

Microsoft's
Bold Bid for
Yahoo!

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SocGen guy?



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Hack Attack

MACWORLD AND THE CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW may be the launching pad for the gadgets du jour, but if you want to see what high-tech wizardry may emerge from the garage a decade from now, head about 80 miles north of Oslo in March to the Vikingship Olympic Arena in Hamar, Norway. Each year more than 5,000 computer enthusiasts make the pilgrimage to the Gathering, a massive digital free-for-all where techies plug in and hunker down for five days to show off their networking, programming, and gaming chops. With caffeine the drug of choice and most attendees crashing on sleeping bags at their stations, you might call it Burning Man for geeks. — Paul Sloan

20,000 GIGABYTES of data course through the pipes every hour in one of the largest temporary computer networks in the world. That's roughly equal to a DVD's worth of data every two seconds.

5,200 PEOPLE now pack the sold-out event each year; some 4,000 more are turned away. The event's appeal is not lost on technology's corporate elite: Cisco has been a sponsor on and off for years and, along with IBM and Microsoft, sends recruiters to scope the crowd for new programming talent.

90 PERCENT of the attendees are male; the average age is 19½. The event's founder, Vegard Skjefstad, started the Gathering in 1992, when he was 21. To connect like-minded computer youths, Skjefstad and two friends rented a local concert hall, hoping to draw 600 people by word of mouth; 1,100 showed up.

PHOTOGRAPH BY EIVIND H. NAPVIG





SOCIAL NETWORKING
THE GATHERING IN
HAMAR, NORWAY

