

1968

1968

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

ASCII in Project Gutenberg

PUBLISHED IN 2005

1971

1971

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

Project Gutenberg

PUBLISHED IN 2005 + UPDATED IN 2008

1974

1974

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

Internet

PUBLISHED IN 2008

When Project Gutenberg began in July 1971, the internet was not even born. On July 4, 1971, on Independence Day, Michael keyed in *The United States Declaration of Independence* (signed on July 4, 1776) to the mainframe he was using. In upper case, because there was no lower case yet. But to send a 5K file to the 100 users of the embryonic internet would have crashed the network. So Michael mentioned where the eText was stored (though without a hypertext link, because the web was still 20 years ahead). It was downloaded by six users. The internet was born in 1974 with the creation of TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol / Internet Protocol) by Vinton Cerf and Bob Kahn. It began spreading in 1983. It got a boost with the invention of the web in 1990 and of the first browser in 1993. At the end of 1997, there were 90 to 100 million users, with one million new users every month. At the end of 2000, there were over 300 million users.

© Sebastian Duda



1977

1977

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

UNIMARC: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1984

1984

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

Copyleft

PUBLISHED IN 2008

The term “copyleft” was invented in 1984 by Richard Stallman, who was a computer scientist at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). “Copyleft is a general method for making a program or other work free, and requiring all modified and extended versions of the program to be free as well. (...) Copyleft says that anyone who redistributes the software, with or without changes, must pass along the freedom to further copy and change it. Copyleft guarantees that every user has freedom. (...) Copyleft is a way of using of the copyright on the program. It doesn’t mean abandoning the copyright; in fact, doing so would make copyleft impossible. The word ‘left’ in ‘copyleft’ is not a reference to the verb ‘to leave’ — only to the direction which is the inverse of ‘right’. (...) The GNU Free Documentation License (FDL) is a form of copyleft intended for use on a manual, textbook or other document to assure everyone the effective freedom to copy and redistribute it, with or without modifications, either commercially or non commercially.” (excerpt from the GNU website)

Commonist-copyleft T-shirt (cc) Daveybot aka Dave Morris



1990

1990

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

Web : A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999 + UPDATED IN 2008

1991

1991

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

Unicode

PUBLISHED IN 2008

First published in January 1991, Unicode is the universal character encoding maintained by the Unicode Consortium. “Unicode provides a unique number for every character, no matter what the platform, no matter what the program, no matter what the language.” (excerpt from the website) This double-byte platform-independent encoding provides a basis for the processing, storage and interchange of text data in any language, and any modern software and information technology protocols. Unicode is a component of the W₃C (World Wide Web Consortium) specifications.

© Rob Evers



1993

1993

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1993

Online Books
Page

[PDF](#)

Online Books Page

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1993

1993

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

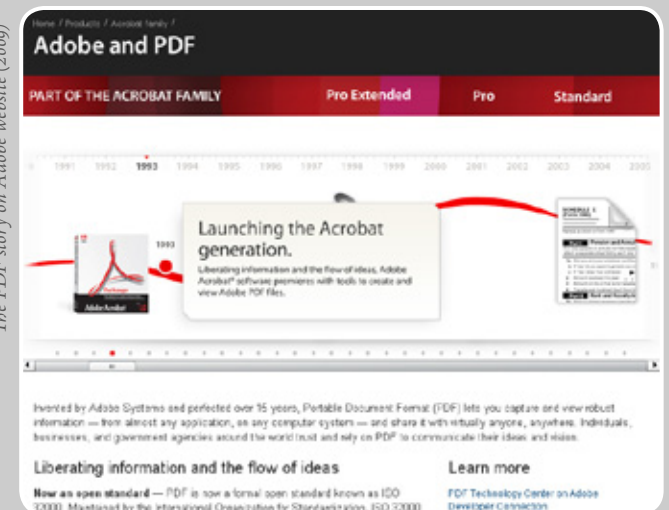
MILESTONES
IN 1993[Online Books](#)
[Page](#)

PDF

PDF

PUBLISHED IN 2008

PDF (Portable Document Format) was conceived by Adobe in 1992, launched in June 1993 with Adobe Acrobat software, and perfected over 15 years as the global standard for distribution and viewing of information. It “lets you capture and view robust information from any application, on any computer system and share it with anyone around the world. Individuals, businesses, and government agencies everywhere trust and rely on Adobe PDF to communicate their ideas and vision.” (excerpt from the website) Adobe Acrobat gives the tools to create and view PDF files and is available in many languages and for many platforms (Macintosh, Windows, Unix, etc.). Ten years later, over 500 million copies of PDF-based Adobe Reader (formerly Acrobat Reader, until May 2003) have been downloaded worldwide. Approximately 10% of the documents on the internet are available in PDF.

