

# HOW LIBRARIES CAN SURVIVE IN THE NEW INFORMATION ECOLOGY

They can be “friends” in people’s social  
networks

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**Barcelona - 5.19.10**

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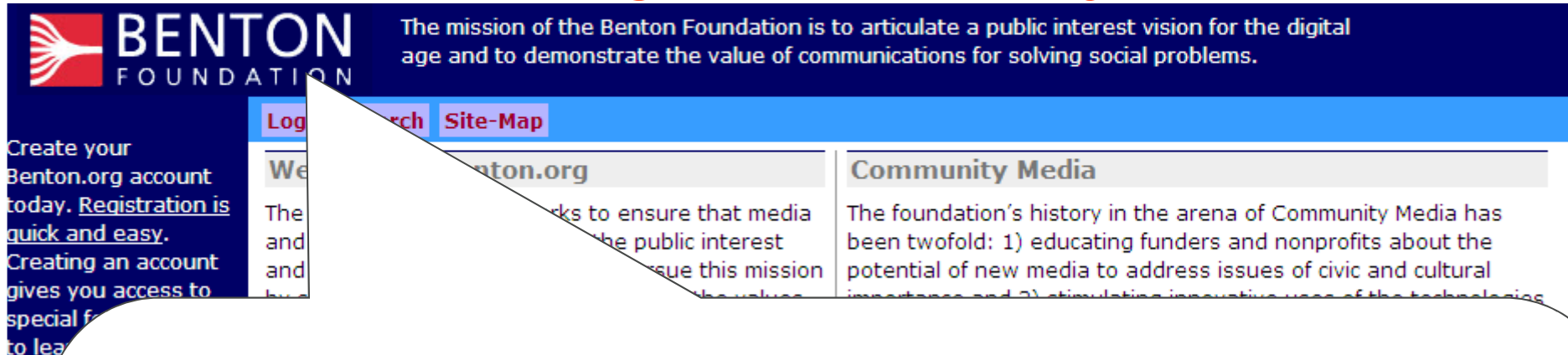
# Apology



# Confession / Atonement



# 1996 Benton Foundation report: “Buildings, books, and bytes”



"If you plopped a library down. . .30 years from now. . .there would be cobwebs growing everywhere because people would look at it and wouldn't think of it as a legitimate institution because it would be so far behind. . ."

-- Experienced library user.

# New information ecosystem: **Then** and **Now**

## Industrial Age

Info was:

Scarce

Expensive

Institutionally  
oriented

Packaged for  
consumption

## Information Age

Info is:

