

Its unfortunate, but true. The internet is not a driving force in our economy. Its a stable mature platform on the same level as electricity, phone service and TV. You can't live without it, but don't expect it to be a catalyst for the economy. We now argue about whether new companies have a business model and can be profitable and get excited about updates rather than new competitors. Thats the sign of a stable market.

Its time to look elsewhere for that "thing" that takes us out of our economic doldrums. These blog posts created a big stir when I originally posted them. They aren't controversial anymore.

If you are young, super-smart and looking to have an impact. The internet is what your mom and dad got excited about. Find something us for all of us to rally around and change our lives. Please.

Here are the old blog posts:

[The Internet is Officially Dead & Boring – Its the economy stupid !](#)

Feb 10th 2008 2:45PM

There was a lot of discussion about my previous posts [here](#) and [here](#). My point is that the internet is a stable platform. Its a utility. Its evolved to the point where you can count on it and develop applications for it without much fear that its going to change.

What confirms my point is that with all the talk of a possible or existing recession, not a single mention is ever made about how increases in productivity from technology will pull us through. That is counter to the recessions of the past 25 years. Whether it was the early 80s, the 90's or even the post bubble , economists and others pointed to technology as a catalyst to productivity that would help pull us out of our economic doldrums.

When there were boomtimes , as we saw from about 91 to 2000, technology was given the lions' share of the credit.

So where are the claims of further productivity enhancements from technology ? They are no where that I can find.

In fact, we can start to make arguments to the contrary. That technology and in particular social network and video sites can be a hindrance to productivity in the workplace.

Further arguments can be made that the MSFT YHOO potential merger is further evidence that the technology industry is maturing.

It is what it is.

[The Internet Is still Dead and Boring](#)

Aug 27th 2007 12:08AM

I obviously hit a nerve with my last post. My index for quality of post has evolved to the number of "you suck", "broadcast.com sucks", "You got lucky", etc posts that are submitted but never confirmed. For this post it was off the charts. Good.

When people resort to personal comments. Its usually a good sign.

Among those I respect, there were a lot of great responses. Let me first say, my position on this has nothing to do with HDNet. I've not abandoned the net. In fact i have more than 100 RSS feeds and untold other sites Im involved with.

Ive been inundated with spam on Myspace. Used flicker. Used Digg for sourcing news and laughed at the unending ridiculousness of its posters. Used and posted to Youtube, Google Video, DailyMotion, Veoh, Flickr, Slideshare, used every bittorrent client, got bored with twitter after 7 minutes, signed up for other findme, find you, this is where I am, this is where you are, type app I could find, and the lists go on and on. I read techmeme, techcrunch, extremetech, and tons of other tech sites and I make a point to try every and any new site that seems the least bit plausible or interesting. I spend far far too much time on the net just to make sure I keep up and know whats going on.

Honestly, its just a bigger, more time consuming version on CompuServe Forums from back in the day (Find someone who participated in the OS/2 forums if you want to know about social networks). Only back then you didn't call People friends, they were just forum members.

I have a ton of Internet investments that you dont and wont know about.

i have loaded and used facebook apps and I have downloaded the API documentation and actually read it. I'm such an exciting guy, I downloaded Ruby on Rails and read the documentation as well. That's what Saturday Nights are for.

I have bought installed and integrated every imaginable wireless device in my house. I think its fun.

I have invested in and gotten involved with application development on Facebook. Had a serious discussion with Facebook about the revenue opportunities they could achieve if they would license their API for full scale commercial applications on other websites. For example, to me, it would be an interesting and potentially explosive business move for Yahoo to license the Facebook API for their Panama platform. I think the beauty of Facebook is that people for the first time have defined and opened up the "database of their lives". Which if integrated into an advertising platform like Panama would allow advertisers to truly

personalize ads, rather than algorithmically present ads. To me it was an interesting conversation.

I think it could change the way advertising is handled on the net. Each user could have the option to publish certain fields/objects which could be replicated/peered to the licensees of the API and then integrated into the ad serving application. When the user showed up on the licensee site, say Yahoo Finance, the ad server could present a contextual ad chosen based on the published objects within the context of the Yahoo content.

Its one of many good or bad ideas that are feasible because the net is the plain vanilla boring, never really changing platform that it is.

Guess what. When things go from exciting to stable and boring in the technology world, that's a good thing.

Call me a cynic. I feel the same way about Personal Computers. Faster processors dint do it for me. Installing Vista was a disaster till I read a copy of CPU magazine and used the OS mods they had in there to clean the junk up. Its sad but true that a 25 year old platform is more volatile than the Internet. It still takes so long to boot that for the first time since I had a Mac in 1990 I bought a Macbook and junked my Vista Laptop. My time is at a premium. The days of being concerned that if I bought a Mac there might be some apps that I could use but the wouldn't run on the Mac are long gone. Not because the Mac has an Intel processor, but because I cant really think of any new off the shelf software that I would get excited to buy.

