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## Hawaii e.biz

### Chief Simpleton

*It's a new title for Hawaii's claim to world wide web fame: Kevin Hughes*

By Kelli Abe Trifonovitch

Kevin Hughes' biographical information on Webify Solutions' Web site includes a quote from jazz musician Charles Mingus: "Making the simple complicated is commonplace; making the complicated simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity."

You might say that Hughes' mission in life these days is to make life simpler, particularly on the Web. He works remotely from Hawaii for Webify Solutions, a business Web-services company based in Austin, Texas, and Palo Alto, Calif. "They liked to call me Chief Simpleton, but that didn't fly too well with people in the financial industry, so Chief Interface Designer I am," Hughes says.

In May, 30-year-old Hughes received a 2002



**Kevin Hughes**

Distinguished Alumni award from the University of Hawaii. He was inducted into the World Wide Web Hall of Fame in 1994 for development work he did as a student and lecturer at Honolulu Community College from 1991 to 1993. There, he launched the first hypermedia campus-wide information system on the Web. He also developed "imagemap," a Web link accessed by clicking on parts of an image.

His commercial work since then has included: the first online cable television listings; the first online shopping site; the interface for the first XML-based procurement system; and the first Web site for Wells Fargo.

Hughes says the UH alumni award has brought him full circle. "I'm not washing my hands of Hawaii," says Hughes, "but, in some ways, I am washing my hands of Hawaii high tech. I want to get involved, and I want to see people get involved in environmental and other issues, which are, in some ways, ultimately

Feature  
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### 3G Whiz

Maui Sky Fiber blazes ahead with a new high-speed wireless service for Internet subscribers

### Technique

It's been a tough year for the Secure Shell (SSH) protocol.

### Secure IT

Remotely Accessing Your Office

### Q&A with Peter Kay

A reader asks, "I've heard that your office is paperless. How do you live without Post-It notes and scratchpads?"

### Law of the Line

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Scott Butera is a Financial Consultant with Salomon Smith Barney.

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Veronica Kaneko is the Big Mac at McDonald's Hawaii

### Road Ahead

A longtime funeral director aims to restore confidence in Hawaii's "Death Care Industry"

### Japan Journal

Tokyo-based sports marketing executive Ken Berger has some ideas for bridging Japan and Hawaii through sports

### Real Estate

### Room At The Top

General Manager, Kahala Center Co.

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related.

“The good and bad news is that just as many high-tech opportunities exist now in Hawaii as they did when I first got to Hawaii,” he says. “I think the right approach, which is just starting to happen now, is people are starting to look at deeper changes that need to be made in communities and in the educational sector.”

Last year, Hughes launched the Forward Foundation, a nonprofit organization that concentrates on promoting arts, culture and the environment by empowering other organizations with technology. His current lifestyle reflects these interests. He and seven other housemates share “Ihiuka,” a multimillion dollar home at the top of Pacific Heights Road. Those housemates include musician Makana and Evan Tector, executive director of the Forward Foundation. One room, a recording studio, has been redesigned with state-of-the-art equipment, which has been used by groups, such as Palolo Jones, Friends of the Bride and Reign Cheq’d.

In “simplification” mode, he and his housemates are looking for more modest digs, maybe a downtown loft, where they can do a lot of music and studio work without bothering the neighbors. The hitch: It has to house eight, although many of them plan to be on the road much of the time.

“To do everything I’ve done over the last couple of years and to do everything I need to do, all I’ve needed is my laptop, my guitar and a Net connection. That’s it,” says Hughes.

He has set up a server “Kevcom” at his grandmother’s Manoa home, so he and his compatriots can work remotely from anywhere in the world. Hughes says, “[My grandmother] has no idea. To her, it’s just a small box with a fan on it and all she knows is that she shouldn’t unplug it from the wall. In fact, she’s handwritten a big sign next to it.”

With Kevcom in place, Hughes plans to work on technologies he’s interested in to simplify the Web; serve as Digital Librarian for the World Wide Web History Project; travel; work on music and visual arts; and continue to work with the Forward Foundation. Says Hughes, “There’s a lot left to do, and I hope people concentrate more on those issues now that the [dot-com] hype has passed. People are thinking less – hopefully – about stock options and more about real ideas.”

Photo: Ronen Zilberman

## Face to Face

One year after Sept. 11, Honolulu-based Science & Technology International serves its toughest customer – the U.S. Department of Defense

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