**Internet**

Life today is highly dependent on computers - they do most of the important work and are found everywhere - from homes, to police stations, government institutions and military facilities. However, the computer would have never been so popular and widely spread if it was not for the Internet. 

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**History**

When the original conceptual foundation of the Internet was laid back in the 50s, no one had the slightest idea of how far this project would go. At those insecure post-war times of alienation and deepening political division, the vision of the Internet as we see it today, was only a matter of science fiction dreaming. Starting as a military project in the United States, it quickly became very popular in several other countries.   
  
Now, several decades later, with the spread of the democratic lifestyle and the amazing technological progress, we all witness the existence of a parallel world of unlimited communication possibilities that occupies an increasing part of our daily routine with the sole purpose of facilitating our lives. 

**The Internet today - common uses**

The dynamic, user-friendly interface of the Internet as we know it today, is breathed life into by a multi-layer global network system that connects hundreds of millions of computers. This large system is comprised of multiple local and global networks serving private, public, business, academic and government purposes, which allows for the exchange of data between more than a hundred Internet-linked countries worldwide. This makes the Internet an enormous carrier of various information resources and services, such as text and multi-media data, email, online chat, VoIP, [file transfer](http://www.ntchosting.com/ftp/ftp-transfer-file-upload.html) and [file](http://www.ntchosting.com/internet/file.html) sharing,[ecommerce](http://www.ntchosting.com/ecommerce-web-hosting.html), online gaming, etc. 

**The Email**

The [E-mail](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/) is probably one of the most popular features, which came alongside with the creation of the Internet. Today, almost every person on the planet has an email address somewhere, be it a self [hosted email](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/hosted-email.html) address or an email address with some of the [free email](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/webmail.html) providers, such as Google or Yahoo. The Email, which was originally intended to act as an alternative to letters, today represents so much more, making the communication between people on different sides of the planet very easy. Today, there are even enterprises, which handle their entire online business, relying solely on email based communication.   
  
At NTC Hosting you can find a powerful email solution coming with several features, such as an email [auto-responder](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/auto-responder.html), which can be used to send an automated reply to every message sent to you; an anti-spam filter, via which you can stop unwanted emails; an [anti-virus](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/anti-virus-protection.html) protection service, which checks all your emails for viruses; and an [email forwarding](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/forwarding.html) function, through which you can forward all your emails to one mailbox. With NTC Hosting you can also create [mailing lists](http://www.ntchosting.com/email/mailing-lists.html) for your hosted emails, which can send one single email message to several subscribers simultaneously. 

**E-commerce**

With the growth of the Internet and the number of its users, a huge market share was created. Before, to hold an enterprise you had to have an office and cover all kinds of additional expenses, whereas now you can just create a website with one of the several [e-commerce](http://www.ntchosting.com/internet/ecommerce.html) script solutions, and have your own online shop in a matter of minutes.   
  
This has allowed a lot of small businesses to grow, making their products available worldwide to a much wider audience.   
  
With all web hosting plans offered by NTC Hosting, our users can have an e-commerce solution pre-installed and readily available. You can have one easily installed in your account at any time with the help of our popular [PHP Scripts Installer](http://www.ntchosting.com/popular-php-scripts-installer/). 

**File transfer and sharing**

The transfer of files over the Internet has existed since the creation of the latter. Today, with the majority of information being stored on files, their safe transfer and sharing has become a big necessity. A popular way to transfer files is to send them via email as attachments. This, however, is not the best way, since several providers place restrictions on the type of files that can be sent, or on their size. This is why the File Transfer Protocol was created. It allows a user running an [FTP program](http://www.ntchosting.com/ftp/ftp-program-file-transfer.html) to connect to an [FTP-enabled server](http://www.ntchosting.com/ftp/ftp-server-connection.html) and safely transfer files to this server. Once they are on the server, they can be downloaded by everyone.   
  
