THE INTERNET AND THE NEEDS OF THE SOCIETY.

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ABSTRACT
There is no doubt the internet is a wondrous creation. The Internet creates new ways for people to communicate, congregate and share information. It is obvious that the internet has and will continue to change the way we live. Summarily, the internet meets four primary needs of the society-communication, knowledge sharing, commerce and entertainment. This paper explores the use of internet to meet the above needs of the society; major areas of concern and threat to their usage were also considered.

Keywords: Internet; Society; Communication; Entertainment Industry; Knowledge Sharing; Commerce.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Internet is the largest electronic network in the world. It is really a global network of networks. It is an open-end network of computer and communication networks that now encircle the globe, with its greatest concentration of networks, computers and users located in the United State. It continues to grow through the addition of new networks, computers, and user connections at a rate that far outstrips any previous growth trend associated with modern information technology. Its place is both nowhere and everywhere: there is no single administrative authority that owns, controls or manages it, yet its users clearly benefit from access to information resources and services from around the world that can be brought to their desktop computer and fingertips.

2.0 PRIMARY NEEDS OF THE SOCIETY
2.1 COMMUNICATION ON THE INTERNET

Communication is the most popular use of the Internet, with email topping the list of all the technologies used. Some of the types of communication technologies used also include email discussion groups, usenet news, chart groups, and Internet Relay Chart (IRC). These are unique to networked computer environments and have come into wide popularity because of the Internet. Other technologies, including video and audio conferencing and Internet telephony, are also available on the Internet. They require more multimedia capabilities of computer systems and are more taxing of network resources than the others. They also are adaptations of other technologies to the Internet [8].

Most of the technologies that are unique to the Internet require communication to be done in text - letters with some symbols and punctuation. Communicating effectively involves taking the time, except in informal communications, to use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation and writing an appropriate message. When replying to a message, include the pertinent parts of the message and use an appropriate and interesting subject header in any case.

When you are communicating on the Internet, take care not to give out personal information to strangers and to treat others with respect. Be aware of the risks involved in communicating with people you cannot see and may never meet in person. Take time to consider what you write to others, and be careful to avoid humor and sarcasm except with the best of friends. You can't assume that your messages are private, so be careful about what you write.

Several issues related to ethical and legal considerations arise from using the Internet for communication. The manner in which communication is implemented on the Internet makes it susceptible to monitoring. You can't assume that communications are private. Some believe that sending email is like sending a message on a post card. Some laws have been enacted to help protect privacy during electronic communications. These, however, have been difficult to enforce and are rarely applied. One way to protect privacy is to encrypt or code a message. A common way of encrypting messages is through the use of public and private keys. Although software for encryption is readily available, current policies and laws prohibit its export.

Another area of concern is dealing wit abusive or offensive communications. Laws that apply to libel, harassment and abuse have been applied to cases where the offending behaviour has occurred on the internet. Unsolicited email or other forms of communication is called spam. It definitely is an annoyance, but also quiet costly to the people who receive the junk email or other communication. It is relatively inexpensive to produce, because most of the cost of transporting the email is shifted to the receiver and all people that use the networks supporting the Internet [8].

2.2 INTERNET AND ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

The role of television, radio and other such devices that were used to a large extent in the last few decades have all been replaced by modern and state of the art device that are now able to provide for all the entertainment needs of the people from all over the world. These days, the internet and computers are being used for the entertainment needs of the people from all over the world.

These days, though music and sports form an important aspect of the entertainment of people, there are many new devices that are now used for the entertainment. There are several methods in which you will be able to use these devices for satisfying your entertainment needs.

The online games are one of the best methods that you can use for the entertainment. The internet is a place where there are thousands of games that are available on various sites. As there are so many games available, a person will be able to make a choice between the one he is interested in and the one he is not interested in.

Even music is available on the internet. Movies can be downloaded from the internet too. There are certain sites on the internet that can be used for the downloading of the movies and the music files. You can play these anytime you want after downloading the files. This is one of the best methods of getting all your entertainment needs to be met.

All these have been very useful for the people to have good entertainment. As the days go by, there are many more methods of getting entertained because there are newer methods that are being used. Since the computers are portable, people can also use the internet and the computer to have a lot of entertainment on the move.

Apart from doing some serious work on the internet, you can also entertain yourself by availing its entertainment services. Several websites offer free music and videos, which you can download and play on your computer. The concept of distributing such entertainment services originated from the popularity of the Kazaa.com website that offered free music to its subscribers. Following into the Kazaa.com footsteps, many websites such as planet M, Amazon and yahoo started providing such facilities to their users. Some websites adopt music and video as the primary product for e-commerce, where the users can place orders for CDs and DVDs online. If you are downloading music or video files from the Internet, you must have a download accelerator software such as FlashGet, which helps you download the files quickly. The download time also depends on the speed of the Internet connection and the type of network you are using [11].

2.3 INTERNET AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The pressure to transform our institutions of learning continues. Virtually every enterprise and institution is grappling with the disruptions and opportunities caused by Web-enabled infrastructures and practices. New best practices, business models, innovations, and strategies are emerging, including new ways to acquire, assimilate, and share knowledge. Using technologies that are already developed or that will be deployed in the future, best practices in knowledge sharing not only are diffusing rapidly but will be substantially reinvented in all settings: educational institutions, corporations, government organizations, associations, and nonprofits. But institutions of learning are in a unique position to benefit from an added opportunity: providing leadership in e-knowledge [9].