Abundant

Cheap

Personally  
oriented

Designed for  
participation

# The internet is the change agent

## Then and now in U.S.A.

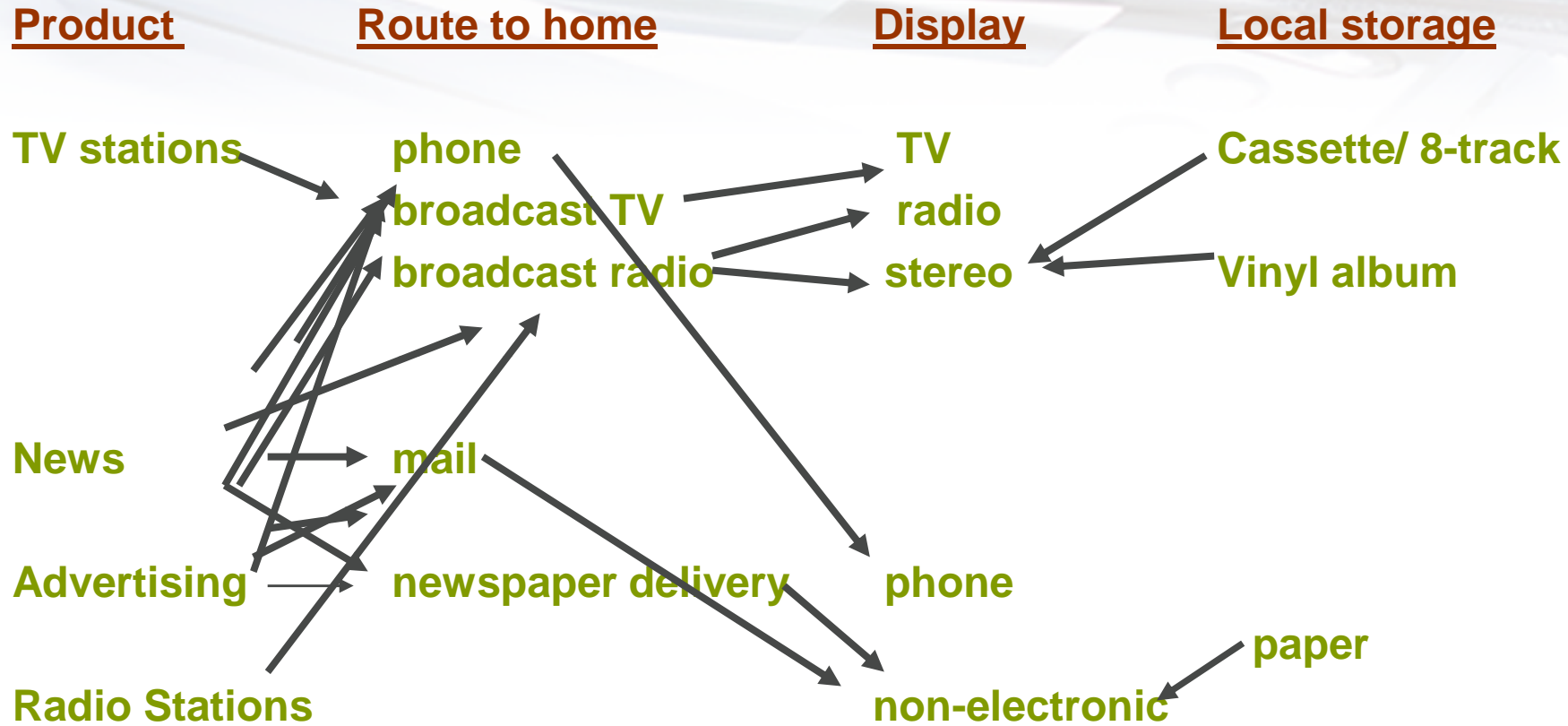
2000

46% of adults use internet  
5% with broadband at home  
50% own a cell phone  
0% connect to internet wirelessly  
<10% use “cloud”  
= slow, stationary connections built around my computer

2010

75% of adults use internet  
62% with broadband at home  
80% own a cell phone  
53% connect to internet wirelessly  
>two-thirds use “cloud”  
= fast, mobile connections built around outside servers and storage

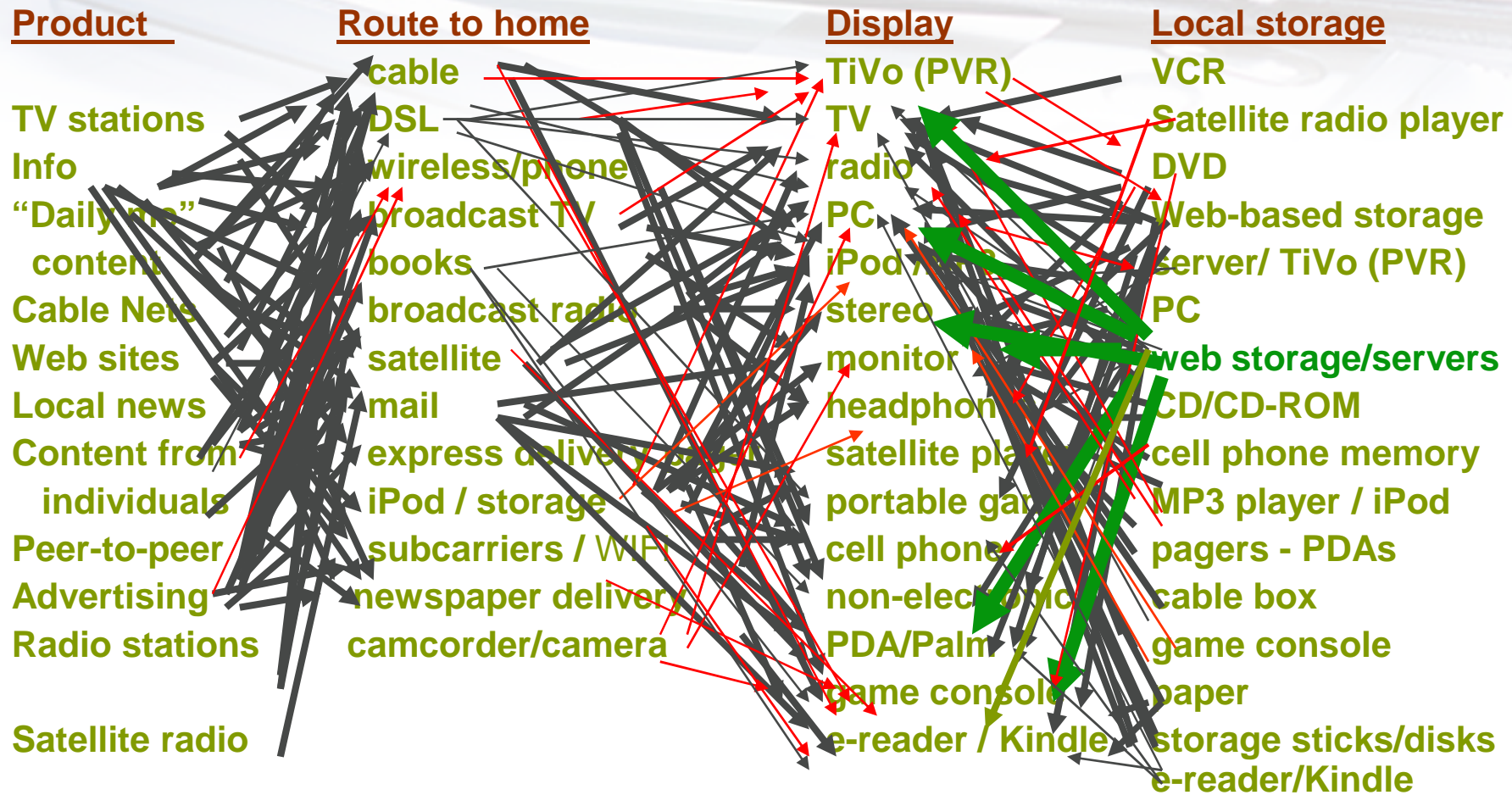
# Media ecology – then (industrial age)



