

Fabio Bevilacqua, Lidia Falomo *

Towards a new web site of the DHST: participatory media for a community of scholars. Possibilities and choices

THE DIGITAL WORLD IS WITNESSING and participating in a new revolution that goes by the name of “Web 2.0” and deals with “participatory media” and “social networking”; together with other relevant recent developments it can offer great opportunities for the international community of historians of science.

The phenomenal rapid increase in sites that allow easy communications and exchange of information between members; the digitalisation of millions of printed books, images, movies, and music tracks that could within a decade cover the entirety of humankind’s cultural production; cooperative work with tools (like wikis) that have led to new instruments that are used by millions of users daily and compete with well established printed ones; the use of “tags”, that enable establishing a folksonomy rather than a taxonomy; the possibility of emergence of niches (like the one of history of science) previously lost in “the long tail”; lectures accessible to all (through podcasts); news available in real time (through “RSS”) pose new opportunities and new challenges and question our pleasant, traditional academic scientific routine.

Today historians of science usually work individually within strict boundaries, gather around small local societies, interact just through email or by expensively participating in conferences, publish in traditional media (books and journals), often with financial costs and giving away the copyright of their results. This is possibly not the best way to face universal shortage of funds, of academic positions, of good students. We should try to improve matters and make extensive use of Web 2.0 technologies.

The site <http://www.dhstweb.org> is provided by the Division of History of Science and Technology (DHST) of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science. It aims to improve communications and cooperation among historians of science and technology worldwide through Web 2.0 tools (such as Personal Pages, Blogs, Tags, Wikis, Podcasts, etc). It is mainly, but not exclusively, based on [Google Applications for Your Domain](#).

The new DHST site still provides information on the Division’s activities but its success will largely depend on an active role played by the community of historians. The success of this “experimental” site might foster the transformation of the Division into an organization with both national (today about sixty) and individual members (today not in the statutes).

This site can be read by everybody interested in History of Science and Technology worldwide. To use the interactive possibilities offered by Web 2.0 tools, which will be progressively added, historians of science (professional, students, amateurs) need to register.

In order to register historians have to send an email with their data to info@dhstweb.org. According to availability they will get an email account (like: j.smith@dhstweb.org) and a password (provided to DHST by [Google Applications for Your Domain](#)) that will let them have [access](#) to a number of tools (from number 6 on tools are not provided by [Google Applications for Your Domain](#) but can be accessed opening a Google account with your "j.smith"@dhstweb.org user name and password, without the need of another Gmail account). Registration is free. The tools already implemented or that will be progressively implemented are:

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1. **Email**: 2 Gbytes of disk space for your mail. It works like [Gmail](#), and allows to easily use the list of contacts of all other members. Of course it is possible to readdress the incoming mail to your main account (or viceversa!).
2. **Voip** through **Talk** (chat, talk and exchange files with other members). You need to download the free software, make yourself “available”, invite a contact to accept your calls. Moreover utilizing [Skype](#) you can have a conference call (up to 9 users +host) and broadcast live (up to 100 users).
3. **Calendars**: manage a number of personal [Calendars](#) (compatible with Outlook and others), access the [DHST Calendar](#) (DHST and other HST events) and all the other public calendars.
4. **Personalise** your own home page with a number of “gadgets” that will let you control at a glance most of the tools discussed so far (and others).
5. **On line documents and cooperative tools**: DHST web members can start using [Google Docs and Spreadsheets](#) through their dhstweb.org account and password.
6. **Groups**: access the [DHST Groups](#) (through [Google Groups Beta](#)), basically cooperation tools on specific topics. The Council and each Commission will have a Group. Groups endorsed by DHST can be added according to specific needs and will be moderated; in principle Groups discussions can be read by everybody, participation is allowed only to Group members (acceptance is under the responsibility of the moderator). Groups allow easy communication between group members (not necessarily through email!), easy uploading of files and (for the Group manager) publication of web pages (100 MBytes each group), publication of members own profiles (making it easier to identify colleagues with similar research interests). It is a basic tool to build and participate in a community without being submerged by email messages.
7. **Blogs**: DHSTweb members will be entitled to comment and/or post on the [site Blog](#) and on all the other DHST Blogs that will be published, allowing better interaction between members and DHST officials. Of course they will be able to contribute with their own blogs.
8. **Web pages**: publish easily your own web pages with [Page Creator](#) (with 100 MBytes of disk space to build your personal web site and upload your files).
9. **News**: [Rss](#) and Atom technology allow easy update of information (already widely adopted by the main news commercial sites that show the icon). Information once selected is available through your own browser or special applications called readers (e.g.: [Reader](#)) or aggregators. It is possible for instance to receive the table of contents of the latest issue of the main HOST journals (a freely delivered “current contents”). We are working at making this available to all on the DHST website ([here](#)).
10. **Tags**: to informally generate internet taxonomies (folksonomies). If you classify web pages of interest, you can have at hands your bookmarks and share them with the community (social bookmarking). This would dramatically improve access to relevant HOST materials. Software is provided by [Del.icio.us](#) (Yahoo) and more recently by [Notebook](#) (Google).
11. **Wikis**: the extraordinary success of [Wikipedia](#) has publicised the possibility of collaborative authoring through appropriate software programmes (or web sites) called wikis.
12. **Podcasts**: Basically a recorded video or audio file that can be downloaded and utilized asynchronously. A form of narrowcasting (“broadband / narrowcast, narrowband / broadcast”) “Podcasting is the method of distributing multimedia files, such as audio or video programs, over the Internet using [syndication](#) feeds, for playback on mobile devices and personal computers.” Could be very useful for spreading talks, interviews, lessons and for educational purposes.

