Browser issues:
Netscape
Netscape – Exchange Mail integration
Print Expired " when "POST" method is used
3.02 – 3.03 form post bug
CSS support
UNIX Stability

Microsoft
Java 1.1 support
Security Zones
Operating system changes
Windows NT implications

Problems with IE 4.0

Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 makes changes to underlying Windows 95 operation system Dynamic Link Libraries (DLL). These modifications may cause unexpected side effects for existing Windows 95 application software. Several examples of interaction problems have been discovered. The currently known affected applications are:

Adobe Photodelux
Norton Utilities
Compaq Home Base

None of these applications are known to be installed inside Boeing, however I do expect other problems to be identified as Internet Explorer 4.0 becomes more widely implemented. I would like to point out that in testing the production release of Internet Explorer 4.0 on a clean test machine I have had interaction problems with the McAfee Antivirus software installed with our default Windows 95 image. I would add that the product is not unusually unstable or ill behaved in any way. Testing with documented World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) specifications has indicated that Internet Explorer 4.0 supports many of the standards initiatives. There are however areas of concern.

Many of the problems that I have seen reported regarding Internet Explorer 4.0 are related to users installing the production release of the product over the top of an existing platform preview release. Microsoft has a procedure that can be used to clean the platform preview release off a machine, my recommendation to testers was that the platform preview only be installed on machines that can be reformatted. I would recommend that individuals that need to install Internet Explorer 4.0 for testing purposes continue to use a machine that is dedicated to testing. Detailed integration testing will have to be performed with all standard desktop applications before we will know for sure if there are interaction problems with existing Boeing standard application software.

Aside from these issues there are also strategic issues regarding the next generation browser decision. There are issues in both the Netscape and Microsoft products. Each browser implements a different security implementation and code signing capability. Each product has Java 1.1 support issues. Each product employs a different mechanism for "Push" or channel based content distribution.

We have gathered information about what people think are the important features of a next generation browser. The features that were identified:

Multiple platform support
Client side certificate authentication (portability and security)
Java 1.1 support (e.g. DCAC applications)
Offline browsing
Exchange integration
Cascading Style Sheet (CSS1 and CSS positioning) support
Javascript support (European Computer Manufacturers Association, ECMA-262 draft)
Auto proxy configuration

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Multiple user profiles

The Web browser category has rapidly evolved from a simple HTML parser into a complex information and multimedia content delivery mechanism. The browser decision should be less about what product we deploy and more about what functionality we require.