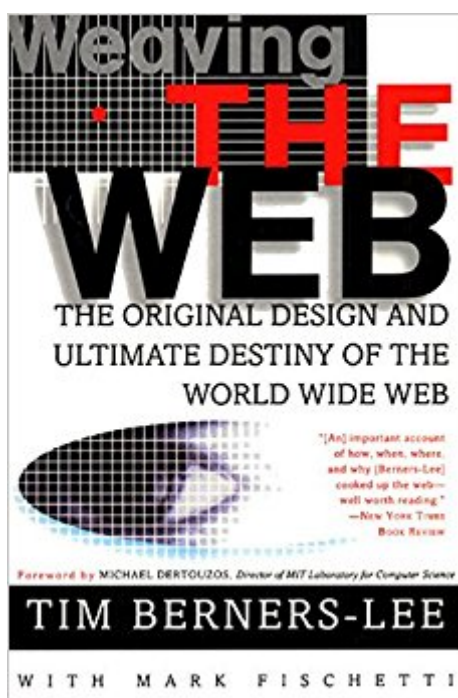


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Weaving The Web: The Original Design And Ultimate Destiny Of The World Wide Web



Synopsis

Named one of the greatest minds of the 20th century by Time, Tim Berners-Lee is responsible for one of that century's most important advancements: the world wide web. Now, this low-profile genius-who never personally profitted from his invention -offers a compelling protrait of his invention. He reveals the Web's origins and the creation of the now ubiquitous http and www acronyms and shares his views on such critical issues as censorship, privacy, the increasing power of software companies , and the need to find the ideal balance between commercial and social forces. He offers insights into the true nature of the Web, showing readers how to use it to its fullest advantage. And he presents his own plan for the Web's future, calling for the active support and participation of programmers, computer manufacturers, and social organizations to manage and maintain this valuable resource so that it can remain a powerful force for social change and an outlet for individual creativity.

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Customer Reviews

If you can read this review (and voice your opinion about his book on .com), you have Tim Berners-Lee to thank. When you've read his no-nonsense account of how he invented the World Wide Web, you'll want to thank him again, for the sheer coolness of his ideas. One day in 1980, Berners-Lee, an Oxford-trained computer consultant, got a random thought: "Suppose all the information stored on computers everywhere were linked?" So he created a system to give every

"page" on a computer a standard address (now called a URL, or Universal Resource Locator), accessible via the HyperText Transfer Protocol (HTTP), formatted with the HyperText Markup Language (HTML), and visible with the first browser, which did the trick of linking us all up. He may be the most self-effacing genius of the computer age, and his egalitarian mind is evident in the names he rejected for his invention: "I thought of Mine of Information, or MOI, but moi in French means 'me,' and that was too egocentric.... The Information Mine (TIM) was even more egocentric!" Also, a mine is a passive repository; the Web is something that grows inexorably from everyone's contributions. Berners-Lee fully credits the colorful characters who helped him get the bobsled of progress going--one colleague times his haircuts to match the solstices--but he's stubbornly independent-minded. His quest is to make the Web "a place where the whim of a human being and the reasoning of a machine coexist in an ideal, powerful mixture." Hard-core tech types may wish Berners-Lee had gone into deeper detail about the road ahead: the "boon and threat" of XML, free vs. commercial software, VRML 3-D imaging, and such. But he wants everyone in on the debate, so he wrote a brisk book that virtually anyone can understand. --Tim Appelo --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This lucid but impersonal memoir conveys some vital history and intriguing philosophy concerning the Internet, written by the man who invented such ubiquitous terms as URL, HTML and World Wide Web. British-born physicist Berners-Lee is now the director of the World Wide Web Consortium, which is based at MIT and sets software standards for the Web. In the late 1980s, he wrote the first programs that set up the Web, thus revolutionizing the Internet by allowing users to hyperlink among the world's computers. It was a quantum conceptual leap, and not everyone instantly understood it (some researchers had to be convinced that posting information was better than writing custom programs to transfer it). The release of graphical browsers such as Netscape Navigator made the Web much easier for home users to navigate and led to the commercialization of the Net. Although Berners-Lee calmly eschewed opportunities to get rich, he doesn't subscribe to the notion, common among pre-Web denizens of the Internet, that commercialization is a pox upon cyberspace. After short takes on current issues like privacy and pornography, Berners-Lee moves into prediction and prescription: the Web needs more intuitive interfaces and integration of tools, "annotation servers" that allow comments to be posted on documents and "social machines" that enable national plebiscites. And while he's no digital utopian, he thinks an Internet that balances decentralization and centralization can contribute to a more harmonious society. Berners-Lee's tone is more lofty than quotidian. He'd rather muse about the benefits of decentralization than his revolutionary