For further details on the subject see the presentation attached below.

**Towards a new web site of the
DHST: participatory media for
a community of scholars.
Possibilities and choices**

Fabio Bevilacqua, Lidia Falomo

Università di Pavia



Web 2.0

- *The digital world is witnessing and participating in a new revolution that goes under the name of “Web2” and deals with “participatory media” and “social networking”; together with other relevant recent developments it can offer great opportunities for the international community of historians of science.*

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Economist.com website. The URL is http://www.economist.com/surveys/displayStory.cfm?story_id=6794156. The page features a search bar, navigation links, and a main article titled "Among the audience" under the "Surveys" category. The article is dated April 20th, 2006, and is from the print edition. The text of the article reads: "The era of mass media is giving way to one of personal and participatory media, says Andreas Kluth. That will profoundly change both the media industry and society as a whole." Below the text is an image of a laptop with a microphone and a sign that says "ON AIR". To the right of the article are links for "Printable page", "E-mail this", and "Buy PDF". Below these are "Related Items" including "In this survey" and "From The Economist".

Monday September 4th 2006

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Cities Guide

Read the survey on climate change in The Economist. Available at newsstands from 8th September. Click here for more information.

The Economist

Surveys

SURVEY: NEW MEDIA

Among the audience

Apr 20th 2006
From The Economist print edition

The era of mass media is giving way to one of personal and participatory media, says Andreas Kluth. That will profoundly change both the media industry and society as a whole

ON AIR

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Sources and acknowledgements
Offer to readers
Audio interview: Andreas Kluth
Audio interview: David Sifry
Audio interview: Chris Anderson
Audio interview: Jerry Michalski
Audio interview: Paul Saffo

From The Economist
It's the links, stupid
Apr 20th 2006
New media is about more than old media EJU
Apr 20th 2006

More articles about...
The internet

THE next big thing in 1448 was a technology called "movable type", invented for



Communities

- *Phenomenal rapid increase of sites that allow easy communications and exchange of information between members (like MySpace that has now reached 100 millions)*

The screenshot shows the MySpace website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the MySpace logo and the tagline "a place for friends". Below the navigation bar, there are several sections:

