How to find an e-career



DIGITAL SURVIVOR

JIM CARROLL

Some of the best and brightest workers are set to walk away from mainstream companies to join the wired economy.

But many of them are still trying to figure out where they can go and what they can do. How do they match their skills to the new opportunities? How can they find out whether the career they are jumping into has long-term potential?

That's best done by taking a look at how various industries are being affected by e-commerce. Try "following the transaction" — examine everyday activity and how it's being changed by on-line business models. You can discover how a sector is changing — and from that, determine where the careers may lie.

Take real estate. One study by the U.S. National Association of Realtors suggests that in five years, about 85 per cent of the people who buy a home will start the process by checking out a real estate Web site.

They'll still go to a property to take a look, but they will have found it on-line. And they will likely return to the Web site for the next phase of the transaction.

This is leading to big changes. At some leading U.S. sites (such as **HomeAdvisor.Com**), you'll find a button next to every listed home. Click on it and you'll get comparative quotes on a mortgage from a number of financial institutions.

Expect to see growth in the number of mortgages financed on-line, and new careers and opportunities in that area.

Click on another button and you'll be led to a site that allows a comparison of home insurance quotes from a number of companies. So there may be e-career opportunities as insurance is turned upside down by the direct sale of policies.

On these real estate sites, you will soon see another button that lets you get a "survey" of the property you may purchase.

That's a big change. Today you may need to hire a land surveyor to certify the description of your title to the property. But the proliferation of geographic information system databases is changing even this transaction.

You'll soon be able to buy a chunk of survey data through a Web site. Who will build and support those systems? More e-careers follow.

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