



BUZZ

Surf's Up at These Hot Sites

A quick guide to where teens and tweens are pointing and clicking by **Tina Wells**

We know that tweens and teens spend the majority of their free time (and even some of their class time) surfing the Internet. Where they're spending that surf time, however, seems to be a big mystery. Well, wonder no more. Teens and tweens are drawn to Web sites that engage them on multiple interactive platforms, hold their ever-shrinking attention span, and give them a reason to come back. Check out some of the sites that

have young people's keyboards constantly clicking:

▶ **www.uthtv.com** Quickly asserting itself as the ultimate outlet for youth to express themselves, UthTV allows young people to make their opinions heard through formatted media based on video, audio, image, and text. With a fully interactive network and people to meet and mingle with, as well as one of the hottest online retail stores, UthTV is quickly becoming a prime online destination for tweens and teens.

▶ **www.omnik.com** Why limit yourself to talking with one person at a time when you can get "the world in a click"? The online community OMNIK allows users to have simultaneous video and audio communication with up to 10 people. With features like real-time video, instant messaging, and file-sharing, OMNIK is perfect for talking with friends, family,

and group projects for school, as well as meeting new people from around the world.

▶ **www.absolutepunk.net** This site provides teens with the opportunity to catch new bands and artists they may never have the opportunity to hear otherwise, or at least until a major label picks them up. With users providing constant live postings throughout the day, updating users about the breakups, makeups, tours, and traumas of the bands you'll be hearing on the radio one day, AbsolutePunk has given commercial sites like MySpace.com and PureVolume.com a run for their advertiser's money.

▶ **www.collegehumor.com** Receive a funny joke or photo in your inbox in the past few days? Chances are your friend found it on CollegeHumor.com. Founded in 1999 by two high school seniors who had to separate for college

but didn't want to lose touch, the site began with them sharing funny stories and photos from their respective campuses, and has quickly become a whole lot more. With users constantly submitting new material, and a staff of thousands sifting through the material, teens are sure to find something to make them smile.

▶ **www.shopbop.com** We can't all live in New York's SoHo, so ShopBop.com brings the boutique experience straight to your desktop. Selling some of the hottest brands showcased by young Hollywood (Ya-Ya, Rachel Palley, Nili Lotan), ShopBop lets shoppers spend hours scoring some of the hottest products around.

▶ **www.karmaloop.com** Being cool and cutting-edge isn't just about the clothing; it's about the lifestyle. Karmaloop.com provides all that and more, with everything from the world's edgiest brands (some not even sold in the U.S.!) to a live blog and weekly newsletter featuring all things hip and happening. The company's flagship store in Boston, Mass. has scenesters across the East Coast buzzing, and online shoppers reach as far as Korea and Japan.

▶ **www.pandora.com** From the creators of the Music Genome Project, Pandora is the ultimate tool for tweens and teens who dream of having their own personal deejay. Based on your musical tastes, Pandora will create a station customized just for you. Given Pandora's unlimited stations and plethora of personalization options, don't be surprised if you ask a tween or teen what music station they're listening to and they tell you it's their own. ■