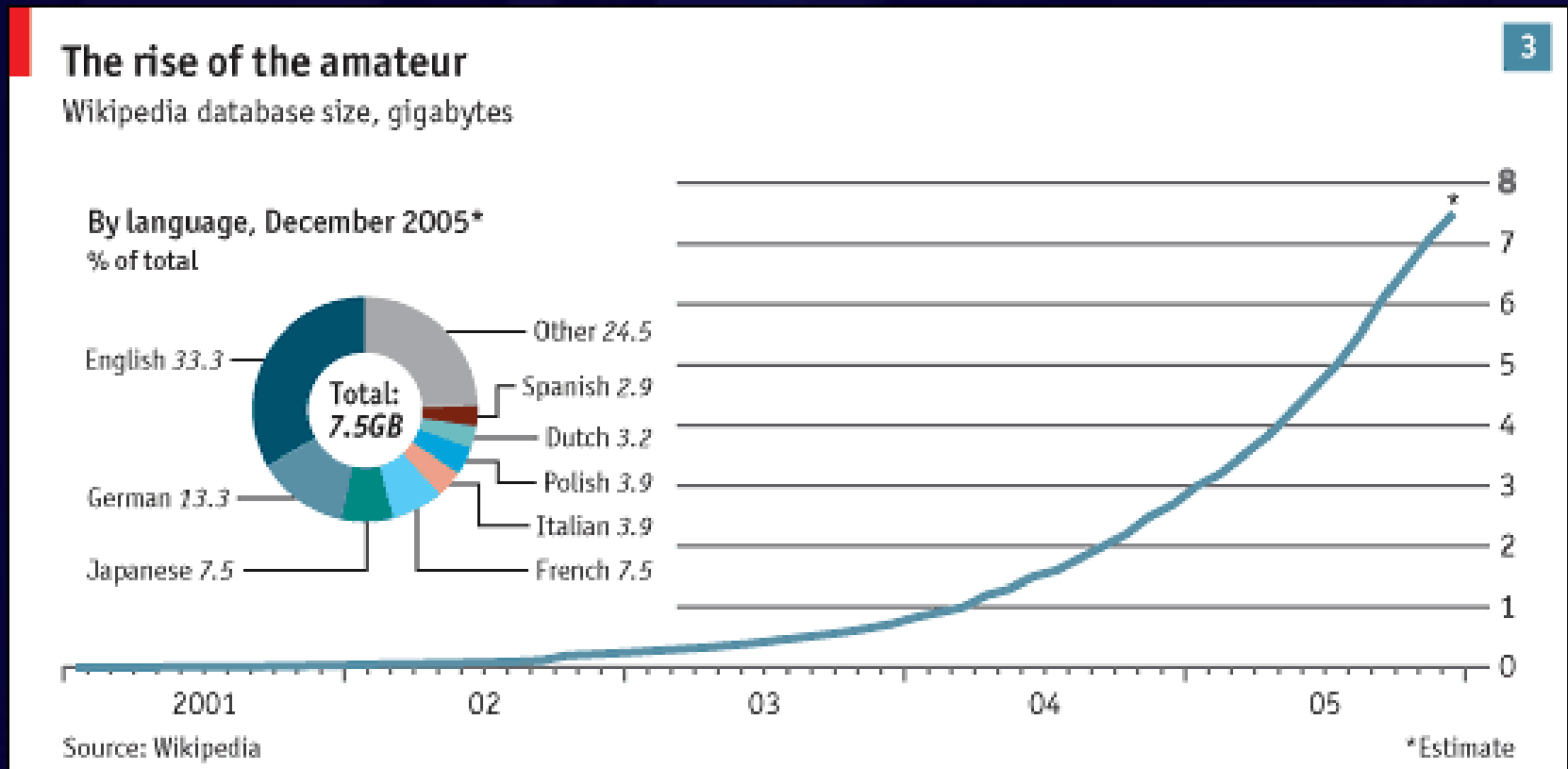
- myspace.com** logo and navigation links: Home, Browse, Search, Invite, Film, Mail, Blog, Favorites, Forum, Groups, Events, Videos, Music, Comedy, Classifieds.
- myspace movies** section: "Check Out Movies Now" with a "showtimes" link and a "movies.myspace.com" link.
- Member Login** section: Fields for E-Mail and Password, a "Remember Me" checkbox, and "LOGIN" and "SIGN UP!" buttons. A "Forgot your password?" link is also present.
- Cool New People** section: Profiles for Derek, Mark, and Babygirl.
- Videos** section: "Crazy Irish Turkeys" video with a "Watch It Now!" link.
- MySpace Music** section: "Ratatat" profile with a "Listen Now" link.
- MySpace Specials** section: "Nelly Furtado Video Premiere" with a "Check it out!" link.

The browser address bar shows "http://www.myspace.com/".