The PDF story on Adobe website (2009)

1994

1994

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1994

Library
Websites

Bold
Publishers

Library Websites: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1994

1994

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1994

[Library](#)
[Websites](#)

Bold
Publishers

Bold Publishers : A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1995

1995

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1995

Amazon.com

[Online Press](#)

Amazon.com: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1995

1995

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1995

[Amazon.com](#)

Online Press

Online Press: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1996

1996

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

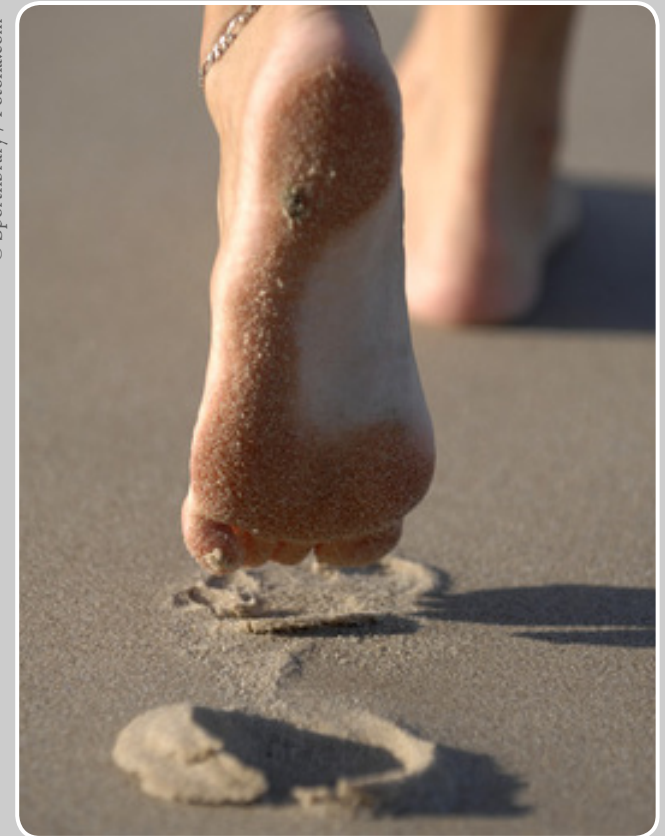
MILESTONES
IN 1996Internet
Archive[New Ways of
Teaching](#)[Palm Pilot](#)

Internet Archive

PUBLISHED IN 2008

Founded in April 1996 by Brewster Kahle, the Internet Archive is a non-profit organization that built an “internet library” to offer permanent access to historical collections in digital format for researchers, historians and scholars. An archive of the web is stored every two months or so. In October 2001, with 30 billion web pages stored, the Internet Archive launched the Wayback Machine, for users to be able to surf the archive of the web by date. In 2004, there were 300 terabytes of data, with a growth of 12 terabytes per month. In 2006, there were 65 billion pages from 50 million websites. In late 1999, the Internet Archive also started to include more collections of archived web pages on specific topics. It also became an online digital library of text, audio, software, image and video content. In October 2005, the Internet Archive launched the Open Content Alliance (OCA) with other contributors as a collective effort to build a permanent archive of multilingual digitized text (Text Archive) and multimedia content.

© Sportlibrary / Fotolia.com



1996

1996

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1996

[Internet
Archive](#)

New Ways of
Teaching

[Palm Pilot](#)

New Ways of Teaching : A Quote

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1996

1996

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1996[Internet
Archive](#)[New Ways of
Teaching](#)

Palm Pilot

Palm Pilot

PUBLISHED IN 2009

In the 1990s, Jacques Gauchey was a journalist and writer living in Silicon Valley and specializing in IT (information technology). He was also working as a “facilitator” between the United States and Europe. Jacques was among the first to buy a Palm Pilot in March 1996, and wrote about it in his free online newsletter. As a side remark, he remembered in July 1999: “In 1996 I published a few issues of a free English newsletter on the internet. It had about 10 readers per issue until the day (in January 1996) when the electronic version of *Wired Magazine* created a link to it. In one week I got about 100 emails, some from French readers of my book *La Vallée du risque – Silicon Valley* [editor’s note: *The Valley of Risk – Silicon Valley*, published by Plon, Paris, in 1990], who were happy to find me again.” He added: “All my clients now are internet companies. All my working tools (my mobile phone, my PDA and my PC) are or will soon be linked to the internet.” Despite fierce competition, Palm stayed the leader in the PDA market, with 23 million Palm Pilots sold between 1996 and 2002.