Tom Wolzien, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co



# Media ecology – now (information age)



Adapted from Tom Wolzien, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co



# Media ecology – now (information age)

Product

Route to home

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Use

TV stations

Info

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Ubiquitous computing age  
Cloud computing  
“Internet of things”

sticks/disks

e-reader/Kindle

Adapted from Wolzien, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co

## Media ecology – now (information age)

Product

Route to home

TV station

Info

“Daily

cont

Satellite radi

... and this all affects social networks

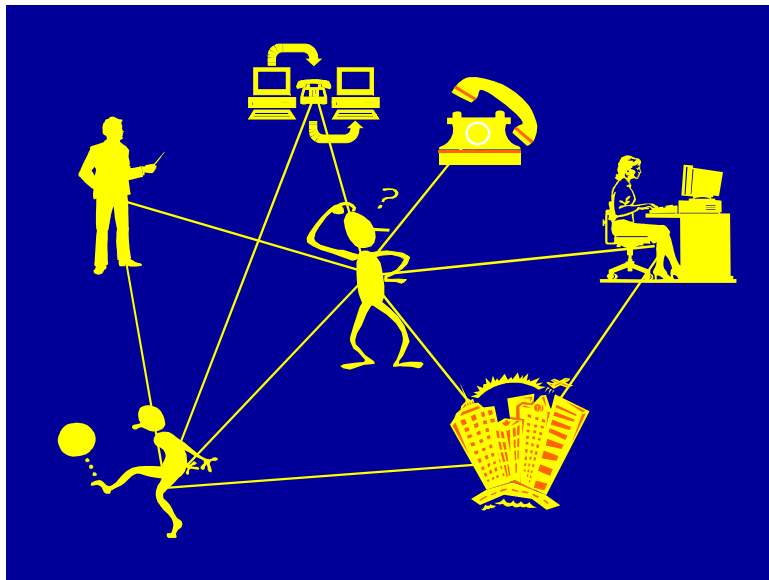
- 1) their composition
- 2) the way people use them
- 3) their importance
- 4) the way organizations – *especially libraries* – can play a part in them