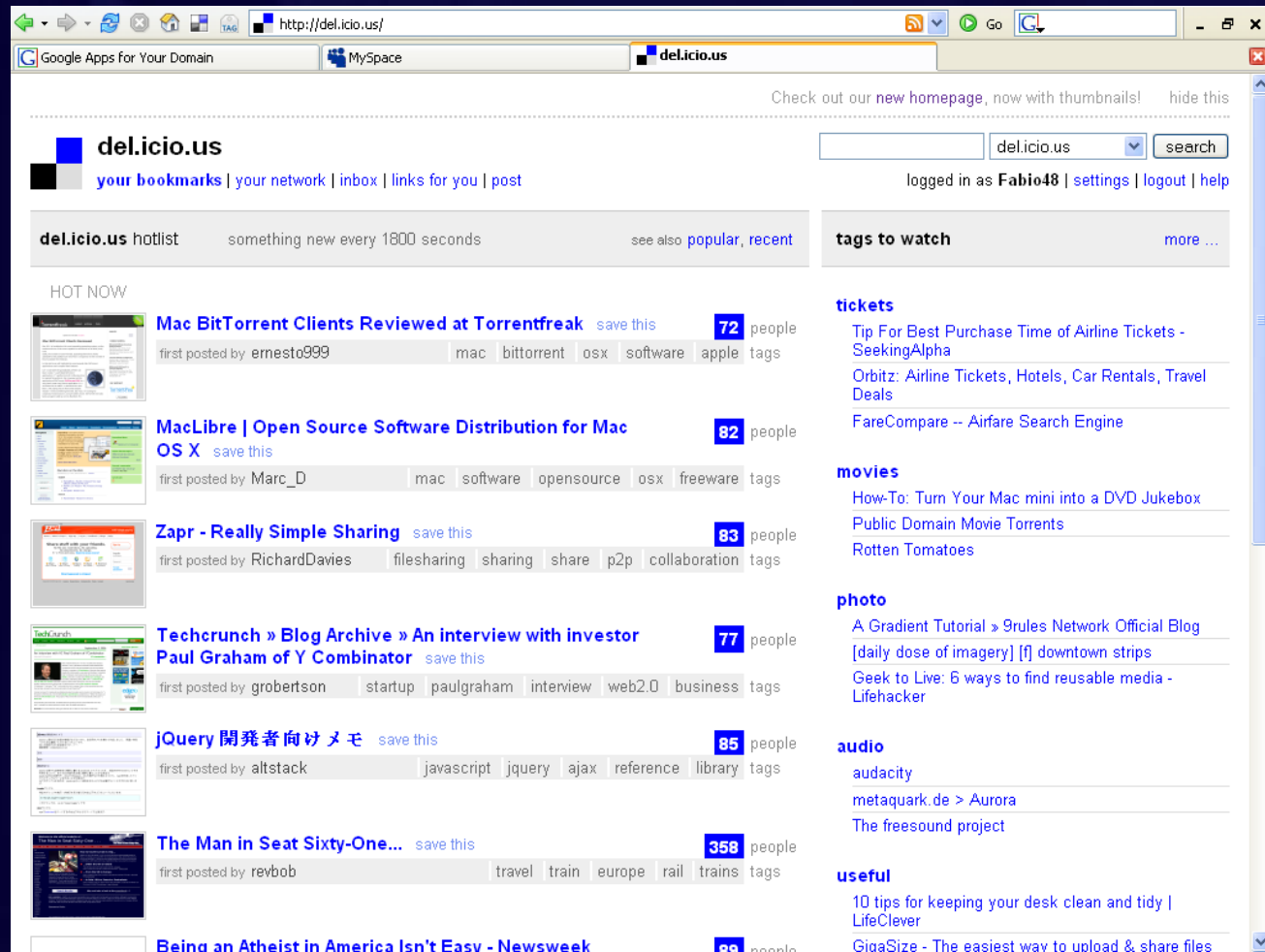
Cooperative work

- *New tools (like wikis) have led to new cultural projects that are used by millions users daily and compete with well established ones*



Indexing

Powerful instruments of search and retrieve allow not only to find but also to reorder (for instance using “tags”) all sorts of documents



The screenshot shows the del.icio.us website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with "del.icio.us" and links for "your bookmarks", "your network", "inbox", "links for you", and "post". A search bar is visible on the right. Below the navigation, there's a "del.icio.us hotlist" section with a refresh indicator "something new every 1800 seconds" and links for "popular" and "recent". The main content area is titled "HOT NOW" and lists several bookmarked items, each with a thumbnail, title, "save this" link, user count, and tags. The items listed are:

