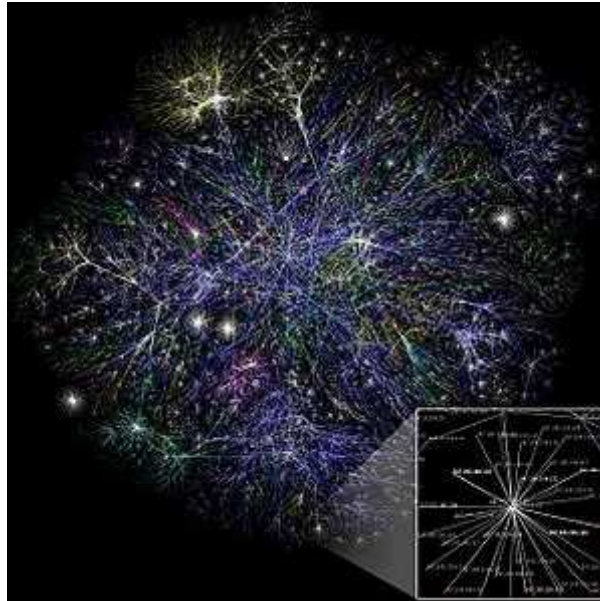


Internet



The **Internet** is a global system of interconnected computer networks that use the standard Internet Protocol Suite to serve billions of users worldwide. It is a *network of networks* that consists of millions of private and public, academic, business, and government networks of local to global scope. The Internet carries a vast array of information resources and services, of the World Wide Web (WWW) and supports electronic mail.

Most traditional communications media, such as telephone and television services, are reshaped using the technologies of the Internet. Newspaper publishing has been reshaped into Web sites, blogging, and web feeds. The Internet has enabled the creation of new forms of human interactions through instant messaging, Internet forums, and social networking sites.



The origins of the Internet reach back to the 1960s when the United States funded research projects of its military agencies to build robust, fault-tolerant and distributed computer networks. As of 2009, an estimated quarter of Earth's population uses the services of the Internet.



The Internet has made possible entirely new forms of social interaction, activities and organizing, thanks to its basic features such as widespread usability and access. Social networking websites such as Facebook and MySpace have created a new form of socialization and interaction. Users of these sites are able to add a wide variety of items to their personal pages, to indicate common interests, and to connect with others.



The Internet has been a major source of leisure since before the World Wide Web, with entertaining social experiments and humor-related Usenet groups receiving much of the main traffic. Today, many Internet forums have sections devoted to games and funny videos. Over 6 million people use blogs or message boards as a means of communication and for the sharing of ideas.

The first generation is now being raised with widespread availability of Internet connectivity, with consequences for privacy, identity, and copyright concerns.

The pornography and gambling industries have both taken full advantage of the World Wide Web. Although many governments have attempted to put restrictions on both industries' use of the Internet, this has generally failed to stop their widespread popularity.

Many use the World Wide Web to access news, weather and sports reports, to plan and book holidays and to find out more about their random ideas and casual interests. People use chat, messaging and e-mail to make and stay in touch with friends worldwide, sometimes in the same way as some previously had pen pals.