Palm Pré-Phone Design (2009) © Palm.com



1997

1997

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1997

Digital
Publishing

[Logos](#)
[Dictionary](#)

[Multimedia](#)
[Convergence](#)

Digital Publishing: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1997

1997

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1997

[Digital
Publishing](#)

Logos
Dictionary

[Multimedia
Convergence](#)

Logos Dictionary: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1997

1997

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1997

[Digital
Publishing](#)

[Logos
Dictionary](#)

Multimedia
Convergence

Multimedia Convergence: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1998

1998

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1998

Online
Beowulf

[Digital
Librarians](#)

[Multilingual
Web](#)

Online Beowulf: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1998

1998

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1998

[Online
Beowulf](#)

Digital
Librarians

[Multilingual
Web](#)

Digital Librarians: Two Experiences

PUBLISHED IN 1999

1998

1998

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1998

[Online
Beowulf](#)

[Digital
Librarians](#)

Multilingual
Web

Multilingual Web: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 2000 + UPDATED IN 2004

1999

1999

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1999

Digital
Authors

[Open eBook](#)

Digital Authors: Two Experiences

PUBLISHED IN 2000

1999

1999

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 1999[Digital
Authors](#)

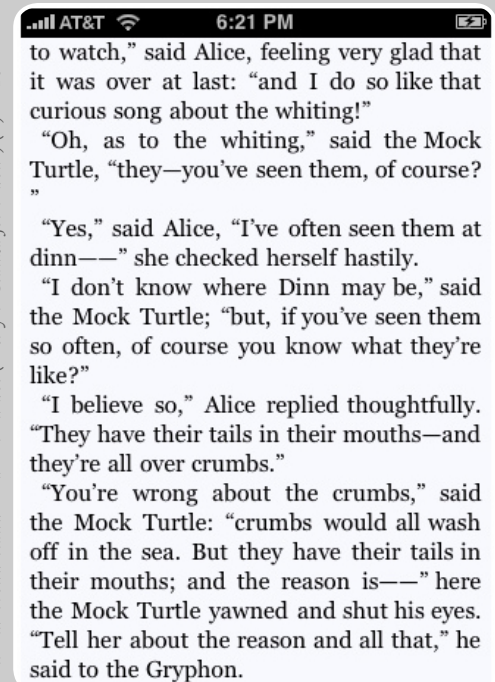
Open eBook

Open eBook

PUBLISHED IN 2009

In 1999, there were nearly as many eBook formats as eBooks, with every company and organization creating its own format for its own eBook reader and its own electronic device. The publishing industry felt the need to work on a common format for eBooks and published in September 1999 the first version of the Open eBook (OeB) format, an eBook format based on XML (eXtensible Markup Language) and defined by the Open eBook Publication Structure (OeBPS). The Open eBook Forum was created in January 2000 to develop the OeB format and OeBPS specifications. Since 2000, most eBook formats were derived from —or are compatible with the OeB format. In April 2005, the Open eBook Forum became the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF), and the OeB format became ePub format. The ePub format is one of the standards for the digital publishing industry.

"Alice in Wonderland" ePub screenshot (Lexcycle Stanza for iPhone) (c) LilRonGal



2000

2000

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2000

your
Dictionary.com

[Online Bible of
Gutenberg](#)

[Distributed
Proofreaders](#)

[Public Library
of Science](#)

yourDictionary.com: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 2001

2000

2000

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2000[your
Dictionary.com](#)[Online Bible of
Gutenberg](#)[Distributed
Proofreaders](#)[Public Library
of Science](#)

Online Bible of Gutenberg

PUBLISHED IN 2000

The Bible of Gutenberg went online in November 2000, on the website of the British Library. As we all know, the Bible of Gutenberg is considered as the first print book. Gutenberg printed it in 1454 or 1455 in Germany, perhaps printing 180 copies, with 48 copies that would still exist in 2000. Three copies —two full ones and one partial one— belong to the British Library. The two full copies —a little different from each other— were digitized in March 2000 by experts from the Keio University of Tokyo and NTT (Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Communications).

