

ON THE INTERNET

SPOTLIGHTING WEB SITES

The Internet is a network of computer systems from around the world, including government, university, commercial, and public computer systems. This section explores investment-related sites on the Internet. Each issue highlights an area that may be of interest to Computerized Investing readers. We welcome referrals to sites you have discovered.

Webcasting & On-Line Conference Calls

The Internet continues to grow in importance as a means of accessing data, company reports, real-time quotes, and breaking news. As issues of full disclosure have come center-stage, individual investors have gained a new resource at their disposal: on-line company conference calls and webcasts.

This article spotlights four Web sites that offer the individual investor conference call schedules and direct access to the actual conference calls, as well as other important on-line company events—either via a telephone link or using a media player installed on your computer.

The broadcasters serve as producers—they help companies put conference calls on the Internet and provide the portal for individual investors with the necessary audio capabilities to listen in. This is called webcasting or netcasting—the transmission of live or prerecorded audio and video to PCs that are connected to the Internet. The software that enables webcasting is referred to as a streaming media player. A certain level of technology is required to achieve streaming media and get webcasting on your PC. The streaming media checklist includes the following hardware and software:

- any PC with a Pentium chip or better (Power PC or better for Mac users);
- an Internet connection;
- a sound card;
- speakers; and
- a media player, either RealPlayer by RealNetworks (www.real.com) or Windows Media Player by Microsoft (www.microsoft.com).

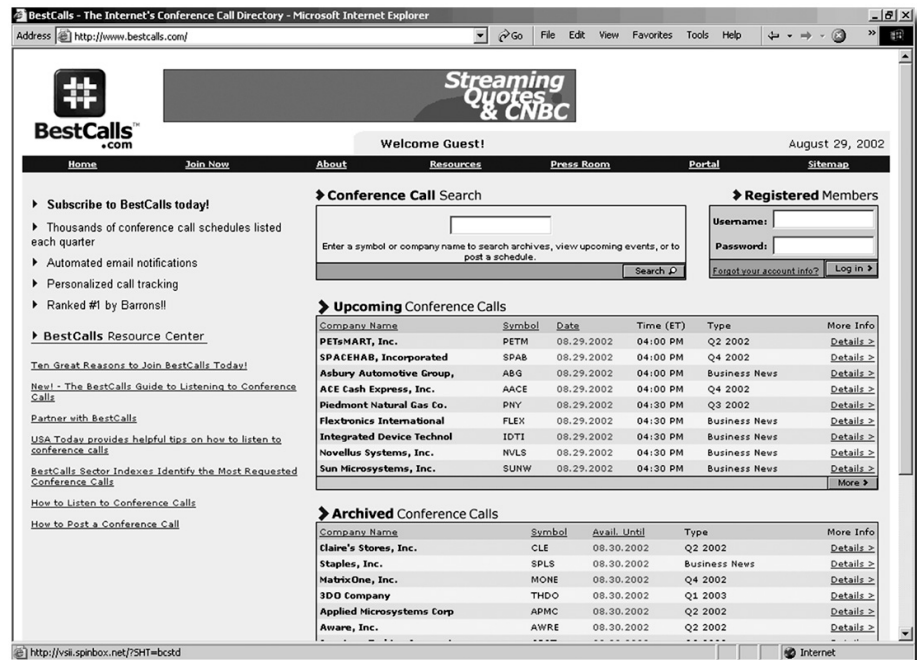
BestCalls.com

www.bestcalls.com

BestCalls.com is a fee-based service that charges \$49.95/yr. to individuals wishing to access thousands of live and archived company conference calls.

This site does not produce on-line conference calls, but rather is a “partner” of the broadcasters—distributing conference call schedules and content. The BestCalls.com Web

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site serves as a directory for on-line conference calls and provides links to certain conference calls. Promoting itself as “the TV Guide for conference calls,” BestCalls tracks conference call schedules for thousands of publicly traded companies.

The site allows registered users to create personalized conference call portfolios that track listed conference calls for selected companies. BestCalls also provides access to teleconference call phone numbers and passcodes, links to live audiocasts, links to conference call replays and information, and links to articles. Conference call directories and all features on the site are free to registered members.

BestCalls conference call portfolio tracking system, CallTracker, keeps investors up-to-date with scheduled calls, allowing them to access the conference calls they want. Subscribers simply fill out a profile, entering their E-mail address and the stock symbols of the companies they wish to monitor, and then choose when to be notified of a scheduled call—from as short a time frame as the day of the call to as far ahead as 30 days in advance. CallTracker will then automatically alert users via E-mail prior to the start of each conference call. A personalized CallTracker portfolio module is also presented to all subscribers at the BestCalls home page.

Users can also post calls to the BestCalls database—in fact, a majority of the scheduling content on the site comes

from users.

In addition to the conference call calendars and links, BestCalls also offers access to SEC filings via EDGAR Online, quotes, financial news and data, and earnings estimates from MultexInvestor.com.

BestCall's resource center contains a glossary of terms frequently heard in conference calls and information on the BestCalls 50 Index, composed of the top 50 most popular companies with BestCalls users, as well as a breakdown of the most popular calls by industry. There are also guides to listening to conference calls.

Company Boardroom

www.companyboardroom.com

The CCBN Company Boardroom is a free site that is essentially a calendar of corporate events such as conference calls, earnings announcements, stocks splits, IPOs, and dividends. The conference calls section lists those conference calls for the day and a link for each individual company that contains past conference calls—some of which may be archived—as well as other investor events. Users can search for a specific company by ticker or name or use the alphabetical company directory. If you find that a company you follow is not listed, you can suggest it for coverage. The enhanced company directory contains separate listings for conference calls, streaming media files, and company presentations in HTML, Power Point, or Adobe Acrobat file formats. The enhanced directory also offers company profiles and management, shareholder, and analyst information, press releases, and financial reports.

PR Newswire

www.prnewswire.com

Press release disseminator and business newswire resource PR Newswire also offers individual investors free access to company conference calls and other media events at their Web site. On-line copies of press releases are, of course, also available.

Found under the Multimedia News tab on the News & Information home page, PR Newswire offers a current calendar of both recent and upcoming live events along with a massive archive of past events spanning the last two years. Site capabilities include slide shows and streaming media audio and video content. Ikon Office, eBay, Spyglass, Telescan, and Xerox are some of the firms linked up with PR Newswire.

The PR Newswire site provides a link for downloading the current free version of RealNetworks' RealPlayer.

Vcall

www.vcall.com

Vcall is an on-line conference call center providing earnings season information on the Web for individual investors. Like Broadcast.com's Business Channel, Vcall provides free information in the form of earnings conference calls, shareholder meetings, investor conferences, and Radio Wall Street interviews for over 300 publicly traded companies. Included in Vcall's stable of companies that release investor information on the Web are AB Volvo, Fleet Financial Group, Gardenburger, Iomega, Motorola, and Oracle.

The three streaming media program areas found on the Vcall home page are Today's Vcalls, Upcoming Vcalls, and

Past Vcalls. Each section lists company name, date, time, and the type of event. You can also view events by clicking on the calendar link, or performing a search by ticker. Reminder links are attached to each event that allow registered users to set up customized alert portfolios— notifying them via E-mail when an event is about to take place.

Each company affiliated with Vcall has its own Web page on the Vcall.com site. Included in these company areas are links to the company's Web site, current press releases, conference call transcripts, basic financial data, featured Vcalls, recent Vcalls, SEC filings, and analysts reports.

Vcall.com has a link to the RealNetworks Web site for downloading the current free version of the RealPlayer.