Adapted from Wolzien, Sanford C. Bernstein & Co

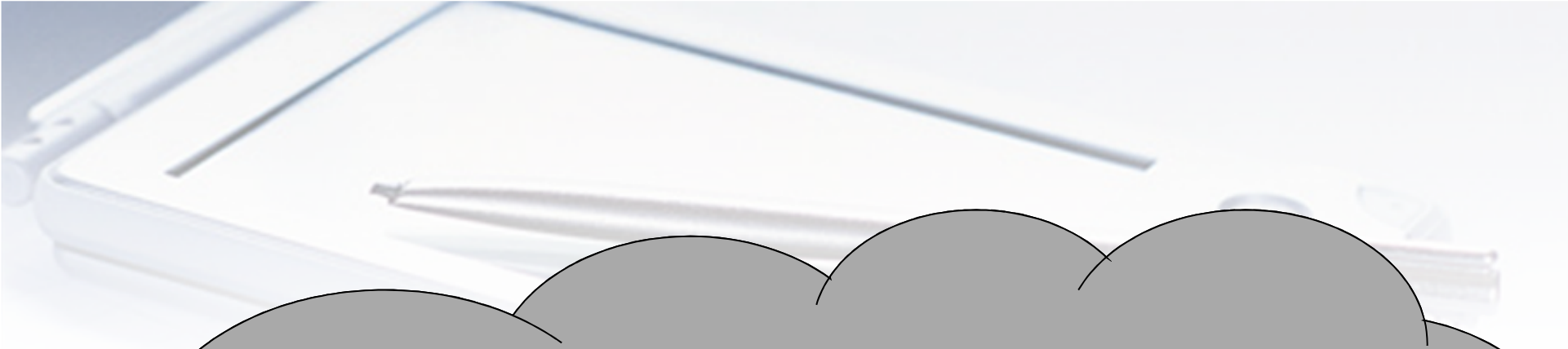
# Behold the idea of networked individualism

## Barry Wellman – University of Toronto

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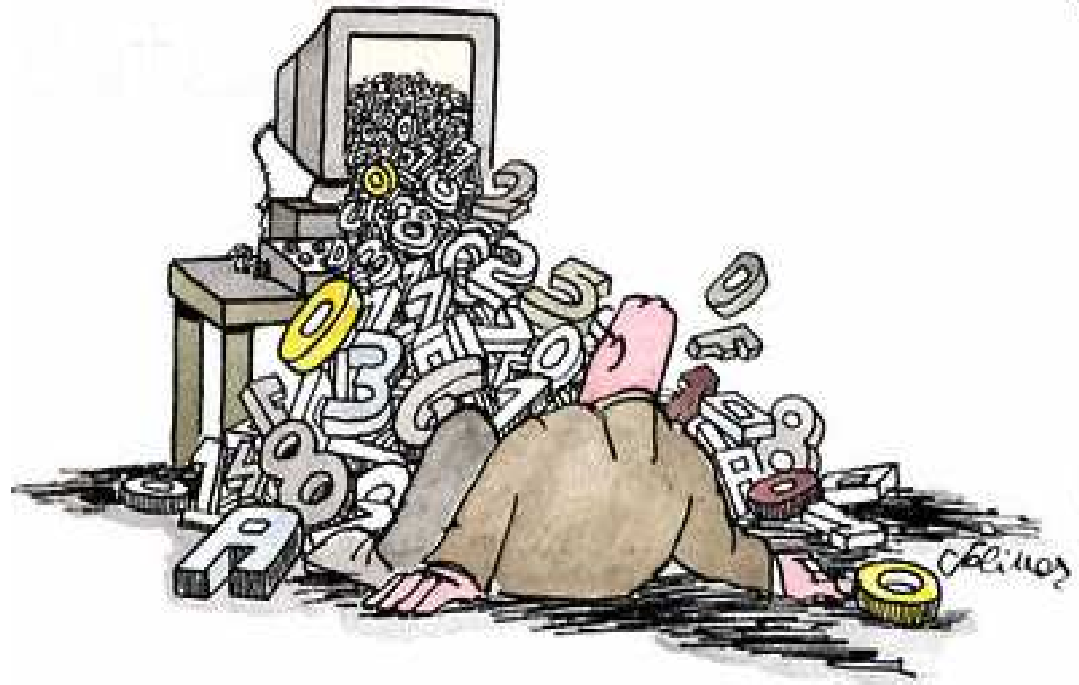
The turn from  
groups to social  
networks = a  
new social  
operating  
system



**8 ways the inform and  
influence ecosystem has  
changed in the digital age and  
pushed along networked  
individualism**