- Mac BitTorrent Clients Reviewed at Torrentfreak** (72 people) - tags: mac, bittorrent, osx, software, apple
- MacLibre | Open Source Software Distribution for Mac OS X** (82 people) - tags: mac, software, opensource, osx, freeware
- Zapr - Really Simple Sharing** (83 people) - tags: filesharing, sharing, share, p2p, collaboration
- TechCrunch » Blog Archive » An interview with investor Paul Graham of Y Combinator** (77 people) - tags: startup, paulgraham, interview, web2.0, business
- jQuery 開発者向けメモ** (85 people) - tags: javascript, jquery, ajax, reference, library
- The Man in Seat Sixty-One...** (358 people) - tags: travel, train, europe, rail, trains
- Being an Atheist in America Isn't Easy - Newsweek** (88 people) - tags: religion, atheism, america, newsweek

On the right side, there are several categorized lists:

- tags to watch** (more ...)
- tickets**: Tip For Best Purchase Time of Airline Tickets - SeekingAlpha, Orbitz: Airline Tickets, Hotels, Car Rentals, Travel Deals, FareCompare -- Airfare Search Engine
- movies**: How-To: Turn Your Mac mini into a DVD Jukebox, Public Domain Movie Torrents, Rotten Tomatoes
- photo**: A Gradient Tutorial » 9rules Network Official Blog [daily dose of imagery] [f] downtown strips, Geek to Live: 6 ways to find reusable media - Lifehacker
- audio**: audacity, metaquark.de > Aurora, The freesound project
- useful**: 10 tips for keeping your desk clean and tidy | LifeClever, GioaSize - The easiest way to upload & share files

