A History of the Internet and the Digital Future

By Johnny Ryan

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This book explores the trends that are shaping the businesses, politics, and media of the digital future.
A great adjustment in human affairs is underway. Political, commercial and cultural life is changing from the centralized, hierarchical and standardized structures of the industrial age to something radically different: the economy of the emerging digital era.
A History of the Internet and the Digital Future tells the story of the development of the Internet from the 1950s to the present, and explains how the Internet has revolutionized political campaigns; how the development of the World Wide Web enfranchised a new online population of assertive, niche consumers; and how the dot-com bust taught smarter firms to capitalize on the power of digital artisans.

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Editorial Review

Review
"This is the best Western history of the Internet offered to date, but it is up to readers to connect the dots of where things may be headed."
Library Journal

*"Understanding the trends driving this revolution is pivotal to success. **Consider this book your road map** to getting there." --Marc Benioff, CEO of salesforce.com*

*"**This is a must-read for both governments and companies** who need to fully understand this shift in power." --Susanne Dirks, Leader, Global Center for Economic Development, IBM Institute for Business Value*

"Johnny Ryan has admirably captured the sweep of the Internet's development from its earliest days." -- Professor Jonathan Zittrain, Professor of Law, Harvard Law School

"Ryan dissects the play of actors, the essence of their technical ideas, and the details of their activities with documentation and diligence, and even uncovers some discrepancies. He develops a narrative that I found intriguing, enlightening, and credible."
-Dave Crocker, The Internet Protocol Journal (Cisco)

"Ryan understands the power shift that the Internet is. If you see the Internet as Ryan does, you will understand how Craigslist kills newspapers, how Facebook rises from nothing and why everything is being invented anew."

(Phil Madsen, online politics pioneer (campaign manager of Jesse Ventura, 1998))

"Ryan describes a fundamental shift and dispersion of power from traditional centres of power to the networked individual. This is a must-read for both governments and companies who need to fully understand this shift in power and the implications it has on how they interact with the networked individuals who represent their citizens, customers, suppliers."– Susanne Dirks, Leader, Global Centre for Economic Development(IBM Institute for Business Value)

(Susanne Dirks)

"Johnny Ryan has admirably captured the sweep of the Internet's development from its earliest days, showing us how its profound impact is in part an accident of history, a phenomenon whose most interesting and liberating aspects could fade without reinforcement of its core values."– Jonathan Zittrain, author of *The Future of the Internet – And How to Stop It*

(Jonathan Zittrain)

"Thanks to the proliferation of cloud services, ubiquitous, low-cost bandwidth, and new devices like smartphones and the iPad, there are fewer obstacles to innovation than ever before. In the next decade, the 'office' need not be much more than an Internet connection. Johnny Ryan takes us through the history of the

Internet to demonstrate how it has changed everything. But that's not all; he also identifies what's to come in the future.We are in a new era of transformation that has been powered by the Internet. Understanding the trends driving this revolution is pivotal to success. Consider this book your road map to getting there."–Marc Benioff, Chairman and ceo of salesforce.com

(Marc Benioff)

"Both an enormously useful work and a great read. Read it and understand what has made the Internet different."–TimWu, Columbia Law School

(Tim Wu)

"Amidst the RANDs and ARPANETs, the dates and somewhat dry details, and the numerous footnotes (the book is about as well-researched as any I've read), Ryan weaves in stories. These stories are what make this such a wonderful read. . . . Ryan's stories and analogies serve several functions—first they make the book interesting and accessible. Second, the historical references put the Internet and all its technology into perspective and suggest that while inventions/technologies may change, people and the way people react to these technologies pretty much stay the same. . . . *A History of the Internet and the Digital Future* is a thoughtful book that is well researched and well written. The stories and historical references add color and life to the text and help show important cultural connections between today's digital age and earlier times." (*PopMatters.com*)

"The WikiLeaks saga may have drawn us into new, and scary, galaxies of cyberspace, but this survey of the online story so far offers a handy catch-up that will prove a boon to geeks and dabblers alike."

(*Independent*)

"An engrossing, well-written account of the Internet's founding and the backstory of the underlying protocols and plumbing, which draws on that rich history to make predictions about the net's future."

