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## **BRIEF NEWS - November 1998**

### **Futurelink eyes senior stock listing**

*Nov 26th 1998:* Canadian ASP Futurelink Distribution is asking investors to approve a reverse stock split to pave the way for a listing on a senior exchange such as Nasdaq, the New York Stock Exchange or Toronto Stock Exchange. Stocks in the Calgary, Alberta based company, which are quoted on the US National Association of Securities Dealers' OTC bulletin board service under the symbol FLNK, currently trade at a price which is below the minimum required for listing on a senior exchange. Futurelink, which claims to have signed up 120 customers over the past year and bills itself as "the world's first computer utility company", is the only pureplay ASP whose stocks are publicly traded, albeit only over-the-counter at present. If investors give their approval at Futurelink's upcoming annual general meeting on Monday November 30th, the directors expect to time the reverse split to coincide with a strategic growth initiative or financing round during 1999.

- [Corporate site](#)

### **Netscape ponders merger with AOL**

*Nov 23rd 1998:* Netscape today confirmed that it is in negotiations with America Online (AOL) about a possible merger. The statement came in response to rumours which surfaced late last week that a deal might be in the offing. Although today's statement stressed that there was "no assurance" the approximately \$4bn merger would be closed, discussions appear to have reached an advanced stage, with a firm proposal on the table that would see Netscape shareholders swapping each of their shares for 0.45 AOL shares. Netscape's final quarter and annual financial results for the period ended October 31, 1998 are due for release tomorrow (Tuesday) at 2.00 pm Pacific Standard Time (10.00pm GMT).

- [Netscape press releases page](#)

### **DOJ slates Microsoft rental plan**

*Nov 20th 1998:* A Microsoft senior VP recommended rental as "the best thing long-term" in a memo sent to chairman Bill Gates and other senior executives last December, the US Department of Justice has revealed. But the memo's author, Joaquim Kempin, who is in overall charge of OEM sales, was not thinking of online rental. His proposal - which he'd already suggested in 1996, the memo notes - was to put a time limit on the life of software shipped with the system. Users would have to pay a renewal fee if they wanted to continue using the operating system after a set period. The limited-time licence was one of a number of options discussed in the memo for maintaining Microsoft's operating system revenues in the face of falling system prices. The Justice Department, which believes the memo strengthens its antitrust case against Microsoft, posted it on its web site yesterday (Thursday) as exhibit 365.

- [Exhibit 365 \(PDF format, 165k\)](#)

### **Qwest goes Dutch in Euro linkup**

*Nov 20th 1998:* US backbone carrier Qwest and \$9bn Dutch telecoms giant KPN have joined forces to launch an international IP-based fibre network in January. To be called KPNQwest, the joint venture will take over operation of EuroRings, KPN's pan-European fibre optic backbone, and EUnet, the Europe-wide business ISP which Qwest acquired in April this year. It will also operate a high-capacity transatlantic link into Qwest's North American fibre network. The venture will sell carrier services from day one, adding IP-based services in the spring. Later it plans to offer offer voice, frame relay and ATM. EuroRings will ultimately be a 9,000-mile (14,500km) network linking more

than 30 cities in western, central and eastern Europe. 1,500 miles (2,500km) of the first phase has been laid to date. Qwest has completed 9,100 miles (14,600km) of its 18,500 mile (30,000km) network linking over 130 US cities. EUnet, which claims over 83,000 customers, operates in 14 European countries.

- [EUnet](#)
- [KPN](#)
- [Qwest](#)

#### **Rental dooms shrinkwrap says report**

*Nov 18th 1998:* ASPs face "bitter struggles" while they establish best practice in the emerging application rental industry, but ultimately online rental computing will obsolete traditional shrinkwrapped software, claims a new report. It also predicts online rental will boost adoption of component software; help get an e-payment infrastructure under way; and become the primary income source for portals. Less contentiously, the report describes the key enablers of software rental and overviews current ASP business models. Published by Farleit, which also publishes *ASP News Review*, the report is available to order online from this website.

- [Overview and contents listing](#)
- [Announcement](#)

#### **ASP offers package database rental**

*Nov 12th 1998:* A Denver, Colorado-based ASP is claiming a global first for its business application rental service announced this month (Nov 4th). Planet Computer's PlanetUplink service offers two internet-accessed rental products. Of the two, Internet Application Hosting is the landmark service, offering online rental of a range of mass market database applications including Oracle, Access, SQLServer, FileMaker Pro, Goldmine and ACT!. The second service, Internet Office Hosting, is a complete package that bundles Internet access, email, office productivity software and database applications. There is an initial set up fee ranging from \$1500 to \$2500 according to the number of users, and then a monthly fee of \$50 plus \$45 per seat. The IT solution provider, which also markets NCD's Windows terminals, first tested the service last year and began offering it to its existing customer base in April.

- [Planet Computer](#)

#### **Netscape innovates billing, browser**

*Nov 11th 1998:* Netscape yesterday (Tuesday) announced two contrasting products. BillerXpert is new Internet bill presentment, payment and self-service customer account management application designed for utilities and other high-volume bill issuers. Pricing starts from \$250,000. At the other end of the scale was NGT (Next Generation Technology), the proposed foundation for its future browser products. A core feature will be a layout engine which will display Web pages on a range of industry standards for page content including HTML 4.0, XML and several others. Company officials said this would enable developers to create user interfaces for applications which would adapt to client platforms as varied as standard desktops, palmtop computers and mobile phones. NGT has been developed in conjunction with Netscape's Open Source project, Mozilla.org, from where source code for NGT technologies can be downloaded free of charge.

- [NGT announcement](#)
- [BillerXpert announcement](#)
- [mozilla.org website](#)

#### **Excite signs up with ASP startup**

*Nov 5th 1998:* Internet portal Excite has signed up as the first customer of startup ASP Corio, which formally launched its services Tuesday (Nov 3rd). Corio, which is backed by the Java Fund operated by venture capital

investment firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield and Byers, will host its data centre and network facilities at Exodus Communications, a leading US Internet hosting provider. The Santa Clara CA-based ASP is a Peoplesoft Certified Outsourcing Partner. It has yet to announce any other partnerships.

- [Corio](#)
- [Exodus Communications](#)
- [Excite](#)

### **1m+ ASP seats by 2000 says Citrix**

*Nov 5th 1998:* At the current rate of growth, there will be over a million users worldwide hooked up to ASPs, Citrix VP of business development Traver Kennedy told *ASP News Review* last week. At the end of a three-week visit to Europe, Kennedy said he was aware of over 12,000 users already subscribing to ASPs, and that was only counting the Citrix customer base. "This appears to be doubling" every month, he said. The largest number were in Canada, where he had counted 5,000 ASP seats, while he was aware of a further 3,300 in the US and 4,000 in Europe. Fort Lauderdale FL-based Citrix Systems is the creator of Windows terminal technology.

- [Citrix Systems](#)

### **Microsoft releases IE5 beta**

*Nov 4th 1998:* Released in beta today, version 5.0 of Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser allows content providers to build accessories which can be integrated into the user interface. Bloomberg Financial Markets and MSN have already prepared beta examples. Unlike Netscape's customisation of Navigator 4.5 with Netcenter-specific features, the Microsoft approach allows third parties to offer customised features direct to the user, but involves users in downloading and installing extra code before they can activate third party functionality. Like Navigator 4.5, IE5 supports custom search bar integration, Web-based mail integration and toolbar customisation. The new browser also includes IntelliSense ease of use features.

- [IE5 announcement](#)
- [Bloomberg and MSN betas](#)

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