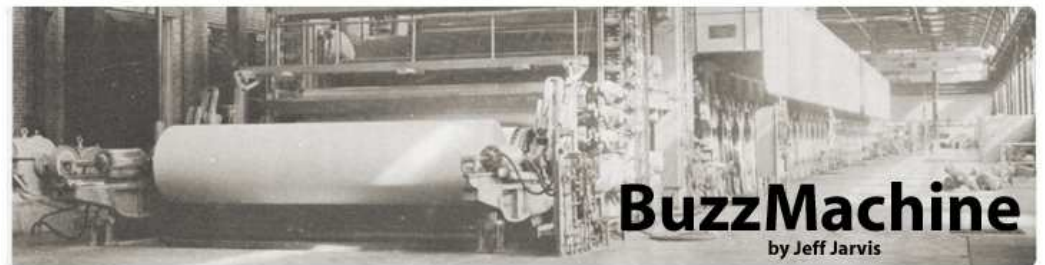
# Information ecosystem change – 1

**Volume** of  
information  
grows



## Information ecosystem change – 2

The **variety** of info sources increases and democratizes and the **visibility** of new creators is enhanced in the age of social media.



### Broadband nation

December 7th, 2008

I've been offline in a UK castle with wi-fi only in the basement (but I suppose that's a miracle) and then in a Holiday Inn (what a fall) with gawdawful and gawdawfully expensive so-called broadband so I'll take this opportunity while sitting in the Apple store (bless it) to just join in the chorus of celebration that Barack Obama pledged to fix our gawdawful broadband status in America. Now let's speculate about just how ambitious we can be.

At the conference I just attended (a few posts on that later, when I can be online for more than two minutes) there was talk of trying to tax broadband providers here to subsidize (or some would say compensate) content creators. I think that's bassackwards.



XML

#### General

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- » [Rules of Engagement](#)



# Social networking



**57% of online adults use social network sites**  
**73% of online teens use them**

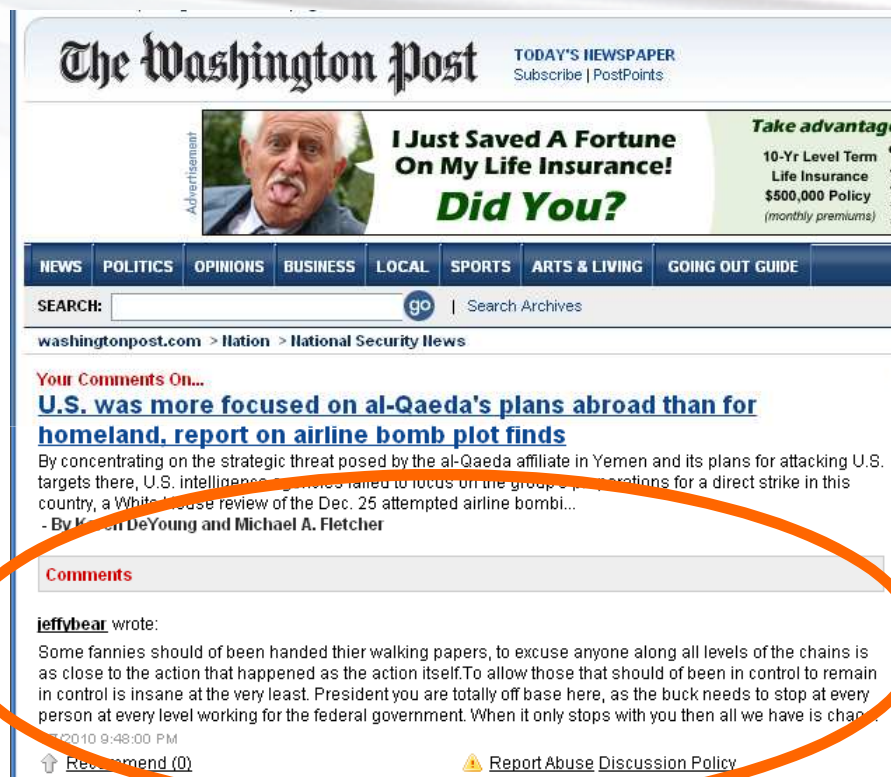
## Picture sharing

flickr®



**~50% of online adults post pictures online**  
**~70% of online teens do that**

# Posting comments on websites/blogs



The Washington Post TODAY'S NEWSPAPER  
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**Take advantage**

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Life Insurance	4C
\$500,000 Policy	4E
(monthly premiums)	5C
	5E

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**Your Comments On...**

**U.S. was more focused on al-Qaeda's plans abroad than for homeland, report on airline bomb plot finds**

By concentrating on the strategic threat posed by the al-Qaeda affiliate in Yemen and its plans for attacking U.S. targets there, U.S. intelligence agencies failed to focus on the group's preparations for a direct strike in this country, a White House review of the Dec. 25 attempted airline bombi...

