For immediate release
15 January 1998

Consortia Formed to Develop Chinese WWW Standard and Promote Business Use of Internet

Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and Chiao Tung University (Hsinchu) will sign an agreement to form the World Wide Web Consortium--Chinese Computing (W3C3) on 19 January 1998. The Consortium will be the leading body guiding the development of the Web technologies for the Chinese language community.

Today's World Wide Web (WWW) applications are driven by the standards set by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) which was founded by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1994. Though W3C is intended to influence the development of WWW on a global basis, it has not yet addressed the special needs of Chinese applications on the Web.

"A major challenge for Chinese WWW development is that different systems are used to encode and present Chinese information on the Web," said Prof Vincent Shen of the HKUST's Department of Computer Science, who initiated Hong Kong Supernet and built it into the University's first commercial success. "The objective of W3C3 is to develop common protocols and tools to facilitate the evolution of the Web in the Chinese language."

Besides setting up policies, standards and regulations for Chinese Internet applications, the W3C3 will focus initially on developing technologies for posting, browsing, searching and retrieving information on the WWW with partial or full Chinese contents. It will also develop tools that provide coarse translation of texts between English and Chinese. Technical work at HKUST on W3C3 will be carried out by staff at the Cyberspace Center and at the Center for Computing Services and Telecommunications.

After the signing ceremony, the Cyberspace Center will host the inauguration of the Internet Business Consortium (IBC) and receive a major equipment donation from the Hewlett-Packard Company.

The IBC, led by the Cyberspace Center and sponsored by recognized industry leaders in Internet technology, is aimed at improving employee readiness in Hong Kong and promoting business use of Internet technology. As such, it supports the work of the Cyberspace Center and W3C3, and helps the Government to build Hong Kong into a regional leader in information technology. Current members of
IBC are 3Com, Andersen Consulting, Citibank, Hewlett-Packard, Hong Kong Institution of Engineers, HKUST (convenor), Informix Greater China, LinkAGE Online, Netscape, Oracle (HK) and Sun Microsystems.

To support the Cyberspace Center and HKUST, the Hewlett-Packard Company has donated 18 multimedia personal computers and an HP9000 server, with a total value of about HK$1.5 million.

Details of the events are as follows:

**Events:** World Wide Web Consortium--Chinese Computing (W3C3) Signing Ceremony; Inauguration of the Internet Business Consortium (IBC); Hewlett-Packard Donation Ceremony

**Date:** 19 January, 1998 (Monday)

**Time:** 2:30 pm (Light refreshments will be served at 2:15 pm)

**Venue:** 7/F Foyer, Academic Building, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Clear Water Bay, Kowloon

**Note to Editors:**
You are cordially to send your representative(s) to cover the ceremonies. There will be a guided tour of HKUST's Cyberspace Center after the ceremonies. For further information, please contact Bosco Wong of the Public Affairs Office at 2358-6307 or email pamedia@usthk.ust.hk.