

The Internet is Boring. Its old news.

The biggest compliment I can pay to the net and to all those pioneers who got it to this point is that its boring. It works. It's not perfect, but it works and has absolutely become a utility. We get water, electricity and now digital bits shipped to our homes. Its our choice whether to purchase any of the above, and we tend to choose all 3.

I dont get excited about enhancements made to the electrical or plumbing infrastructure and I no longer get excited about the marginal enhancements being made to our digital distribution infrastructure.

We havent seen anything new for the net itself for years.

Web 2.0 ? Not as exciting as going from Dos to Windows. Not by a long shot. Heck, its not as exciting as going from WordStar and all its keyboard combinations to WordStar 2000 was. Now that was progress !

Broadband ? Been around for years. Remember @Home ? Most of you probably cant, which shows just how long its been around. When did ISDN come and go ? Sure connections are getting faster, but the net throughput for downstream and upstream bandwidth to the home have increased by a only few Mbs IN THE LAST 10 YEARS !

The prospects for the next few years are about the same. Maybe you will get fiber to your house. Maybe not. But your connection is only as fast as the rest of the people in your neighborhood let you get. Your network connection throughput will continue to be limited not only via provider capacity constraints, but by usage of your neighbors. Its our net and it is what it is.

But what about all the new things you can do with the net ?

Web Based Applications ? Are they much more advanced than writing multi user based network applications accesible via dialup ?

And come on now, blogging ? If GeoCities had created a script to add dated journal entries and gotten rid of those ugly floating ads that made everyone hate it, would this be posted on GeoBlogMaverick ? And my goodness, if GeoCities had the foresite to add the Myspace concept of friends instead of rings and host people's media files, would we call it a revolutionary social network ? Or just a webpage and file hosting service ? Which is exactly what Myspace and other social networks are.

There is nothing "oh my god" unique that has happened on the net in forever.

What we have seen are incremental applications that have been powered by the amazing ongoing drop in pricing of PCs, hard drives, memory and BACKBONE (not last mile) bandwidth.

None of which are "the internet "

In 2000 at Broadcast.com, I remember SPLURGING and buying 500MB drives for our programmers and our servers. They cost almost 1k dollars per drive. I remember sitting with drive manufacturers and telling them that if they could get my cost down to 1 dollar PER MB, i would step up and make a big purchase. They couldnt do it.

Today ? I can buy a 4GB Compact Flash card for \$70. A Flash Drive for not much more. (By the way, when is someone going to do a box that bonds flash drives across USB ports as a single Drive ???, or let us create a HUGE ram drive using Ram Memory for video media server apps ?). I can buy 1k times as much storage as I could 6 years ago for \$175 dollars.

Back then, the PC to host those servers cost thousands of dollars ea. The applications we ran had minimum CPU requirements. Have you noticed these days that its almost impossible to NOT buy a PC that is fast enough to run any application you want to run ? Do we even pay attention to how fast processors are any more ? Are there any apps we cant run with an off the shelf PC that costs 500 bucks and has 1gb of memory ?

The net hasnt made the net better. Its better pricing, capacity and performance for all the things we use to run all the applications that attach to the net that have made the net better

Flickr, MySpace, Digg, Google, Filesanywhere.com, Goowy.com, IceRocket.com, YouTube, etc, etc, all happened and have had an impact because the cost to create each of these companies have fallen to next to nothing.

Want to create a Youtube video ? The camcorder, PC with editing ability, and home broadband connection have all fallen in price.

Want to create the next Youtube ? The cost to host and store all that video has fallen a THOUSAND times versus the cost 5 years ago. The quality of video delivery for someone with a 1 or 2mbps home broadband connection hasnt changed all that much, and where it has, its more attributable to encoding and codec enhancements than any internet throughput improvements. Of course **its not easy or cheap to scale to millions of users... because the internet itself hasnt gotten better !**

I can say without any doubt in my mind that if Overture had popularized Cost Per Click a few years earlier and costs for computing equipment were in 2000 what they are today, the hot sites of today would have been the hot sites of 2000.

Its not the net, its the applications stupid !

Falling costs to create , host and deliver digital bits enable entrepreneurs to be entrepreneurial. Kids can save enough money these days to buy a computer and create applications their friends can use and maybe even buy year round for less than they can buy a decent lawnmower to mow lawns with only in the summer. Its the brainpower that is changing our world. The internet is just a utility to deliver the digital bits they create.

I cant wait for my daughter to ask me why people used to get so excited about the internet and I can tell her that after the first few years it made no sense to me either.

The net is boring. Get over it.