technology makes possible than respond to Internet skeptics and critics. But he was very, very right a decade ago, and he's well worth reading now. First serial to Vanity Fair; 7-city author tour; 25-city radio campaign. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Sir Tim Berners-Lee recounts the original design and development of the World Wide Web in the 1980s and 90s. This is more than merely an authoritative historical account, however valuable that may be. Tim elaborates on his big dreams and deep personal philosophy that drove him to conceive and gift to humanity the most powerful information technology invented - so far. 62 years ago when Tim was born (happy birthday!), ENIAC was in the final few months of its life and the 5,000-tube UNIVAC was just 2 years into commercial production. Computers were monstrous beasts with (by today's standards) minimal processing, storage and communications capabilities, yet ironically they were known as 'electronic brains'. Networking was virtually nonexistent, and email wasn't even invented until Tim was 16. In that historical context, the foresight that led Tim to create the Web is quite remarkable. Tim's early fascination with the 'power in arranging ideas in an unconstrained, weblike way' led him to create technologies to support that aim. This was true innovation, not merely coming up with bright ideas, wouldn't-it-be-nice pipe-dreams and theories but putting them into practice and exploring them hands-on. He has remained hands-on ever since, and is the Director of the World Wide Web Consortium. Tim's vision extends way beyond what we have right now, into the realm of artificial intelligence, machine learning and real-time global collaboration on a massive scale, the 'semantic web' as he calls it. But in the sense of a proud parent watching their progeny make their way in the world, I suspect he is keen to see the Web develop and mature without the shackles of his own mental framework. The free Web ideal is closer to free speech than free beer. Highly recommended.

Tim Berners-Lee built in the Web a system that reflects his own modesty, generosity and passion for bringing people together. This book is a readable, interesting and very worthwhile look at how he came to design and build a system that nobody knew they needed, and that nobody realized was possible. An excellent read for technical and non-technical audiences alike.

Very insightful and historical view of the Web by the gent that created it. Tim gives credit to the folks that influenced his design for the Web and tells exactly how it came into being in the mid 90's. Amazing to think he used a NEXT computer from Steve Job's old company to start the Web @

CERN.A must read for anyone who is interested in Web history and doesn't settle for the common place acceptance of what the Web is today, but wants to learn of its origins. Are you a grandma who loves checking email from her distant relatives and doesn't care how yahoo appears in front of you when you type the URL? Then this book isn't for you. This book is for techies like myself that are tired of every John, Dick and Tom who use the "www" acronym and have no idea of what the heck they are talking about. How can you fully understand a technology if you don't know where it came from. This book is a little dry (hence 4 stars) but will keep the interest of any knowledgeable Unix/dot.com geek, even if you have ADD. =) Much love to the folks @ CERN and to Tim...even though we evolve into new entities, lets not forget how or when we first started this wonderful Web process. Kevin

If you work on the web, use it frequently or derive your livelihood from it in some way, this is an outstanding work that presents the history and thinking that went into the development of the web. Tim details the early days of conceptualization of the web followed by the evolution to a research tool and onto the multifaceted web of today used for commerce, entertainment, research, communications and any number of other activities. He begins with the early days of the web as a project at CERN, the difficulty getting people to conceptualize a worldwide network of hypertext, (how long did it take you to "get it" when you were first introduced to the web?) its tremendous growth and commercialization in recent years, and his vision of the future. The book discusses the various interests that pull the web in different ways and the possibility of the development of a future "semantic web" in which a variety of standards and technologies combine to enable search engines to respond more intelligently to queries when people search for information on the web. The case is made that research, commerce, communication, and any number of other activities has its place on the web and all serve to enrich the web as a worldwide network of communication and knowledge. In order to continue to grow and thrive, there must be basic standardized protocols. In addition, no one party should be vertically integrated and grow large enough to be able to control access, technology, and content such that it inhibits the free flow of information and global communication. It would be tough to find a better figure to pioneer and contribute so profoundly to the development of the Internet and World Wide Web. Had it been pioneered and developed on proprietary patented protocols and technologies; access, usability, and overall usefulness of the web would be nowhere near what they are today. To gain an understanding of where the web came from, where it's headed, and how various companies, technologies and other interests may affect the future development of the web; pick up a copy of "Weaving the Web".

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