Beyond Office and email, I spend a ton of time on the net. That boring platform that ain't gonna change and is dead in the excitement category.

What do I get excited about ?

I'm excited about Virtual Machines, [as I have written before](#), and the changes and impact they could have on all of us. I get fired up about the continuing decline in flash and hard drive prices. Its amazing to me after all these years of watching drive prices fall that I can buy more than 500gigs of drive for under 100 bucks. That i can buy a 16gig flash drive for not much more. and it still pisses me off that i have to deal with file size limits that require me to manage my email files when I back them up.

And of course I'm excited about the HDTV space and whats happening there. Maybe some people dont think peoples media consumption patterns change when 70" HDTVs are installed in their homes, I do.

Which brings me to why I said that "The Net is Dead and Boring"

The best way to sum up how I feel about the excitement and opportunities on the net compared to the many other personal and corporate technology options out there is to use a Yogi Berra quote.

"Nobody goes there anymore. It's too crowded"

When everyone is looking for gold in the same river, the best opportunities are somewhere else.

But hey, that's just me.

[The Internet is Dead and Boring](#)

Aug 24th 2007 5:53PM

A lot of people are all up and upset about my comments that the Internet is dead and boring. Well guess what, it is. Every new technological, mechanical or intellectual breakthrough has its day, days, months and years. But they don't rule forever. That's the reality.

Every generation has its defining breakthrough. Cars, TV, Radio, Planes, highways, the wheel, the printing press, the list goes on forever. I'm sure in each generation to whom the invention was a breakthrough it may have been heretical to consider those inventions "dead and boring". The reality is that at some point they stop changing. They stop evolving. They become utilities or utilitarian and are taken for granted.

Some of you may not want to admit it, but that's exactly what the net has become. A utility. It has stopped evolving. Your Internet experience today is not much different than it was 5 years ago.

That's not to say the impact of the Internet on the entire planet hasn't been off the charts. It has been. It has changed the lives of billions of people and it will continue to be a utility to billions of people. Just like cars, TVs, Radio, Planes, Highways, you get the point.

Some people have tried to make the point that Web 2.0 is proof that the Internet is evolving. Actually it is the exact opposite. Web 2.0 is proof that the Internet has stopped evolving and stabilized as a platform. Its very very difficult to develop applications on a platform that is ever changing. Things stop working in that environment. Internet 1.0 wasn't the most stable development environment. To days Internet is stable specifically because its now boring. (easy to avoid browser and script differences excluded)

Applications like Myspace, Facebook, Youtube, etc were able to explode in popularity because they worked. No one had to worry about their ISP making a change and things not working. The days of walled gardens like AOL, Prodigy and others were gone. The days of always on connections were not only upon us, but in sufficient numbers at home, work and school, that the applications ran fast enough to hold our interest and compel us to participate. In other words, the Internet stabilized. Great software was developed to run on the software.

Just as a reminder to some, Myspace, Facebook, Youtube, etc are not "the Internet". They are software applications that run on the Internet. Just like MicroSoft Excel is a software application that runs on MicroSoft and Apple operating systems.

The days of the Internet creating explosively exciting ideas are dead. They are dead until bandwidth throughput to the home reaches far higher numbers than the vast majority of broadband users get today.

Few people's **actual throughput** to their homes have increased more than 5mbps in the past 5 years, and few people's throughput (if you don't understand the difference between throughput and the marketed downstream speeds you read from your ISP, you should) to their homes will increase more than 10mbps in the next 5 years. That's not enough to define a platform that allows really smart people to come up with groundbreaking ideas.

In fact, if you index the expected growth in bandwidth consumption by applications that are heavy **LAST MILE bandwidth users (as opposed to the Internet backbone where there is plenty of bandwidth but consumers can't get to it)** vs the actual increase in **LAST MILE bandwidth** available to the home, our net effective throughput to the home could decline over the next few years. The Internet is like a highway. There is plenty of room for everyone to go as fast as the throughput will let you go, that is until the traffic forces everyone to slow down.

For some reason a lot of people don't understand that concept.

So, let me repeat, The days of the Internet creating explosively exciting ideas are dead for the foreseeable future..

The Internet is boring. That is not a bad thing. In fact it's easy to make the argument that it's a great thing. That it has become the utility that the people who worked to get it started firmly believed it would. That it finally is the platform for any number of mundane applications that are easy to write and that anyone can use and trust.

Just like wheels, printing presses, cars, TV, radio, electricity, water.....