- By **Ken DeYoung** and **Michael A. Fletcher**

**Comments**

**jeffbear** wrote:

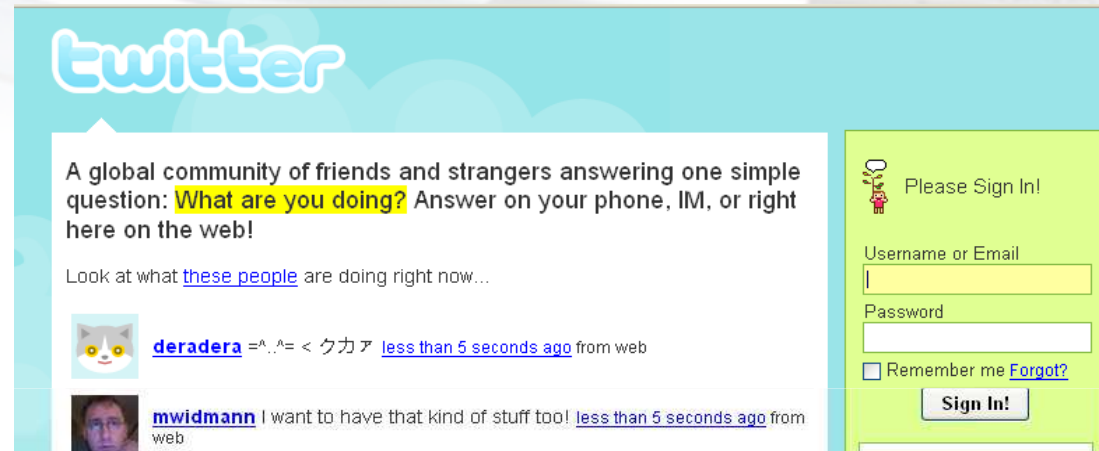
Some fannies should of been handed thier walking papers, to excuse anyone along all levels of the chains is as close to the action that happened as the action itself.To allow those that should of been in control to remain in control is insane at the very least. President you are totally off base here, as the buck needs to stop at every person at every level working for the federal government. When it only stops with you then all we have is chan...

10/10 9:48:00 PM

Recommend (0) Report Abuse Discussion Policy

**26% of adults post comments on sites**

# Twitter



**19% of adults use Twitter or other status update methods**  
**8% of teens use them**

# Blogs

## LiveJournal.com

[Home](#) [News](#) [Create Journal](#) [Modify Journal](#) [Download](#) [Directory](#) [Support](#)

### What is LiveJournal.com?

LiveJournal.com is a **free service** here on the Internet that allows you to create and customize your very own "live journal" ... an up-to-the-minute log of whatever you're doing, when you're doing it. It's free, it's fun, it's easy to use!



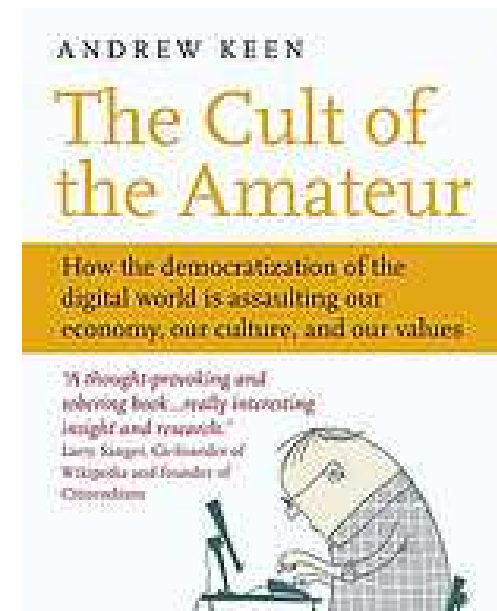
### How do I use my LiveJournal?