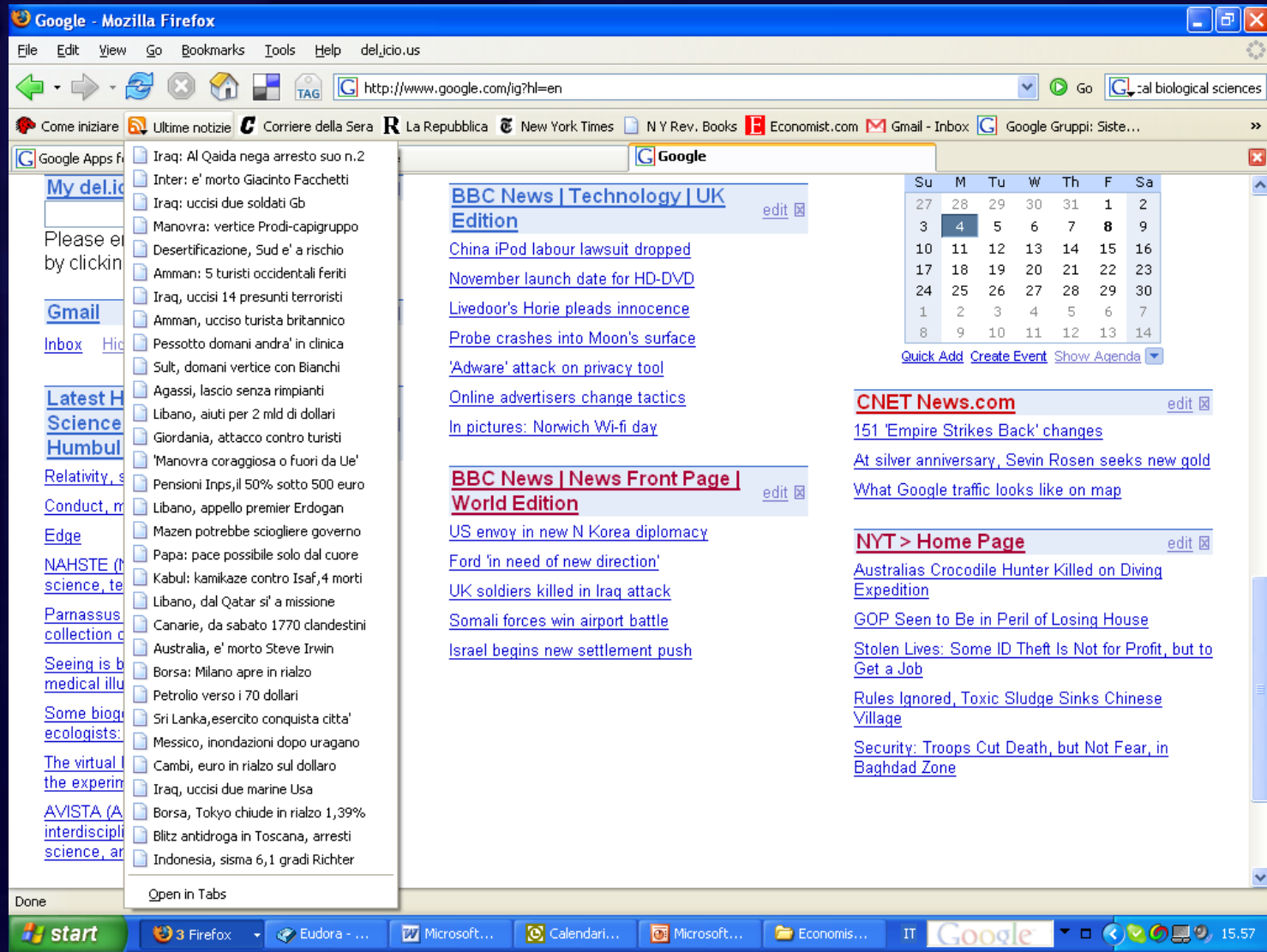
Learning tools

- *Lectures can be made available to all through podcasts*



News

- *Are available in real time (through “RSS”)*



The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window with the address bar displaying <http://www.google.com/ig?hl=en>. The page content includes a list of news items on the left, a main news section in the center, and a calendar on the right. The news items are organized into sections like 'BBC News | Technology | UK Edition', 'BBC News | News Front Page | World Edition', 'CNET News.com', and 'NYT > Home Page'. The calendar shows the date 4th of the month.

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

New Alexandria

The digitalisation of millions of printed books, images, movies, music tracks could within a decade cover the entirety of humankind cultural production

http://books.google.com/books?vid=ISBN0486606368&id=bghZbc6WecC&pg=PA18&pg=PA18&dq=maxwell

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[Page 165](#)
That adopted by Maxwell is one that ...

[Page 180](#)
the system of lines * (Maxwell)



