Assessment 1 - The Internet, the World Wide Web, and Social Media  
  
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**Part 1**

The Internet is amazing, informative, crazy, and sometimes a weird place. It can bring all the knowledge in the world to a person’s fingertips or it can bring them an odd video of a cat dressed as Darth Vader. The possibilities of the Internet are endless but it was not always that way. This assessment will take an in depth look at what makes up this monster called the Internet as well as how the whole thing developed through the years.

**Significant Factors & Figures**

**Internet:** A man named J.C.R. Licklider from MIT used a factor he called the “Galactic Network” plan in 1962 to fuel the idea of the Internet. His network concept was an envisioned design that included interconnected computers and databases that matches fairly well with how the world’s Internet works today in 2018. DARPA (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) also played a big role in the building of the Internet because it brought together several brilliant minds who were influenced by Licklider’s idea of interconnected systems. Ivan Sullivan, Bob Taylor and Lawrence Roberts were three prominent people who assisted Licklider with his project. Roberts was the first person to create a WAN (Wide Area Network) which connected a TX-2 computer on the East Coast in Massachusetts to a Q-32 computer on the West Coast in California. This was a major factor because it proved that computers could communicate properly by sending and receiving data and running commands but the dial-up telephone system that they were using was inadequate to say the least. (Leiner, Cerf, Clark, Kahn, Kleinrock, Lynch, Wolff, 1997)

**World Wide Web:** In 1989, Sir Tim Berners-Lee created the World Wide Web. Tim saw a growing problem at the company he worked at, CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) where he noticed that their accelerators had a hard time sharing any   
information with each other. He published a document called “Information Management: A Proposal” which was not accepted right away by anyone at CERN but Tim was given time to work on this new project in the latter half of 1990. In just a couple short months, Benders-Lee had come up with three different technologies that still stand today as the fundamental foundations of the Web: HTML (HyperText Markup Language), URI (Uniform Resource Identifier), and HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol). By 1991, the first ever webpage was created on the Internet and select people from outside the CERN community were invited to be part of the World Wide Web. A decision was made in 1993 by CERN that the code that created the World Wide Web would be available to everyone globally for no fee. This was the beginning of the Internet/World Wide Web mashup as people know it today. They became one because it combined the connectivity of the Internet with interconnected computers and the sharing capabilities with the collections that the Web provided to make an incredible universal space that was free to everyone (World Wide Web Foundation, 2012). Men like J.C.R. Licklider, Lawrence Roberts, and Tim Berners-Lee would be proud of the enhancements that have come from their initial plans because all of these men had commonalities like wanting to connect the world through a digital space. All of them had their specific piece that added to the recipe that created the connectivity of the Internet and the digital age as the world knows it today.

**Communication**

The transformation to a digital world has made people’s professional lives easier and more in sync. Communicating with co-workers and employers has become easier with the assistance of applications like Grammarly which is spell check on steroids and helps make sentences and overall structure sound and look more appealing. These tools helps people to understand the “professional” world at an expert level and have helped average people to appear and become more skillful which leads to more and better opportunities for employment and promotion.

**Part 2**

**Social Media Usage**

Social Media has revolutionized the way everyone goes about daily tasks and how they think about literally everything. People use different social outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and eBay to communicate with family, reconnect with old friends, keep up with Hollywood’s favorite celebrities, find employment, keep track of local and world news, buy goods and services, and so much more. Focusing on one particular media platform like Twitter, a person can see that it is used primarily for worldwide communication with anybody who has an account. An average user might use Twitter to see what their favorite athlete is up to in the offseason or send a funny tweet to a friend whereas a professional organization might use Twitter to promote their business, advertise deals and discounts that are currently going on, provide company contact information, or respond to customers who may be having issues. For example, a media company would be able to post a promotional video of their newest available rental equipment while also responding to a customer who tweeted them for instruction on how to use a projector they rented for a graduation party.

**Advantages & Disadvantages**

The advantages of a social platform like Twitter are seemingly endless but a few major ones would be the ability to be sitting on a couch in New York City and, with a few magical presses on a cell phone, send a message to a friend studying abroad in China. Another huge advantage is the instant availability to news, both local and worldwide. It usually only takes about an hour from the moment an incident happens for it to be readily available on Twitter. All the known details and posts from other users are right there in front of you and you are likely hundreds or thousands of miles away from where the event actually happened. It is absolutely amazing that anyone is only a few clicks away from anything they want. Business professionals can also use the advantages of Twitter to get their business recognized. There are constant viral trends that circulate among people and a lot of them are introduced by companies and brands. In fact, companies in today’s age are always looking for new and trendy ways to engage their audience which will lead to more and more posts and tweets to advertise their business and products. A company in 2018 could almost run entirely off of social media engagement. For example, there are millions of people in the world who loves sneakers. A company like Nike can post a photo on Twitter of their new shoe line being released and it spreads like wildfire among the shoe loving community, especially those who are following Nike’s account. Twitter also has features that show trending topics which could show a non-shoe loving person, who may have missed the memo, that Nike came out with a new shoe even though they are not actively part of the sneaker community. This is how companies are reaching people that they would not ordinarily reach. Obviously, every application has disadvantages as far as the functionality goes with small imperfections here and there but the glaring and overall largest disadvantage to social media, in my opinion, is that it never turns off. The brains of younger generations are constantly bombarded and consumed by media and advertisements. I hear people continually talk about “unplugging” from the world when they get an opportunity to go on vacation. This media has taken over everyone’s lives to an unhealthy point. Taking a step back and enjoying the world through eyeballs instead of 12 inches of bright phone screen is a much needed escape no matter how incredible the content is that a person is consuming. Researchers from both Florida State University and San Diego State University studied results from two surveys of young people that date back to 1991. The research concluded that 48 percent of those teens in the case that used an electronic device for at least five hours per day had thought about or attempted suicide. That number lowered to 28 percent when those young people only used the electronic device for one hour per day. Any person can see that those numbers show that everyone needs to step away from technology from time to time to remember that there is a life outside the screen (Study Finds, 2017). A possible disadvantage from an organization’s standpoint would be what the world has come to know as Twitter mobs. These mobs usually form due to a group of people being offended by something said online and they can completely ruin the reputation of a company by essentially boycotting the offensive company.

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