

Tim Berners Lee

Nowadays, it is hard to imagine a world without the Internet. In fact, most of your parents grew up in a time when the idea of sending information from one computer to another was like something out of a science fiction film.

The idea of a network connecting lots of systems is actually a hundred years old or so. But it wasn't until the creation of something called ARPANET in the late 1960s. This was a basic system that allowed two computers to send a very simple message. The first message was "LOGIN", and it crashed the system after two letters!

When we think of the Internet now, most of us think of what is actually called the World Wide Web. This was the brainchild of a great British software engineer called Tim Berners Lee. He had been working for CERN in Geneva when he had the idea of a global network that would allow scientists and researchers to share information easily.

It was 1989 when Tim Berners Lee published a paper that explained how the modern World Wide Web would work. He was also responsible for creating the very first web browser. On 6th August 1991, he launched the very first web page. It was very simple. Its only job was to show people what the World Wide Web was about and how they could start to build their own web pages. It's hard to imagine that something that started with just one single page has grown into the massive web that it is today, in only 30 years.

It's sometimes very easy to confuse the Internet with Tim Berners Lee's World Wide Web. Perhaps an easy way to remember it is that the Internet is like a series of roads. The World Wide Web is just one way to use those roads - perhaps imagine it as cars. You also have other things that use the Internet. Email, for instance, might be lorries on the roads. Streaming films on your TV might be motorbikes. They all use the same roads (the Internet), but do it in different ways.

Nowadays, Berners Lee is the Director of the World Wide Web Consortium. This is an organisation

that he created to help decide on important issues with the web. You may not notice it, but the World Wide Web is always changing how it works. The changes make it more efficient or easier to access, or sometimes more stable or harder to hack into.

So every time you type the www in your website address, remember that it stands for World Wide Web. And remember to think about the brilliant Tim Berners Lee who helped to make it all possible.



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RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. What was the name of the first system that connected two computers?
2. What was the first message sent between computers?
3. Where was Tim Berners Lee working when he had the idea for the World Wide Web?
4. What did the very first web page say?
5. What does the text suggest you think of the internet as?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

S

Which was invented first, the Internet or the World Wide Web?

V

Which word means that the World Wide Web is quicker?

I

How does the author feel about Tim Berners Lee? What tells you this?

V

Which word or phrase tells you that ARPANET wasn't very complicated?

P

What do you think you will be able to use the Internet for in the future? Give a reason.

Answers:

1. ARPANET
2. LOGIN
3. CERN
4. What the World Wide Web was and how to build your own web page
5. A road

S: Internet

V: Efficient

I: He is described as “the brilliant Tim Berners Lee”, so the author thinks that he is somebody worth celebrating/an important and clever person

V: A basic system

P: Any suitable prediction with a valid reason