Jerome's Epistle to Paulinus, Volume 1, Folio 1r — British Library

2000

2000

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2000

[your
Dictionary.com](#)

[Online Bible of
Gutenberg](#)

Distributed
Proofreaders

[Public Library
of Science](#)

Distributed Proofreaders

PUBLISHED IN 2005 + UPDATED IN 2008

2000

2000

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2000[your
Dictionary.com](#)[Online Bible of
Gutenberg](#)[Distributed
Proofreaders](#)Public Library
of Science

Public Library of Science

PUBLISHED IN 2008

The Public Library of Science (PLOS) was founded in October 2000 by biomedical scientists Harold Varmus, Patrick Brown and Michael Eisen, from Stanford University, Palo Alto, and University of California, Berkeley. Headquartered in San Francisco, PLoS is a non-profit organization whose mission is to make the world's scientific and medical literature a public resource. In early 2003, PLoS created a non-profit scientific and medical publishing venture to provide scientists and physicians with high-quality, high-profile journals in which to publish their most important work: PLoS Biology (launched in 2003), PLoS Medicine (2004), PLoS Genetics (2005), PLoS Computational Biology (2005), PLoS Pathogens (2005), PLoS Clinical Trials (2006), PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases (2007). All PLoS articles are freely available online, and deposited in the free public archive PubMed Central. They can be freely redistributed and reused, including for translations, as long as the author(s) and source are cited. PLoS also hopes to encourage other publishers to adopt the open access model, or to convert their existing journals to an open access model.

PLOS homepage (2009) — Public Library of Science



2001

2001

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2001

Wikipedia

[Creative
Commons](#)

Wikipedia

PUBLISHED IN 2008

Launched in January 2001 by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger (Larry resigned later on), Wikipedia has quickly grown into the largest reference website on the internet. Its multilingual content is free and written collaboratively by people worldwide. Its website is a wiki, which means that anyone can edit, correct and improve information throughout the encyclopedia. The articles stay the property of their authors, and can be freely used according to the GFDL (GNU Free Documentation License). Wikipedia is hosted by the Wikimedia Foundation, which runs a number of other projects, for example Wiktionary — launched in December 2002 — followed by Wikibooks, Wikiversity, Wikinews and Wikiquote. In December 2004, Wikipedia had 1.3 million articles from 13,000 contributors in 100 languages. Two years later, in December 2006, it had 6 million articles in 250 languages.

Wikipedia's Logo — © Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.



2001

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2001[Wikipedia](#)Creative
Commons

Creative Commons

PUBLISHED IN 2009

Creative Commons (CC) was founded in 2001 by Lawrence Lessing, a professor at Stanford Law School, California. As stated on its website, “Creative Commons is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to making it easier for people to share and build upon the work of others, consistent with the rules of copyright. We provide free licenses and other legal tools to mark creative work with the freedom the creator wants it to carry, so others can share, remix, use commercially, or any combination thereof.” There were one million Creative Commons licensed works in 2003, 4.7 million licensed works in 2004, 20 million licensed works in 2005, 50 million licensed works in 2006, 90 million licensed works in 2007, and 130 million licensed works in 2008. Science Commons was founded in 2005 to “design strategies and tools for faster, more efficient web-enabled scientific research.” ccLearn was founded in 2007 as “a division of Creative Commons dedicated to realizing the full potential of the internet to support open learning and open educational resources.”

© iStockPhoto



2002

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH

WEB

MIT OpenCourseWare

PUBLISHED IN 2008

The MIT OpenCourseWare (MIT OCW) is a large-scale, web-based electronic publishing initiative launched by MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) to promote open dissemination of knowledge and information. A pilot version of the MIT OpenCourseWare (MIT OCW) was available online in September 2002, with 32 course materials of MIT. In September 2003, the site was officially launched with several hundred course materials. In March 2004, 500 course materials were available in 33 different topics. In May 2006, 1,400 course materials were offered by 34 departments belonging to the five schools of MIT. In November 2007, all 1,800 course materials were available, with 200 new and updated courses per year. In November 2005, the MIT launched the OpenCourseWare Consortium (OCW Consortium) as a collaboration of educational institutions creating a broad body of open educational content using a share model. One year later, the OCW Consortium included the courses of 100 universities worldwide.