There are a lot of [Free FTP](http://www.ntchosting.com/ftp/free-ftp-clients.html) software solutions, which allow you to seamlessly connect and transfer files. With all NTC Hosting plans, users can take advantage of our powerful FTP solution. With each of our [CMS hosting](http://www.ntchosting.com/cms-blog-album-web-hosting.html) and [Low-Cost hosting](http://www.ntchosting.com/low-cost-affordable-shared-web-hosting.html) offers, you can take advantage of numerous [FTP accounts](http://www.ntchosting.com/ftp/ftp-account-management.html), making [FTP transfer](http://www.ntchosting.com/ftp/ftp-transfer-file-upload.html) and sharing a breeze. 

**The nature of the Internet**

The explosive growth of the Internet over the last decade is attributed to two basic reasons - the non-centralized management of its development and the non-proprietary nature of its main functional units - the Internet protocols. This 'freedom' of the Internet determines its balanced organic growth and prevents it from suffering the consequences of monopoly. The only Internet-related entity with central coordinating functions is ICANN, which controls the assignment of domain names and [IP addresses](http://www.ntchosting.com/dns/ip-address.html) on a global scale - a very necessary role that works for the organized distribution of unique website names to users worldwide. 

**Internet access**

Since browsing the Internet is considered as a pretty normal daily activity such as picking up the phone to make a phone call, for example, the Internet access points have become an indelible part of the communication infrastructure today. Public Internet-connected places include libraries, airports, coffee shops, hotels, and specialized Internet cafes. Thanks to the Wi-Fi technology, the Internet can now be accessed by every laptop/PDA equipped person within wireless-connection enabled areas such as campuses, malls, parks and even entire cities. The mobile phone industry has also been affected by the Internet with almost every newly released phone model offering access to the global network. 

**Internet / WWW disambiguation**

Talking about the Internet, it is important to point out that it is not identical in meaning with the World Wide Web. Both terms are increasingly used as synonyms on a global scale, although this is not correct from a technical point of few. The reason for this common misunderstanding is that the World Wide Web is the most popular Internet application today. Anyway, you should distinguish both terms, knowing that the World Wide Web represents the huge set of interlinked text documents, images and other resources presented on the websites and linked by means of hyperlinks and [URL](http://www.ntchosting.com/internet/url-global-web-address.html) elements, while the Internet provides the physical environment for the web to exist.

Ever wonder how the Internet got started? It's something we use every day, and most of us probably take it for granted. In this brief historical profile, we're going to take a look at a few of the more memorable milestones that have made this worldwide phenomenon into the network we know and love today.

* **1957:**The United States Department of Defense formed a small agency called ARPA (Advanced Research Projects Agency) to develop military science and technology.
* **1961-1965:**The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) started to research sharing information in small, phone-linked networks. ARPA is one of their main sponsors.
* **1966:** The first ARPANET plan is unveiled by Larry Roberts of MIT. Packet switching technology is getting off the ground, and small university networks are beginning to be developed.
* **1969:**The Department of Defense commissions the fledgling ARPAnet for network research. The first official network nodes were UCLA, Standford Research Institute,UCSB, and the University of Utah. The first node to node message was sent from UCLA to SRI.
* **1971:** more nodes join the network, bringing the total to 15. These new nodes include Harvard and NASA.
* **1973:** ARPAnet goes global when the the University College of London and Norway's Royal Radar Establishment join up.
* **1974:** Network intercommunication is becoming more sophisticated; data is now transmitted more quickly and efficiently with the design of TCP (Transmission Control Program).
* **1976:** Unix is developed at AT and T; Queen Elizabeth sends out her first email message.
* **1979:** USENET, the mother of all networked discussion groups, is developed.
* **1982:** Internet technology protocols are developed, commonly known as TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol and Internet Protocol). This leads to one of the first definitions of an "internet" being a connected set of networks.
* **1984:** Number of hosts is now up to 1000, with more being added every day.
* **1985:** The first registered domain is Symbolics.com.
* **1987:** Number of hosts breaks the 10,000 mark.
* **1988:** First large-scale Internet worm affects thousands of Internet hosts.
* **1991:** [Tim Berners-Lee](http://websearch.about.com/od/searchingtheweb/p/Tim-Berners-Lee.htm) develops the World Wide Web.
* **1993:** The World Wide Web's annual growth is now at a staggering 341,634%.
* **1994:** ARPAnet celebrates 25th anniversary.
* **1995-1997:** RealAudio introduces Internet streaming technology, dial-up systems emerge (America Online, Compuserve), the Internet backbone continues to be strengthened with the addition of MCI, Microsoft and Netscape fight for WWW browser supremacy, and there are now more than 70,000 mailing lists.
* **1998-present:**The Internet continues to experience staggering growth. More people use the Internet to get connected to others, find information, conduct business, and share information than ever before in history.

