

Introduction

[“The Internet is for Everyone”](#) is a memo written by Vint Cerf as a plea to the the people who write and define standards to make sure the way the Internet is engineered maintains the philosophy that the Internet should be available and useable by everyone in the world, regardless of race, gender, creed, location, or wealth. (The full document with sidebar commentary can be found here: [Primary Source: “The Internet is for Everyone”](#))



Clearly, Vint Cerf thought that the prospect of “The Internet is for Everyone” might be threatened in early 2002, shortly after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. In the memo, he lays out the state of the Internet and its usage in 2002, predicts the future, and then presents a series of nine challenges or threats to the idea that the Internet is for everyone.

The last several paragraphs of the memo all begin with the phrase: “Internet is for everyone - but it won’t be if...” Here is the first sentence from each of those paragraphs

1. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** it isn't affordable by all that wish to partake of its services, so we must dedicate ourselves to making the Internet as affordable as other infrastructures so critical to our well-being.
2. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** Governments restrict access to it, so we must dedicate ourselves to keeping the network unrestricted, unfettered and unregulated. We must have the freedom to speak and the freedom to hear.
3. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** it cannot keep up with the explosive demand for its services, so we must dedicate ourselves to continuing its technological evolution and development of the technical standards the lie at the heart of the Internet revolution.
4. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be** until in every home, in every business, in every school, in every library, in every hospital in every town and in every country on the Globe, the Internet can be accessed without limitation, at any time and in every language.



5. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be** if it is too complex to be used easily by everyone. Let us dedicate ourselves to the task of simplifying the Internet's interfaces and to educating all that are interested in its use.

6. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** legislation around the world creates a thicket of incompatible laws that hinder the growth of electronic commerce, stymie the protection of intellectual property, and stifle freedom of expression and the development of market economies.

7. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** its users cannot protect their privacy and the confidentiality of transactions conducted on the network.

8. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** parents and teachers cannot voluntarily create protected spaces for our young people for whom the full range of Internet content still may be inappropriate.

9. **Internet is for everyone - but it won't be if** we are not responsible in its use and mindful of the rights of others who share its wealth.