

# Internet – how the internet has fundamentally changed

[Technology](#), [Internet](#)



Many users of this innovation have re-invented it for unexpected uses. Certainly this new tool of communication has fundamentally changed our society. When did the Internet take hold of society? The answer is as different as our society is diverse. For some it happened at school while researching for a paper. For others it happened at work when a new "communication tool" was being introduced throughout the organization. And still for others it happened through their own curiosity - just exploring a new toy. Whether it happened quickly or slowly - with little exception - it has happened.

The Internet has changed the way we work, function as a family, immunization, date, shop, seek or share information and the process in which we gain knowledge. This innovation has afforded society many benefits, as well as created some challenges. Throughout this paper, we will discuss both and how the Internet has fundamentally changed our society.

Almanacs on Work - For most adults, the Internet invaded their lives at work. Organizations found it necessary to adopt this "Information Tool" in order to move at the new speed of business. Creating a new medium for communicating across multiple departments, offices and locations.

Paper became a thing of the past as monthly newsletters and policy and procedures were quickly absorbed into web pages and internal company sites. This transition resulted in amazingly fast and up to date information. Employees could find out new information at the click of a button. The decrease in production and meeting cost was a huge benefit for businesses. On the flip side - although information was quickly disseminated - this new

medium was not always the most effective when used to communicate new information. It did not create a very participatory environment.

Initiative and Interpretation was left up to each individual seeking the information. A too so friendly monitor screen replaced opportunities for face-to-face communication. The worker could no longer read "body language" as part of the communication process. In some organizations this has left a void for demodulating, brainstorming and overall involvement. Impacts on Family - This innovation has created a new family dynamic in general, yet specifically to how families communicate. Instead of Mom and Dad yelling out the front door to come in, get a bath and do your homework - they are hollering to get off the computer.

Whether it is surfing, a game, or a chat room for your closest friends - this is today's playground. An indirect result of this new playground is that our society's children are becoming obese from lack of exercise - already glued to televisions an average of two hours a day, we now add centenary computer time to create a new generation that is not physically fit. It really comes down to the fact that the nomadic, agrarian, and even industrial periods of society required people to move around and physically work.

Now the informational period (including the Internet) has most of us stationary at home and at work! Children are, for the most part, far savvier than parents when navigating through the "Net". With our changing family unit, the Internet has created an independence for children that has never existed in our homes before. This independence makes screening children's

friends more difficult; too many true stories have been told about sexual predators enticing young people through the Internet. We would never open our front door to these people; yet they come into our home through the Internet.

This technology allows all types of information into our homes - creating huge regulatory issues significant benefit is the ability to communicate with long distance family members. This being essential with the rapidly changing, ever so busy lives we have created for ourselves. The Internet overcomes geography, war, economics - you name it - to provide the opportunity to communicate with loved ones. An example, twenty years ago men on Navy ships at sea had no communication access to family except during an emergency. Today computers with internet and e-mail are available to use daily on our Naval ships at sea.

Communication and even photos are instantaneous with immediate response time--simply amazing! Impacts on Dating - Using the Internet as a dating venue - gives new meaning to the old adage " love is blind". For many adults, with such busy lives, the opportunity to meet nice people is a challenge. The Internet creates a medium for individuals seeking companionship. It allows seekers to cross state lines, demographics, etc. To meet new prospects. Yet, here is where " the blind" thing comes into play. Log- ins, user names, or personal descriptions are not guarantees that I am the person I claim to be.

This, in general, creates many risks for active participants. This medium also assists adults who are in a long distance relationship. They are able to maintain frequent contact with one another. The "date and mate" game of life can almost be played out over the Internet. Yet, we need to ask if this new communication tool is really connecting people in a meaningful way? People are now spending less time involved in community groups like bowling leagues, civic clubs and church activities. What a shame if that which was developed to connect us to others really isolates us from real, personal, people-to-people contact.

Impacts on Learning - The Internet has obviously had a huge impact on the learning process - not only in method, but in scope of research as well. Doing research is no longer in the library at a periodical index box. It is accomplished everywhere - with limitless information at one's fingertips. Learning is no longer bound to classrooms, libraries or paper. At the same time, the knowledge consumer must be even more wary and discriminating. Many people believe information is factual because they found it on the Internet.

People need to understand that much of the Internet's information is as reliable as the billboards along our nation's interstates! Consumer beware!

The Internet's impact on how society learns is not limited to how we obtain information, but how we participate in formal programs as well. This innovation has produced "self-paced" learning. It has broadened its target audience and reached past "traditional" students. Adults who were geographically estranged from higher institutions of learning can now avail

themselves of the opportunity to complete a Master's degree from the privacy of their home with on-line courses.

These on-line classes provide a broader range of thoughts and perceptions as people enrolled are often more heterogeneous than homologous as they come from a broad geographic area as well as the usual varied career backgrounds. However, one impact of concern that is similar to our new work environment is the Internet's affect on participation. Although it creates a very accommodating learning environment, it minimizes two- way communication. Many adults are visual and interactive learners. These characteristics are sometimes missing when participating in on-line learning.

Impacts on Economics - Knowing how fast today's society moves, the opportunity to purchase products and services on-line is a significant benefit for consumers. It has altered how merchants and package providers offer services. What used to be phone or mail orders are now real time electronic orders. This has had a flourishing effect on one market and a detrimental affect on another. As consumers can now purchase anything from a car to flowers on-line - this has reduced the need for personnel.

Competitors not only compete against each other - they now compete against the Internet. Also, with this new market come security risks that affect consumers. Retail market places definitely have more competition with the new venue of the Internet. The U. S. Postal Service and long-distance phone carriers have also been impacted by the Internet as more and more communication is occurring through this medium drawing dollars

away from other providers of communication. Pander's box was finitely opened when the Internet was introduced into our society.

Weighing the above pros and cons of the Internet, should we put it back in Pander's box and close the lid? Or, should we harness it's communication powers to become a global world with a promising future? The Internet has fundamentally changed the way we communicate with each other - fast responses from one work site to another with multiple attachments, chat rooms with new friends from all around the world, on-line classrooms, and library resources around the world at our fingertips at work or home.

Communication is more rapid and more global now - thanks to the Internet!