

II. INTERNET

The Internet

The Internet, a global computer network which embraces millions of users all over the world, began in the United States in 1969 as a military experiment. It was designed to survive a nuclear war. Information sent over the Internet takes the shortest path available from one computer to another. Because of this, any two computers on the Internet will be able to stay in touch with each other as long as there is a single route between them.

This technology is called packet switching. Owing to this technology, if some computers on the network are knocked out (by a nuclear explosion, for example), information will just route around them. One such packet-switching network already survived a war. It was the Iraq computer network, which was not knocked out during the Gulf War.

Most Internet host computers (more than 50%) are in the United States, while the rest are located in more than 100 other countries. Although the number of host computers can be counted fairly accurately, nobody knows exactly how many people use the Internet. There are millions and their number is growing by thousands each month world-wide.

The most popular Internet service is e-mail. Most of people, who have access to the Internet, use the networks only for sending and receiving e-mail messages. However, other popular services are available on the Internet: reading news, using the World Wide Web, telnet etc.

Words and word combinations:

a network

to embrace

to survive

a path/ a single route

a packet switching

owing to

a nuclear explosion/ a nuclear war

to knock out

an access/ a reliable alternative

the wireless station-радиостанция

to transmit

to intercept

to conduct transaction