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**New Research Identifies Similarities Among Executives
Responsible for Corporate Websites**

Responsibilities, Expertise and Challenges Demonstrate Emergence of a New
Profession with a Unique Identity

Portland, Ore. — January 28, 2009 — A recent 37-question deep dive survey of corporate Internet executives reveals a group of professionals with a unique set of responsibilities and expertise indicating the emergence of a new corporate profession centered on the strategic management of corporate Web sites. This profession is distinct from the more traditional Marketing and Information Technology professions that started the careers of many Internet executives. The research study was conducted by the Internet Strategy Forum (ISF), a professional association for in-house Internet executives, in conjunction with Riley Research Associates and underwriter WelchmanPierpoint, a Web operations management consulting company. The final results and analysis are published in a 70 page report.

Nearly 70% of respondents are 35-54 years old, with the next largest segment represented by 18-24 year-olds, at 26%. Just under half have a Bachelor's Degree as their highest level of education. About 40% earn an annual salary between \$95,000 - \$155,000. 52% of respondents are in the highest-ranking Internet position within their organization.

Prior to becoming full-time Internet executives, the majority of respondents came from traditional Marketing positions, followed closely by traditional Information Technology positions. Several other professional backgrounds garnered at least 10% of the responses. Only 15% of respondents have been working as an Internet professional since college.

The data comes from the ISF's third "Corporate Internet Executive Research Study". The respondents, over 250 ISF members, are executives responsible in some way for their company's Internet presence.

"Since the first version of this survey in 2005, the Internet Strategy Forum has tracked the emergence of a new profession that is not only a hybrid of traditional Marketing and Information Technology professions, but also unique and separate from those." said Steve Gehlen, ISF founder and co-author of the survey. "With 44% of respondents having 10+ years of experience, it's time for this to be recognized as a new and separate profession. In order to reach the full potential of the Internet to positively impact all areas of business,

more companies should consider establishing an Internet department separate but equal to Marketing and IT on the organization chart, with a track for the top executive to have a C-level position such as Chief Internet Strategist or Chief Digital Officer.”

The unique nature of this new profession becomes evident in the shared responsibilities, required skills and common challenges identified by the respondents. Typical strategic responsibilities include Web presence, social media, and Emarketing. The skills required to perform these jobs represent a large variety of expertise areas including strategic planning, Web production tool management and Internet presence-related vendor management. Across industries, Internet executives share a number of common challenges including a lack of career path opportunities, reporting too low within the organization, too many strategic decision-makers, and a lack of understanding of the role within the company. The complete report includes numerous additional examples ranked by respondents in each of these areas.

“The lack of strategic oversight and governance of the Web at senior-most levels exposes the organization to risk and is a set-up for missed business opportunities. While Web technologies continue to become more sophisticated and the importance of Web sites as operational and marketing tools becomes more significant, organizational Web teams are only slightly larger versions of what they were ten years ago.” said Lisa Welchman, Founding Partner of WelchmanPierpoint, underwriter of the survey. “Web Management practices must mature and that means raising the Internet’s stature to the C-suite. The Internet Strategy Forum, a champion for the profession, is helping to raise awareness for this with their research and programs.”

To purchase the complete 70 page report for \$299 or download a free 4 page preview, visit <http://www.internetstrategyforum.org/research>.

Welchman and Gehlen will discuss the research findings and the implications for Internet professionals and Web operations management at the Internet Strategy Forum's annual Summit conference on July 23 & 24 in Portland, OR. For more information, visit <http://www.internetstrategyforum.org/summit>.

About the Internet Strategy Forum

The Internet Strategy Forum (www.internetstrategyforum.org) is a nonprofit professional association dedicated to peer networking, information exchange, professional development, research and thought leadership among in-house Internet decision-makers.

About WelchmanPierpoint

WelchmanPierpoint (www.welchmanpierpoint.com) is a consulting firm specializing in Web Operations Management, providing a systematic, holistic approach for building and operating Web sites and Web organizations, from strategy and decision-making, to execution and measuring success.

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