Anyone who spends some time on the web cannot have failed to notice the new wave of opportunities and to a lesser extent threats. The web is basically being used in different ways to reach out to people of all kinds and it is intriguing the way things are going. It makes the web look and feel flat. The evolving Internet has led to the continuous fall of the dot com craze and replaced leading to the next generation of web applications. YouTube is a classic example of how the next generation websites have taking over the Internet.

With Facebook, Myspace, Flicker, Twitter, Blogs and YouTube, you can expect nothing but a new world of reaching out to people and hence a way of sharing knowledge to both the deprived and people who can afford. This new web experience is what Tim O' Reilly termed as web 2.0 in 2004. Because of the complex nature of this new phenomenon of sharing knowledge, it became very difficult for everyone else to agree on one definition for web 2.0

The Wikipedia defines web 2.0 as "perceived second generation of web-based communities and hosted services such as social networking sites, wikis and folksonomies - which facilitates collaboration and sharing between user." This may be the best ever definition of what web. 2.0 is. Another generation of web applications is video blogging. Video blogging are just another innovative way of using the blog. Blogs are defined as the published text of an author's thoughts with entries displayed in a reverse chronology. Readers can subscribe to it, link to it, post comments and share links. The Ghana Information Networks for knowledge sharing (GINKS) has been using this technology as a leverage to share knowledge to its audience with considerable success. The GINKS aims at creating a platform for institutions and individuals to dialog and share experience in order to maximize the potential of ICT tools for socio-economic development. Until its inception ICT professionals, decision maker and advocates in Ghana had very few options for linking with other colleagues to share best practices, lessons and network with each other to dialog on pertinent issues that pertain to the evolving ICT industry in Ghana. GINKS has brought together individuals and groups interested in ICT4D and has helped fill the vacuum for knowledge sharing by creating both online and offline space where discussions can be held, lessons can be shared and best practices transferred to promote ICT for development in Ghana.

Another popular method of sharing knowledge on the net is called Vlogging. The term video blogging or Vlogging means making videos and posting them on the internet with the intention of getting a response from viewers. It is important to note here that you have to be passionate about vlogging on a particular issue to do a creative vlog. This is so because it makes you think about all the creative possibilities of doing a perfect vlog that conveys well the information you are about to post.

To do a video blog, the first thing that comes to mind is to get a video of an individual or group telling a story or doing an illustration. The raw video is then edited using various video editing software programs such as Apple's iMovie, FinalCut Pro and Windows Movie Maker. With these editing programs it is easy to edit your videos by giving them titles and doing other changes that make your video very interesting. It is important to allow a third party to check the video to make sure it is interesting and good to post.

The next thing to do after editing the video is to upload it unto a video site on the Internet. Some of the common sites for hosting such videos are google video, YouTube www.blip.tv. From these spaces, you can then share your videos with the public. On your blog, it is imperative to transcribe the video you have just uploaded into text to give it meaning.

Vlogging has the power to reach an unlimited audience with minimal cost which is interesting indeed because it gives the opportunity to the poor to also tell their story. The vlogging process furthermore requires no specialized expertise and can be easily controlled by any

non-technical person meaning it is technologically simpler and cheaper to maintain than a website.

2.4 INTERNET AND COMMERCE

The internet is a different sales medium with some direct sales and some retail characteristics. Electronic commerce over the internet had been predicted to grow at an ever-increasing rate some years back with on-line sales already heading for several billion. Many companies are using this new sales channel, and a few retailers now have established major on-line sales site. There have been some successes, particularly in technology business –to-business and niche markets [10].

Most companies with an internet presence have a straight forward marketing site. The objective of the site is to supplement traditional marketing activities, perhaps give additional information, and generally promote the company. There is often a reluctance to give complete product details because the objective is to induce visitors to call or write to the company for more information and thus establish contact.

A selling site is different. The objective is to close the sale electronically with payment (and sometimes delivery) made over the Internet. This type of site will be designed to include comprehensive product information, as visitors will be expected to make a purchasing decision based on the information presented. Such sites generally have three sections:

a) Marketing and added value information. This is aimed at attracting customers, giving them a feel for the contents, and giving them confidence in the retailer.

b) The catalog- Detailed information on product benefits, specifications, and pricing.

c) Order processing- This will include a method for specifying and paying for the order. More advanced systems may have a method for the customer to go back into the system to check progress and delivery of the order. These sites may be stand –alone, or may form part of a larger retailing site called a 'shopping mall'.

Electronic commerce is a new form of marketing that has recorded an explosive growth over the last few years. The technology underlying the market is quiet complex, and will become more so as new payment methods and web technologies come on stream. The marketing approach is also new and different. The key to success is to find innovative ways to use that technology to attract customers and build business.

3.0 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORKS.

There is little doubt about how useful the Internet can be. Internet and society is a research field that addresses the interrelationship of Internet and Society. This study had enumerated four primary areas in which Internet has , Computer Performance and Security.

helped to meet the needs of the society. I believe that with the rate at which the field of internet is expanding, in the nearest future it will meet more of the needs of the society.

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