

# Microsoft goes after ASP.Net developers

BY ALLISON TAYLOR

Targeting both seasoned ASP.Net developers as well as new Web developers, Microsoft Corp. recently announced the availability of some new resources and

tools in an effort to build its developer base.

The ASP.Net Resource Kit, which can be downloaded for free or for a fee through a Web hosting partner (which will host sites built using the kit), includes

tools, tutorials and samples to help new developers learn the Web server technology, as well as new controls and components for developers that currently use it, Microsoft said in a statement.

The kit also provides dis-

counts on ASP.Net training, Web hosting and access to ASP to ASP.Net and PHP to ASP.Net migration guides with documentation, samples and utilities. Also included is the ASP.Net Web Matrix, which is a free tool used

to build applications on ASP.Net. ASP describes dynamically generated Web pages that carry the .asp extension built with ActiveX scripting — VB Script or JScript code.

John Carthy, director of marketing at myhosting.com, the only Canadian-based Web hosting company offering a package related to this resource kit, said it's a great way to encourage developers to start using ASP.Net.

"It's always tools and applications that drive an operating system and not the operating system itself," Carthy said. "The availability of these tools, affordability and functionality, makes it very attractive."


Carthy said resource kits are a good feeding mechanism to promote interest in ASP.Net.

Four Web hosting companies in the U.S. and myhosting.com in Toronto will be offering services for US\$9.95 a month, which includes Microsoft SQL Server database support, a hosting account and an ASP.Net enabled account.

Myhosting.com is a pure Microsoft hosting company, and Carthy said that Microsoft is trying to provide the tools to allow the developer community success on the .Net platform.

As Microsoft continues to focus on making the tools available, myhosting.com can pinpoint the development of the backend, including the server infrastructure, in order to be interoperable with the emerging tools, he added.





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The ASP.Net Resource Kit can be downloaded for free at [www.msdn.microsoft.com/asp.net/asprk/](http://www.msdn.microsoft.com/asp.net/asprk/). Developers can alternatively order a copy of the kit on CD.

Two years ago users and developers would have had to buy a server comparable to SQL Server, Carthy said.

"Slowly, hosting companies are offering this functionality in a shared environment...to provide everything necessary to build a proper application," he said.

David Senf, a senior analyst at IDC Canada Ltd. in Toronto, said Microsoft wants to make its platform easier and more fully featured than competitive platforms from vendors such as Sun Microsystems Inc. and IBM Corp.

"Moreover, building Web apps using open source tools and code libraries, like in Java, PHP or Python, is becoming increasingly simplified," Senf said.

"Microsoft needs to keep improving on the argument that building and, more importantly, maintaining applications — whether Web, server, desktop or mobile — is less costly within the .Net framework. At the end of the day, the business decision maker cares about total cost, not developer religious fervor."

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# COMPUTERWORLD

THE VOICE OF THE I.T. COMMUNITY

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**Hospitals try wireless remedies**  
BY PATRICIA PICKETT

Two Ontario hospitals have opted for voice over IP and wireless LAN technologies to help improve internal communication. Earlier this month at the Wi-Fi Power conference in Toronto, Gerry Dinnik, director of information systems for North York General Hospital (NYGH) in North York, Ont., outlined why the hospital turned to wireless technology for its emergency department (ED). According to Dinnik, NYGH has one of the busiest EDs in Canada, with about 34,000 annual visits. Before the days of the wireless ED, "we depended on one-way and overhead paging," he said. When receiving one-way pages, physicians or other medical staff would have to drop what they were doing and search for a landline phone. "It caused a whole bunch of delays," said Dinnik, estimating that staff was wasting 10 per cent of their day trying to answer pages. See HOSPITAL/PAGE 8

**Voice talk abounds**  
VoiceCon attendees hear merits of IP telephony  
BY STEFAN DUBOWSKI  
Orlando, Fla.

Network equipment vendors say the enterprise should start thinking of IP telephony as a method of gaining competitive advantages, rather than as a cost-saving technology. But that message seems to be garnering mixed reviews from industry observers. Network gear makers like Avaya Inc. and Nortel Networks say it's time to push the argument for IP telephony forward, that the technology should no longer be considered a way to simplify enterprise communication infrastructure, or a method of making moves, adds and changes less costly. Rather, IP telephony should be considered a platform for productivity enhancements and fundamental business transformation that could help the user organization pull ahead of its competitors. See VOICE/PAGE 8

**Ballmermania comes to Toronto conference**  
Intellectual property protection still a big issue  
BY CHRIS CONRATH

During a recent visit to Toronto for the Can-Win 2004 conference, Microsoft Corp. CEO Steve Ballmer talked about the challenges facing Microsoft, especially in the developing world where the market opportunities are the biggest, but so too are the challenges. Always an impassioned speaker, Ballmer said the biggest opportunity for any corporation starts with innovation rather than focusing on specific geographical areas. Ballmer pinpointed China as the market to watch, though admittedly a market not free of challenges. Microsoft uses the acronym BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) to identify the four biggest developing world players but it is really "China and the other guys," he said. This year China will become the number two market for PCs, ranking behind only the U.S. in units sold — and that number is continuing to rise, he said. But Ballmer wanted to clarify that for all the growth in computer sales in China, the country still is quite a small market for Microsoft. In fact, Norway is a bigger market for the Redmond giant than China, he said. See BALLMER/PAGE 8

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