



INTERNET  
HALL *of* FAME

Bob Metcalfe's Internet Hall of Fame acceptance speech

Thank you for this spectacular Internet Society Hall of Fame induction in Berlin, which my whole family and I already gathered to celebrate during June in Istanbul. Where were you?

We celebrated my good fortune to be swept up by the Internet movement in 1970 at MIT and Harvard. I got to build an Arpanet IMP interface and write some early packet protocol software at MIT Project MAC in the laboratory of Internet visionary Professor J.C.R. Licklider. Then I got to build another IMP interface and write some more protocol software at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center in the Computer Science Laboratory of Internet visionary Bob Taylor. How lucky can you get?

Well, I was even luckier to be the first person in history to be given the problem of how to network a building full of personal computers. And so at Parc we came up with Ethernet, building on Arpanet packet switching and Alohanet multiaccess. We extended the Internet into buildings, going past our time-sharing minicomputers, right to desktop PCs.

During 1973 we took desktop bandwidth from 300 baud to 2.94 megabits per second. The Parc Ethernet desktop speed-up of nearly 10,000 times was in keeping with the Internet's longterm ethic of "Build it and they will come." And what came were new, unanticipated applications of bandwidth, like the World Wide Web in 1989 and then Youtube.

I was also lucky to have landed in Silicon Valley, where from 1979 I got to grow 3Com Corporation, an early provider of emerging Internet hardware and software standards, including Ethernet, TCP/IP, and Unix. We went three for three.

We all are now building out the Gigabit Internet and people are again asking if it's too much. Again we say, Build it and they will come, new, unanticipated applications of bandwidth, bringing the world ever more freedom and prosperity. Onward!