(Cory Doctorow *Boing Boing*)

From the Author

The Internet, like many readers of this book, is a child of the industrial age. Long before the arrival of digital communications, the steam engine, telegraph pole and coalmine quickened the pace of the world. Industrialized commerce, communications and war spun the globe ever faster and increasingly to a centripetal beat. Control in the industrial- ized world was put at the centre. The furthest reaches of the globe came under the sway of centres of power: massive urbanization and a flight from the land created monstrous cities in the great nations; maritime empires brought vast swathes of the globe under the sway of imperial capitals. The training of workmen, the precise measurement of a pistol barrel's calibre, the mass assembly of automobiles, all were regimented, standardized in conformity with the centripetal imperative. The industrial revolution created a world of centralization and organized hierarchy. Its defining pattern was a single, central dot to which all strands led. But the emerging digital age is different.

A great adjustment in human affairs is under way. The pattern of political, commercial and cultural life is changing. The defining pattern of the emerging digital age is the absence of the central dot. In its place a mesh of many points is evolving, each linked by webs and networks. This story is about the death of the centre and the development of com- mercial and political life in a networked system. It is also the story about the coming power of the networked individual as the new vital unit of effective participation and creativity.

At the centre of this change is the Internet, a technology so unusual and so profoundly unlikely to have been created that its existence would be a constant marvel were it not a fact of daily life. No treatise or arch plan steered its development from beginning to end. Nor did its success come from serendipity alone, but from the peculiar ethic thatemerged among engineers and early computer lovers in the 1960s and '70s, and through the initiative of empowered users and networked communities. The combination of these elements has put power in the hands of the individual, power to challenge even the state, to compete for markets across the globe, to demand and create new types of media, to subvert a society - or to elect a president.

We have arrived at the point when the Internet has existed for a suf- ficiently long time for a historical study to reveal key characteristics that will have an impact on business, politics and society in the coming decades. Like all good histories, this book offers insight into the future by understanding the past. The first section of this book (Chapters 1-4) examines the concepts and context from which the Internet emerged. The second section (Chapters 5-9) traces how the technology and cul- ture of networking matured, freeing communities for the first time in human history from the tyranny of geography in the process. This section also describes the emergence of the Web and the folly of the dot- com boom and bust. The final section (Chapters 10-13) shows how the defining characteristics of the Internet are now transforming culture, commerce and politics.

Three characteristics have asserted themselves throughout the Internet's history, and will define the digital age to which we must all adjust: the Internet is a centrifugal force, user-driven and open. Under- standing what these characteristics mean and how they emerged is the key to making the great adjustment to the new global commons, a political and media system in flux and the future of competitive creativity.

From the Back Cover
This story is about the death of the center and the development of commercial and political life in a networked system. It is also the story about the coming power of the networked individual as the new vital unit of effective participation and creativity. Understanding the trends revealed in this story is the key to adapting to the new global commons, a political and media system in flux, and the future of competitive creativity.

This book takes the reader on a path through some of the most interesting events and documents of the last century, from President Kennedy's nuclear scenario war game planning, to Warran Buffet's I-told-you-so letter to shareholders in the aftermath of the dot com bust, this is not only a history, but like all good histories, tells us where we are bound in the future.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alberta Townsend:

This A History of the Internet and the Digital Future are generally reliable for you who want to certainly be a successful person, why. The reason of this A History of the Internet and the Digital Future can be one of several great books you must have is usually giving you more than just simple looking at food but feed you actually with information that probably will shock your before knowledge. This book is actually handy, you can bring it all over the place and whenever your conditions in e-book and printed versions. Beside that this A History of the Internet and the Digital Future giving you an enormous of experience like rich vocabulary, giving you test of critical thinking that we all know it useful in your day task. So , let's have it and revel in reading.

Glenn Remaley:

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Richard Vaccaro:

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them loved ones or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or perhaps playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity this is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day every day to reading a reserve. The book A History of the Internet and the Digital Future it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can m0ore effortlessly to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not to fund but this book offers high quality.

Albert Lightner:

In this age globalization it is important to someone to acquire information. The information will make a professional understand the condition of the world. The fitness of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of references to get information example: internet, newspapers, book, and soon. You can view that now, a lot of publisher in which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended for your requirements is A History of the Internet and the Digital Future this reserve consist a lot of the information from the condition of this world now. This kind of book was represented just how can the world has grown up. The vocabulary styles that writer require to explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some investigation when he makes this book. Here is why this book appropriate all of you.

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