

# THE GEO-SAMPLER

**geotechnics**  
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Remember when business was done in person? Or by mail? Heck, even the fax machine changed the way we worked together. But perhaps there's no greater game-changer than the Internet. Sure, it's accelerated the speed at which we work. But it's also shifted the very nature of our work. And for today's young workforce, there's never been employment without it. Today, we explore this notion in the very first e-focused edition of the GeoSampler, which you may have noticed is published every quarter on good old paper.

## VIRTUALLY CHANGING THE WAY BUSINESS DOES BUSINESS.

A customer asks a question and expects a timely answer. Like within the next minute. Marketing departments learn their competitor's secrets. Without ever leaving their desks. And whole stores don't even have business hours. Heck, they don't really even have stores.

Welcome to business 2.0, where industry exists half in the real world and half online. While the Internet is hardly a new invention - it's been around for more than a quarter of a century - its uses keep evolving. Some argue that the development of today's web started in 1957, when the Soviets launched Sputnik 1, the first satellite, which kicked the United States into high gear to develop new information technologies. Since that time, the uses for the Internet have exploded, hampered only by imagination.

### Top ten uses for the Internet in business

**EMAIL.** You're in touch with a customer in a nanosecond. A colleague passes along critical reports. And poof, information travels at the speed of, well, your typing skills. Be careful, though, because as helpful as email is to the way we communicate, it's also easy to abuse, from well-meaning friends' 'chain letters' to colleagues who send too many notes all day (and night) long.

**RESEARCH.** Wanna know what year the Internet was born? Or what your competitors are telling their prospects? Or a new government regulation that's going to affect your next project? It's all right there at the tip of your fingers.

**INFORMATION SHARING.** "Here, take a look at this report." "Let me send you the plans." "Please review the attached article." We've perhaps never been more collaborative as a workforce. But beware of the resulting common malady, information overload, which leads to reduced productivity and extreme headaches.

**CREDIBILITY.** "Anybody who's anybody has a website." While that adage may not be reality, it's definitely perception. In many cases, checking out a potential business partner's website is part of the due diligence process. The moral? Make sure there's something worthwhile to see.

**MARKETING.** Reach new audiences halfway across the world. Stay in touch with customers on a regular basis. Align with sites that have similar values. There are a gazillion (and ever expanding) uses for the web, just be careful not to overdo. Nobody wants to do business with a rampant spammer.

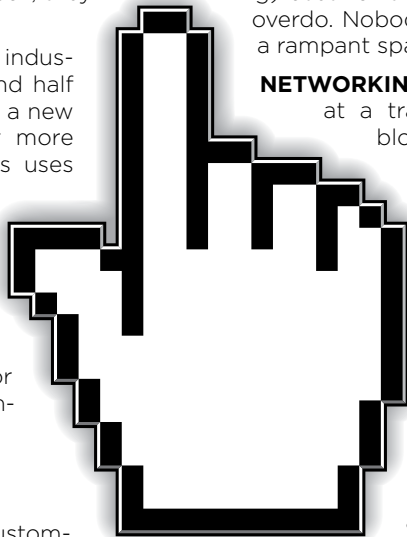
**NETWORKING.** Met an interesting person at a trade show? Read someone's blog? Remember that promising classmate from college? It's amazing who you'll come across online. And sites made specifically for networking, like Linked In, are helping small businesses generate larger sales.

**TRAINING.** You may not be able to send your whole staff to 'power point' training. But you can sure find a session online. In fact, many training sessions are free and self-directed, so you - or any of the eager-to-learn employees in your organization - can determine what you want to learn and how you want to learn it.

**E-COMMERCE.** Books. Shoes. Custom-made suits. There's no end to what can be bought online. And while some websites have replaced traditional brick-and-mortar retail outlets, consider how your business might be able to capitalize on the trend. If not with sales, then perhaps through online purchasing or billing.

**NEW IDEAS.** It used to be that great ideas were born in the shower. Okay, they still are. But they often happen while people are surfing, just bouncing from site to site. That's how our brains can sometimes link previously disjointed thoughts. And give birth to something new or better. So next time you see a coworker surfing, cut some slack. It may just be Internet's way of helping come up with a new idea.

**WEB AS COFFEE BREAK.** One highly productive worker once claimed she got her best work done after a half-hour of online solitaire. The Internet can no doubt be a good break in the middle of a busy day. But just remember that it can be just as likely to affect productivity positively as it can negatively.



*The trouble with being punctual is that nobody's there to appreciate it.*

—Franklin P. Jones



### Why Dogs are Man's Best Friends

The later you are, the more excited your dogs are to see you.

Dogs don't notice if you call them by another dog's name.

Dogs like it if you leave a lot of things on the floor.

A dog's parents never visit.

You never have to wait for a dog; they're ready to go 24 hours a day.

Dogs find you amusing when you're drunk.

Dogs like to go hunting and fishing.

If a dog smells another dog on you, they don't get mad. They just think it's interesting.

Dogs like to ride in the back of a pickup truck.

If a dog leaves, it won't take half of your stuff.



**AAR**  
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**US Army Corps of Engineers.**

**NQA-1**  
COMPLIANT

WE BUILD A NEW WEBSITE AND YOU WIN. HOW GREAT IS THAT?

# GEOTECHNICS.NET SCAVENGER HUNT

Think you're pretty web-savvy? Well, even if you're not, we've got a pretty fun way to celebrate the birth of the new Geotechnics.net website. First, just visit Geotechnics.net and check it out. Then, visit [geotechnics.net/win](http://geotechnics.net/win) and answer these five easy questions. After that, just sit back and wait for your surprise to arrive in the mail. Since you know us, you know it'll be good. Thanks for playing.

- 1.** When you click on to [geotechnics.net](http://geotechnics.net), what's first thing that you see?
- 2.** How cool is that?
- 3.** What accrediting bodies are Geotechnics proud to be associated with?
- 4.** Name one resource available for your use.
- 5.** What's your name, mailing address and email address (*for prize awarding purposes*)?

Thanks.



**My kingdom for a domain:** the oldest still-existing registered .com domain name is [symbolics.com](http://symbolics.com), created March 15, 1985. Others in the oldest 20 include [DEC.com](http://DEC.com), [xerox.com](http://xerox.com), [HP.com](http://HP.com), [intel.com](http://intel.com) and [GE.com](http://GE.com). VeriSign, the current registrar, reported that in mid-2008 around 77 million .com domains were registered. In addition to being an abbreviation for "network," "net" is also a variation of a Russian word ("no" or "not," also commonly pronounced "nyet"), and a domain name like "object.net" can be interpreted as "there is no object." Some domains exploit this fun, for example [mozga.net](http://mozga.net) (brain absent).



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