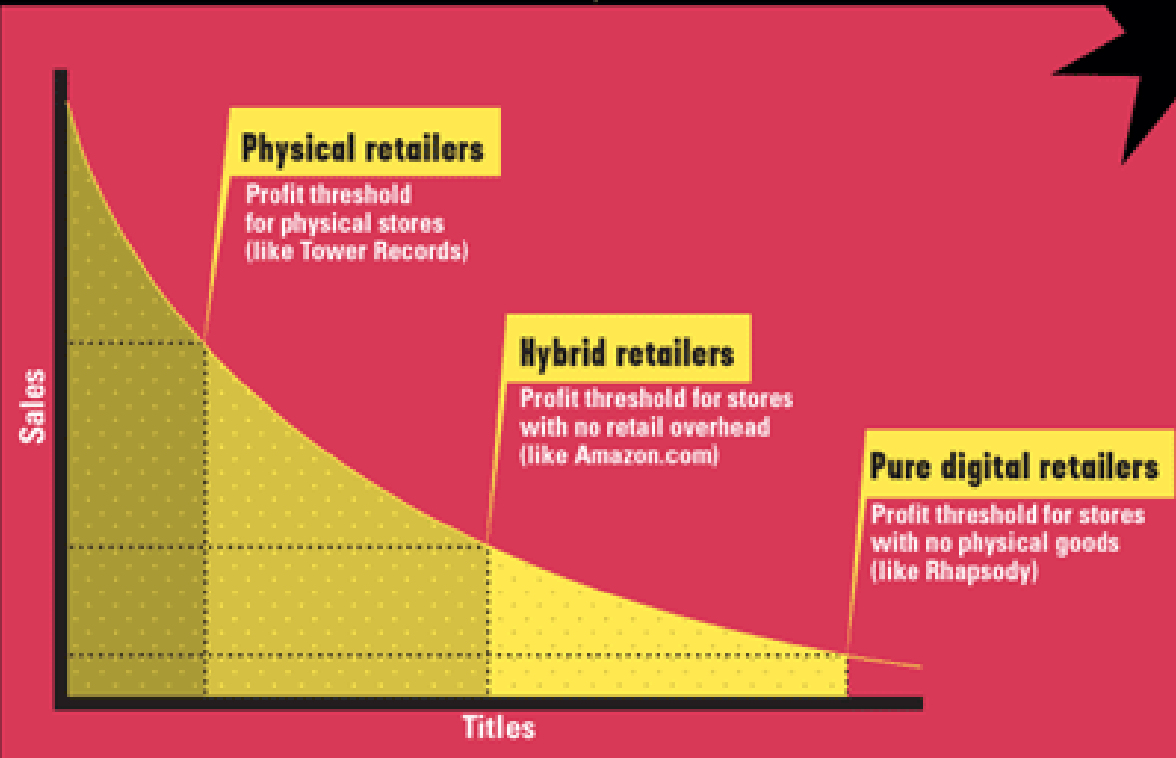
The long tail

- *Documents and books previously lost in “the long tail” acquire new importance*

THE BIT PLAYER ADVANTAGE

Beyond bricks and mortar there are two main retail models – one that gets halfway down the Long Tail and another that goes all the way. The first is the familiar hybrid model of Amazon and Netflix, companies that sell physical goods online. Digital catalogs allow them to offer unlimited selection along with search, reviews, and recommendations, while the cost savings of massive warehouses and no walk-in customers greatly expands the number of products they can sell profitably.

Pushing this even further are pure digital services, such as iTunes, which offer the additional savings of delivering their digital goods online at virtually no marginal cost. Since an extra database entry and a few megabytes of storage on a server cost effectively nothing, these retailers have no economic reason not to carry *everything* available.



History of Science and Web 2.0

- *Today historians of science usually work individually within strict boundaries, gather around small local societies, interact just through email or **expensively participating in conferences**, publish in traditional media (books and journals) often with financial costs and giving away the copyright of their results.*
- *Possibly not the best way to face universal shortage of funds, of academic positions, of good students.*



History of Science and Web 2.0

- *As a small step to improve matters I propose that the new edition of the DHST web site be based on these new tools (the present site has done a good job so far and has earned a reasonable page rank) and that an effort be made by the Division, but also by the other societies, to utilise them.*
- *The site would be accessible by registered historians of science (individual members?) and supervised by the Division's officials.*



The Project

- *The new Web site should integrate the existing possibilities to **search** (the web, the site, the desktop, also utilizing clusters; books, scientific journals, libraries, catalogues, images, movies, blogs, wikis, podcasts, tags), to **publish** on the web (working papers, preprints, books, bibliographies, catalogues, biographies, animations, simulations, documentaries, teaching materials, presentations), to receive at will (not necessarily through email) **news** organised chronologically (scalable **calendars**) and geographically (interactive **maps**) (on current contents, conferences, publications, events, anniversaries, prizes, scholarships, grants),*



The Project

- *to establish a **community** of individual members with the possibility to easily find, contact and work cooperatively with colleagues who share the same interests and fields of research (through **profiles, groups, wikis, web mail, chat, talk** (phone voip), **videoconferencing**) and to easily find and locate societies, research centers, university programmes, libraries, journals, archives, museums, exhibitions. The site should of course continue and improve the diffusion of information on the Division's life and activities.*



Open

- *The guiding principles could be the ones of Open Access (Berlin declaration), Open Source, Creative commons.*



Choices

- *The standard home page might gradually offer all these possibilities, and the individual member will be able to **personalize her/his home** page with the tools of choice. Given that most tools are scalable, a similar approach could be adopted by other societies and the result would be increased cooperation, greater visibility and scientific relevance.*
- *A choice should be made between joining together different available software or cooperating with a major global company.*



A first example

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying <https://www.google.com/a/dhstweb.org/Dashboard>. The page title is "Google Apps for dhstweb.org". In the top right corner, there is a user profile for "info@dhstweb.org" with links for "Inbox", "Help", and "Sign out". Below the Google logo is a search bar labeled "Search accounts".

The main content area is titled "Division History Science Technology" and "dhstweb.org". It features a section for "User accounts" with a count of "2 total" and a link to "Create new account". A note states: "You can create up to 100 user accounts for this domain."