**11% of online adults keep blogs**  
**14% of online teens keep them**  
**>40% of internet users read blogs**

## Information ecosystem change – 3

People's **vigilance**  
for information  
changes in two  
directions:

- 1) attention is  
truncated (Linda  
Stone)
- 2) attention is  
elongated (Andrew  
Keen; Terry Fisher)





## Information ecosystem change – 4

**Velocity** of  
information  
increases and  
smart mobs  
emerge

YAHOO! GROUPS



Best of Yahoo! Groups



★ Best of all Yahoo! Groups

Featured Group



**Ask Liz Ryan**

An online community based on the workplace, work/life and networking advice of author, commentator and advisor Liz Ryan. Use this group to get advice from Liz and from group members on careers, business, networking and work/life issues. Supporting working people at the intersection of work and life.

Search for a group:

Search

**84% of online adults are in a group with online presence**  
**~50% belong to listservs or regular group emails**  
**~40% get email- or text-alerts**

## Information ecosystem change – 5

**Venues** of intersecting with information *and* people multiply and the **availability** of information expands to all hours of the day and all places people are



## Information ecosystem change – 6

The **vibrance** and immersive qualities of media environments makes them more compelling places to hang out and interact  
-- Metaverse Roadmap Project

### 1) Augmented Reality



# Information ecosystem change – 6

The **vibrance** and immersive qualities of media environments makes them more compelling places to hang out and interact

-- Metaverse Roadmap Project

## 2) Mirror Worlds



# Information ecosystem change – 7

**Valence** (relevance) of information improves – search and customization get better as we create the “Daily Me” and “Daily Us”

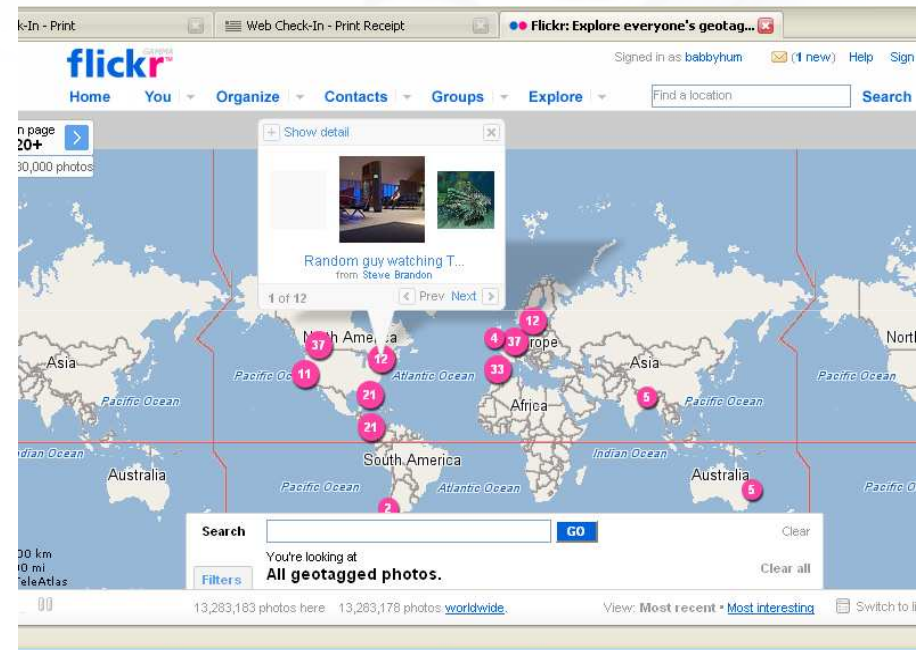


**~40% of online adults get RSS feeds**  
**~35% customize web pages for info they want**



## Information ecosystem change – 8

**Voting** on and  
**ventilating** about  
information  
proliferates as  
tagging, rating, and  
commenting occurs  
and collective  
intelligence asserts  
itself




**31% of online adults rated person, product, service**



## What technology has done to social networks and the role libraries can play in them

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- Made it possible for organizations **like libraries** to become “nodes” in people’s networks that can help them solve problems and make decisions
- Allowed for immediate, spontaneous creation of networks **that can include libraries**
- Given people a sense that there are more “friends” their networks **like librarians** that they can access when they have needs



New ecosystem has changed the role that librarians can play in social networks

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## The four-step flow of information

- attention
- acquisition
- assessment
- action



How do you....

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- get his/her attention?
  - use your traditional services (they still matter!)
  - offer alerts, updates, feeds
  - be available in “new” places
  - find pathways to people through their social networks



## How do you....

---

- help him/her acquire information?
  - make sure to offer services and media in many places
  - find new ways to distribute your collections
  - point people to good material through links
  - participate in conversations about your work with your patrons



How do you....