How difficult our life would have been if there was no Internet. Think about it. To find some information, we all have acquired the habit of 'Googling' it on the web; within a few seconds the screen displays the desired information. You want to book tickets for a movie night with friends, and you can book them at the click of a button. Many of us cannot imagine life without the social networking sites. The Internet has indeed made the world a small place and living life easier. And the rapid progress of technology has made it possible to access the Internet from anywhere through plenty of means. It has such a plethora of uses that we use it for one purpose or the other daily.

For Information:

For a layman, it is nothing but a collection of websites. And there are innumerable websites that serve a variety of purposes. There are news websites, social networking websites, websites that provide information and websites of various businesses and organizations. These websites are updated frequently to provide information to the user. You can find everything of anything on the web just by browsing through a few websites. You can also use emails, blogs, IM chat, social networking websites and communication software for sharing your information with the world. It has made access to information cheaper and easier and this is its most common use.

Business & Advertising:

Almost all the businesses these days have websites, through which they promote and advertise themselves. This medium these days has been used extensively for promotional campaigns. Not only promoting your business but you can also effectively advertise your event or any cause on this medium. There are many businesses that depend on the Internet for their survival like stocks and call centers, to name a few. It has promoted faster access to necessary information which strengthens the business processes.

Education:

It also is a popular medium used by students. Many students use it for educational purposes, like for finding study material or for applying to some college or university. It is now a virtual world and all the applications are done online through the website of the concerned educational body. Students use websites for these and many other purposes like checking exam results, exam schedule, application procedure to any course, etc. Students also take the help of the Internet for project help and for obtaining the required images. Everything is a click away from us.

Communication & Networking:

The use of the Internet for networking is very popular among all age groups. There are many good social networking websites that are used by people for communication. These websites provide an effective and easy platform that facilitates interaction. It is widely used as a means of communication through means like networking websites, chat websites, blogs, etc. Through these websites you can also share your photographs with your near and dear ones. It is widely used by job seekers for job applications and job searching. Facilities like video conferencing has made it possible to conduct interviews online.

Entertainment:

Another popular use of the Internet is for entertainment. Facilities like listening to online music, downloading music and movies provides a platform for entertainment. There are plenty of other ways through which you can entertain yourselves. You can play online games, view sports matches, or watch videos of your choice. It is a trusted means of entertainment for these kinds of purposes and is extensively used for the same.

Other Popular Uses:

It is popularly used for banking. Almost all the banking transactions are possible through this medium. Apart from these common uses, it can also be used for shopping. Online shopping is very popular among masses and on the Internet you can buy anything and get it delivered at home. There are also many people who use it to work from home.

These were some of the chief common uses. It is a boon for us and has made our life easy by facilitating so many uses. But it is also prone to attacks of many kinds that threaten safety. To protect the Internet from these attacks we should all use it carefully and also protect ourselves from various privacy intrusions. Its use as a tool for communication will always remain its most powerful use. The array of uses of the Internet is vast and with the progress of technology new uses will get added to the list of uses continuously.

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