h SGML had been adopted
ell defined as a computer
k from many people who
d to explain that the only
it had historically been
onstrate the World Wide
Web program reading an HTML file and putting it on the screen
in a fraction of a second before people were convinced.

Some people were intrigued, but many never accepted my
argument. Rather than enter into useless debate, I simply forged
ahead with HTML and showed the Web as much as possible.
Robert and I held a few colloquia open to anyone in our divi-
sions. We also told people about it at coffee. Occasionally, a
group of people getting ready to do an experiment would call to
say they were discussing their documentation system, and ask if I
could come over and give them my thoughts about it. I'd meet a
group of maybe twenty and show them the Web, and perhaps
they wouldn't use it then, but the next time through they'd know
about it and a new server would quietly come into being.

Meanwhile, Robert and I kept putting information on the
info.cern.ch server, constantly upgrading the basic guide to new-
comers on how to get onto the Web, with specifications and
pointers to available software.

I continued to try to get other organizations to turn their
hypertext systems into Web clients. I found out about a powerful
SGML tool called Grif, developed by a research group at the
French lab INRIA, which ran on Unix machines and PCs. A com-
pany by the same name, Grif, had since been spun off in nearby
Grenoble, and I was hopeful its leaders would entertain the idea
of developing a Web browser that could also edit. They had a
beautiful and sophisticated hypertext editor; it would do graph-
ics, it would do text in multiple fonts, it would display the SGML
structure and the formatted document in two separate windows,
and allow changes to be made in either. It was a perfect match.

The only thing missing was that it didn't run on the Internet.
Same story.

I tried to persuade the people at Grif to add the software
needed for sending and receiving files over the Internet, so their
editor could become a Web browser, too. I told them I would give
them the software outright; they would just have to hook it in.
But they said the only way they would do that was if we could
get the European Commission to fund the development. They
didn't want to risk taking the time. I was extremely frustrated.
There was a growing group of people who were excited about the
possibilities of the World Wide Web, and here we had the tech-
nology for a true hypertext browser/editor mostly developed, and
we couldn't bridge the gap. Getting Commission funding would
have put eighteen months into the loop immediately. This mind-
set, I thought, was disappointingly different from the more Amer-
ican entrepreneurial attitude of developing something in the
garage for fun and worrying about funding it when it worked!

In March 1991, I released the *WorldWideWeb* program to a
limited number of CERN people who had NeXT computers. This
would at least allow them to write their own hypertext and make
the Web information that Robert and I were putting on
info.cern.ch available to them.

Word spread within the high-energy physics community,
furthered by the cross-pollinating influence of travel. In May
1991 Paul Kunz arrived for a visit from the Stanford Linear Accel-
erator (SLAC) in Palo Alto. Like me, he was an early NeXT enthu-
siast, and he had come to CERN to work on some common NeXT
programs. Since he had the right computer, he was in a position
to use the Web directly, and he loved it.

When Paul returned to SLAC he shared the Web with Louise
Addis, the librarian who oversaw all the material produced by
SLAC. She saw it as a godsend for their rather sophisticated but
mainframe-bound library system, and a way to make SLAC's
substantial internal catalogue of online documents available to