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- help him/her assess information?
  - exploit your skills in knowing the highest quality material
  - aggregate the best related work
  - when you make mistakes, seek forgiveness



How do you....

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- assist him/her act on information?
  - offer opportunities for feedback
  - offer opportunities to learn how to use social media
  - offer opportunities for community building

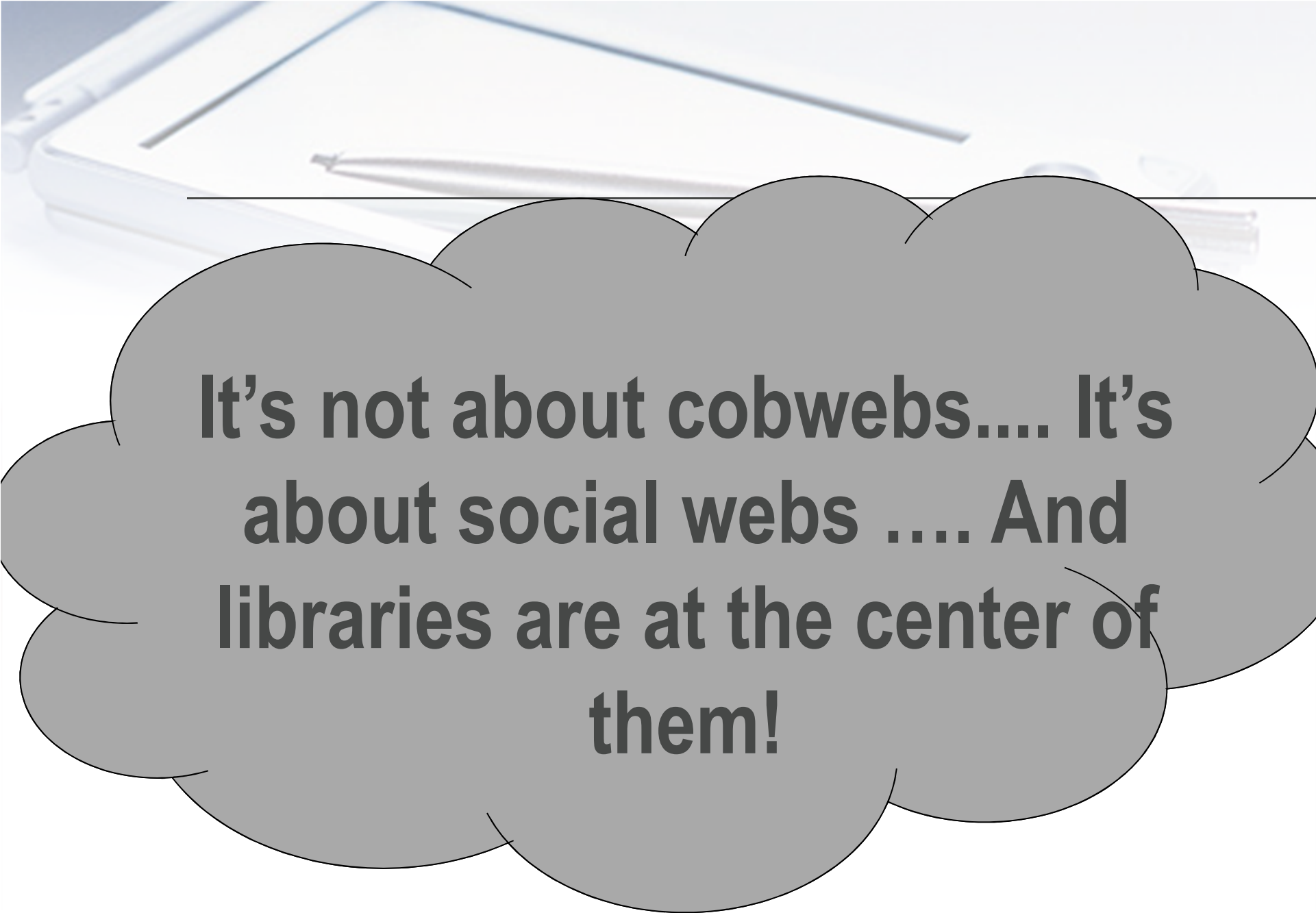




## Why good social networks (and social networking) matter

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- Healthier
- Wealthier
- Happier
- More civically engaged = better communities



**It's not about cobwebs.... It's  
about social webs .... And  
libraries are at the center of  
them!**



Thank you!

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Project

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