

# What is the semantic web, and why would I want to use it?

Asked 16 years, 3 months ago   Modified 16 years, 3 months ago

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Just like it reads.

1

language-agnostic

semantic-web



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asked Sep 22, 2008 at 19:24



Dustman

5,263 ● 10 ● 34 ● 40

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[stackoverflow.com/questions/725261/what-is-the-semantic-web](https://stackoverflow.com/questions/725261/what-is-the-semantic-web) – Simon Gibbs Apr 9, 2009 at 10:37

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3

The simplest and shortest explanation that I have found is: "The Semantic Web is to Machines what the World Wide Web is to Humans".



And as to why you would want that: for the same reasons why you let your Machine compute Pi to the quadrillionth



digit instead of doing that yourself. So you can focus on *interesting* problems and leave the menial work to the Machine.



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answered Sep 22, 2008 at 19:45

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[Jörg W Mittag](#)

369k ● 79 ● 453 ● 661



1

Well, it might not be fitting in with the "official" definition, but I always try and explain it to people as "It's like syndicating knowledge instead of content."



Why would you want to use it? Well... if you are making applications that could benefit from machine parseable and queryable "knowledge," then... you might want to use it :).



IMHO it's rather ill-defined and not implemented in a broadly useful way at present. It's a good idea and I have no doubt things will tend towards this sort of approach in the future, but it's not there yet.

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answered Sep 22, 2008 at 20:02

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[Chris Ingrassia](#)

534 ● 4 ● 6



0

[From wikipedia:](#)

The Semantic Web is an evolving extension of the World Wide Web in which the semantics of



information and services on the web is defined, making it possible for the web to understand and satisfy the requests of people and machines to use the web content. It derives from World Wide Web Consortium director Sir Tim Berners-Lee's vision of the Web as a universal medium for data, information, and knowledge exchange.

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answered Sep 22, 2008 at 19:27

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[Stephen Wrighton](#)

37.8k ● 6 ● 70 ● 87

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Quoting wikipedia adds no value to stackoverflow!

– [Simon Gibbs](#) Nov 22, 2008 at 23:26

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And asking questions that could easily be answered via a Wiki search does? – [Stephen Wrighton](#) Nov 23, 2008 at 2:36

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When the questioner finds the Wiki-searchable explanation difficult to understand, yes. I found that the answer I accepted here immediately made the point clear, while the Wiki article (And it's quote) did not. – [Dustman](#) May 11, 2009 at 23:32

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