MIT OCW homepage (2009)
— Massachusetts Institute of Technology



2004

2004

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2004

Project
Gutenberg
Europe

[Google Print /
Book Search](#)

Project Gutenberg Europe

PUBLISHED IN 2005 + UPDATED IN 2008

2004

2004

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH >

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2004

[Project
Gutenberg
Europe](#)

Google Print /
Book Search

Google Print / Book Search

PUBLISHED IN 2008

2005

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2005Open Content
Alliance[Microsoft Live
Search Books](#)

Open Content Alliance

PUBLISHED IN 2008

The Open Content Alliance (OCA) was conceived by the Internet Archive in early 2005 to offer broad, public access to the world culture. It was launched in October 2005 as a group of cultural, technology, non profit and governmental organizations willing to build a permanent archive of multilingual digitized text and multimedia content. The project aims at digitizing public domain books around the world and make them searchable through any web search engine and downloadable for free. Unlike the Google Print project, the OCA scans and digitizes only public domain books, except when the copyright holder has expressly given permission. The first contributors to OPA were the University of California, the University of Toronto, the European Archive, the National Archives in the United Kingdom, O'Reilly Media and Prelinger Archives. The digitized collections are freely available in the Text Archive of the Internet Archive. In December 2006, they reached a milestone of 100,000 digitalized books publicly available, with 12,000 new books added per month. Two years later, in December 2008, one million books were “posted under OCA principles or otherwise public domain hosted by the Internet Archive”.

© Les Cunliffe



2005

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2005[Open Content
Alliance](#)Microsoft Live
Search Books

Microsoft Live Search Books

PUBLISHED IN 2008

Microsoft has also participated in the Open Content Alliance (OCA), launched by the Internet Archive in October 2005. In December 2006, Microsoft released the beta version of Live Search Books. The book search engine performs keyword searches for non copyrighted books digitized by Microsoft from the collections of the British Library, University of California, and University of Toronto, followed in January 2007 by the New York Public Library and Cornell University. Books offer full text views and can be downloaded in PDF files. In the future, Microsoft intends to add copyrighted works with the permission of their publishers. In May 2007, Microsoft announced agreements with several main publishers, including Cambridge University Press and McGraw Hill. After digitizing 750,000 books and indexing 80 million journal articles, Microsoft ended the Live Search Books program in May 2008 and closed the website.

© Alex Slobodkin



2006

OVERVIEW ›

IN DEPTH ›

WEB

Free WorldCat: A Story

PUBLISHED IN 1999

2007

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2007

Citizendium

[Encyclopedia
of Life](#)

Citizendium

PUBLISHED IN 2008

Citizendium was launched in October 2006 as a pilot project to build a new encyclopedia, at the initiative of Larry Sanger, who was the co-founder of Wikipedia (with Jimmy Wales) in January 2001, but resigned later on over policy and content quality issues. Citizendium—which stands for a “citizen’s compendium of everything”—is a wiki project open to public collaboration, but combining “public participation with gentle expert guidance”. The project is experts-led, not experts-only. Contributors use their own names, not anonymous pseudonyms, and they are guided by expert editors. “Editors will be able to make content decisions in their areas of specialization, but otherwise working shoulder-to-shoulder with ordinary authors.” (Larry Sanger, *Toward a New Compendium of Knowledge*, September 2006) Constables make sure the rules are respected. Citizendium was launched on March 25, 2007, with 1,100 articles, 820 authors and 180 editors.

© Sebastian Duda / Forolia.com



2007

OVERVIEW >

IN DEPTH

WEB

MILESTONES
IN 2007[Citizendium](#)Encyclopedia
of Life

Encyclopedia of Life

PUBLISHED IN 2008

Launched in May 2007, the Encyclopedia of Life is a global scientific effort to document all known species of animals and plants (1.8 million), and expedite the millions of species yet to be discovered and catalogued (8 to 10 million). This collaborative effort is led by several main institutions: Field Museum of Natural History, Harvard University, Marine Biological Laboratory, Missouri Botanical Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Biodiversity Heritage Library (BHL). The initial funding comes from the MacArthur Foundation (10 million dollars) and the Sloan Foundation (2.5 million dollars). A number of pages will be available by mid-2008. The encyclopedia will be operational in 3-5 years and completed (with all known species) in 10 years. Built on the scientific integrity of thousands of experts around the globe, the Encyclopedia will be a moderated wiki-style environment, freely available to all users everywhere.

EoL homepage (2009) — Encyclopedia of Life