A warning icon is followed by the heading "Not all your services have been set up yet". Below this, instructions are provided: "To set up services separately, follow the instructions for each service below. To see only the necessary steps, [set up services together](#). [Add and remove services](#)".

Four service status items are listed:

- Email** - Not set up: "Users can sign in but cannot send or receive email. To set up email, you'll need to direct email delivery to Google. [Set up email delivery](#)"
- Chat** - Not set up: "To set up chat for your domain, you must verify that you own your domain. Once chat is set up, your users will be able to chat with anyone using Google Talk. [Verify domain ownership](#)"
- Calendar** - Not set up: "To set up calendar for your domain, you must verify that you own your domain. [Verify domain ownership](#)"
- Domain web pages** - Not set up: "To publish domain web pages, you'll need to change a "CNAME record" in your domain settings. [Set up web publishing](#)"

The left sidebar contains navigation links under "Dashboard" (Set up), "Accounts" (User accounts, Create new account, Advanced tools), and "Services" (Email addresses, Create email list, Domain web pages, Domain settings).

At the bottom of the page, there are links for "Terms of Service", "Privacy policy", and "Google Home", along with the copyright notice "©2006 Google".

A first example

- *Includes mail, calendar, news, groups*

The screenshot shows the Google homepage with the following elements:

- Browser:** A browser window with the address bar showing `http://www.google.com/ig?hl=en`.
- Navigation:** Links for [Add content »](#), [DHSTInfo@gmail.com](#), [Classic Home](#), [Search History](#), [My Account](#), and [Sign out](#).
- Search:** The Google logo, a search input field, and buttons for [Google Search](#) and [I'm Feeling Lucky](#). Additional links include [Advanced Search](#), [Preferences](#), and [Language Tools](#).
- Other Google Searches:** A section with search boxes for [Blogs](#), [Books](#), [Scholar](#), [Catalogs](#), [Answers](#), and [Directory](#).
- Bookmarks:** A section titled [Bookmarks](#) with an [edit](#) link and a bookmark for [DHST Website 1.0](#).
- Google Calendar:** A section titled [Google Calendar](#) with an [edit](#) link. It displays a calendar for **September 2006**. The calendar grid shows the following dates:

Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

Below the calendar are links for [Quick Add](#), [Create Event](#), and a [Show Agenda](#) dropdown menu.
- Gmail:** A section titled [Gmail](#) with an [edit](#) link. It shows [Inbox \(2\)](#) and [Hide preview](#). The email list includes:
 - [The Google - Google Apps for Your Dorr](#) (Aug 31)
 - [Gmail - Gmail is different. Here's what y](#) (Aug 29)
 - [Gmail - It's easy to switch to Gmail! - D](#) (Aug 29)
- My Google Groups:** A section titled [My Google Groups](#) with an [edit](#) link and a group for [DHSTcouncil](#).



A Blog: <http://dhstinfo.blogspot.com>



DHSTinfo

Blog Archive

▼ 2006 (1)

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[Web 2.0](#)

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2006

Web 2.0

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The phenomenal rapid increase in sites that allow easy communications and exchange of information between members (like MySpace, which has now reached 100 million users); the digitalisation of millions of printed books, images, movies, and music tracks that could within a decade cover the entirety of humankind’s cultural production; cooperative work with tools (like wikis) that have led to new instruments that are used by millions of users daily and compete with well established printed ones; the instruments of search and retrieve that enable finding (for instance using “tags”) documents previously lost in “the long tail”, lectures accessible to all (through podcasts), news available in real time (through “RSS”), pose new opportunities and new challenges and question our pleasant, traditional academic scientific routine.

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As a small step to improve matters I propose that the new edition of our web site be based on these new tools (the present one

Tools

- **Personalised home page**
- **News**
 - Rss
 - Calendars
 - Maps
- **Cooperation**
 - Groups
 - Profiles
 - Wikis
 - Blogs
 - Tags
- **Contacts**
 - Web mail
 - Chat
 - Talk (phone voip)
 - Videoconferencing
- **Teaching/Learning**
 - Podcasts
- **Search and/or publish**
 - Books (catalogues or full content)
 - Papers (journals and citations)
 - Site
 - Images
 - Movies
 - Groups, Tags, Blogs
- **Others**
 - Browser (personalized bar)
 - Openoffice, writely
 - Citation manager
 - Images
 - Video
 - etc

