plans are laid out for your use without the hassle of pre-planning or organizing information before you approach a potential client to resell your product for you. The assistance doesn't stop there though. Alliance ISP Solutions offers books, software, directory listings and strategic partnerships to better assist you in promoting your company.

Alliance ISP Solutions comes with a price tag but after reviewing the options offered and comparing those with past experience, I am very impressed and can honestly say, you get what you pay for. **P!**

To find out more information about Alliance ISP Solutions, you can visit their website at:
http://www.allianceISP.biz

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