MetaFilter

MetaFilter (`www.metafilter.com`) is an enormous Web log — the Web log of anyone in the world. It is open to *anyone* who wants to post to it, on any topic. The site exists to remove communication barriers and to encourage interaction. The whole idea is that participants create a collaborative discussion, shaped by shared information and mutual respect.

Postings are sorted into discussions: You can start with the original post and read responses, or you can jump into the middle of the discussion. In order to post, you must register (free). Be a member long enough, and you can actually post links directly to the home page.

MetaFilter has somewhere in the neighborhood of 17,000 members, 32,000 discussion threads, and more than 750,000 comments. In mid-November 2004, the home page showed discussions on the decline of the U.S. dollar, the anniversary of a famous murder case, Apple iPod tools for the PC, and the psychology of reunions. Though not edited, the site is moderated by community members, and users can lose membership for inflammatory comments.

Matt Haughey, a software engineer, started MetaFilter in 1999. The site, which is shown in Figure 8-4, has experienced some growing pains because of its popularity and has sometimes had to limit new registrations while the site is altered to handle the mass of content and activity it experiences.

Figure 8-4: MetaFilter is a free-wheeling, community-driven, and moderated discussion blog.