Electronic Publishing: Saving the Trees

For centuries, the words and images of the world were published and viewed on paper. That's changed. The ability to store and retrieve massive amounts of information from online storage and the ability to make that information available through the Internet and networking has resulted in enthusiastic acceptance and use of electronic publishing.

Historically, word processing and desktop publishing software have been used to produce documents that can be physically distributed in hard copy-letters, periodicals, magazines, books, reports, manuals, and many other forms of written communication and documentation. However, more and more of what we write never makes it to paper.

An alternative to producing hard-copy documents is electronic publishing. In electronic publishing, electronic documents are created that can be retrieved from disk storage. Electronic documents, also called online documents, are normally found on a hard disk (the PC's, the network server's or an Internet server's). Electronic documents are also distributed on CD-ROM or DVD. All such documents are designed to be viewed on a monitor and most are interactive.

The business world is now linked via the Internet, intranets (an Internet within an organization), and extranets (an intranet that is partially accessible to authorized outsiders, such as suppliers and customers). This linking of the world has revolutionized the way we enter, retrieve, send, maintain, and view information. This worldwide networking has made it possible for business to move toward greater use of electronic publishing.