



An Internet 2020 Initiative: "The Internet is (still) for Everyone"

Introduction:

The Internet Society (ISOC) has been operating in recent years according to a very successful strategic plan and our opportunities have expanded due to our increasingly stable financial base. Therefore, ISOC desires to extend its activities and address some of the long term, difficult and/or intractable issues facing the Internet in its on-going development while continuing to hold to our core principles

<http://www.isoc.org/isoc/mission/principles/>.

The ISOC Board of Trustees have determined to take a long term (10-15 year) view, with a focus on supporting the demands of future users including issues of usability, trust and capacity.

We remain committed to the openness that ensures equal access and full participation for every user. Just as the vision for the Internet in the early 1970s represented advances over the telecommunications system of that era, the vision for Internet 2020 should focus on advances over the existing Internet of today. This effort requires that ISOC have a strong strategic vision of what that future Internet environment might require. Such a long term vision will serve as a platform for an open discussion on technology, governance, access, and usability.

The Internet in 2020 will be fundamentally more advanced than the Internet of today but must maintain its ability to inter-operate with existing deployed and evolving technology base. It will deliver a trusted and very user friendly service. It will be able to support commercial initiatives, small and large, while at the same time guarding the privacy and rights of the user. It will offer open access to more people around the world and will support a high degree of internationalization. It will be pervasive in all sorts of devices and services, supporting both micro appliances and terabit applications. It will be faster, smarter, and hungrier, capable of advanced simulations and complex graphics displays based on real-time data. This network must address the concerns of users, businesses, and governments, and still be global and open.

We envision that in 2020 the Internet will be...

- A fully connected global mesh, allowing every node to both send and receive as needed;
- The primary delivery mechanism for voice, media, and data services.
- An economically strong and well-integrated environment, fostering local businesses, regional cooperation and global interaction;
- A central platform for Education, Research, and shared Knowledge Resources;
- A major hub of civic, cultural and commercial life;
- A Global sensor network providing monitoring, reporting, and notification capabilities across the board;
- Universally available to anyone, regardless of location, language, or economic status;
- A community that values and protects individual privacy;
- A safe and secure place to share information and to transact business.

- The primary access point for comprehensive health and governmental services;
- A forum for involved citizenry that actively participates in public policy and decision making;
- A community that recognizes individual differences and provides multiple means for participation;

Barriers to be overcome:

The Internet as it stands now faces many challenges. These "growing pains" are limiting the overall effectiveness of the existing Internet and its usefulness for individual users, their organization and communities. In the near term some of these issues are becoming increasingly irritating. In the long term, some will limit the sustained growth of the Internet itself. For example, a good summary of the top problems can be found at:

<http://www.caida.org/publications/presentations/2005/topproblemsnet/topproblemsnet.pdf>

None of these problems are purely technical. All require solutions that have to be developed in a multidisciplinary fashion. However the required research and innovation is not (and perhaps can not) happening within the current Internet. The Internet as it is currently deployed is a global enterprise and revolutionary innovations are difficult to insert into the production environment. Many innovations are also driven by factors that do not include a clear and comprehensive vision of the future but rather reflect current economic necessity. However, the solutions to these problems, even if developed independently, must transition seamlessly into the evolving Internet and enable its progressive transformation into Internet 2020.

Opportunities:

A strategic vision for Internet 2020 should address the issues of today, as well as the new issues arising in technology, usability, governance and civil society, economics, capacity building, internationalization, privacy and security, and a host of other areas. The vision should be all encompassing and global in perspective, and not limited to any one issue. That vision should recognize the full range of interested parties sharing the Internet commons and should support forums for participation by all of the stake holders.

ISOCs' Contribution:

The current set of ISOC activities will provide a platform upon which to build the Internet 2020 dialog. ISOC is uniquely positioned between the technology and policy communities and can champion the best solutions through standards development, education, and participation in international forums, as well as our policy activities.