

Google is Not the Internet

Some marketers might claim the “verbing” of brands as the ultimate measure of their success. Case in point:

“I’ll send you an *IM* when I get home.”

“I *Xeroxed* a bunch of copies for you.”

“I *FedExed* the package yesterday.”

“I’ll *skype* you later.”

Google is perhaps the most universally recognizable example of this phenomenon, as in “Let’s *Google* ‘baby stroller reviews’ before we buy one” or “I *Googled* the company before the job interview.”

The larger-than-life search engine was originally launched in 1998 by two Stanford students whose mission was “to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.” Today, Google is the world’s most lucrative online marketplace, racking up annual profits of \$17 billion.

For less-than-savvy web surfers, the distinction between Google and the Internet may not be immediately clear. Below, we take a stab at clarifying the difference.

What is the Internet?

The Internet can be thought of as a massive network of millions of computers and servers located all around the world. All of these computers are connected by various forms of transmission, such as satellites, phone lines, wireless signals, and coaxial cables. Any information that is posted online is transmitted to all of the computers in the network, and can be viewed by any of the hundreds of millions of people who have access to an Internet connection.

The Internet uses a communications technology called TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) that defines how all of the millions of computers will “talk” to one another. Internet surfers use a Web browser (such as Internet Explorer or Firefox) to access millions of published web pages.

Those who have access to the Internet can perform a multitude of functions, including visiting interlinked websites on the World Wide Web, sending email, making web-based phone calls, and uploading and downloading files to and from the Internet.

What is Google?

Although Google has many other facets and initiatives, the company is most widely known for its search engine, Google Search. Each day, Google Search receives several hundred million search queries, making it by far the biggest search engine on the web.

Google Search works by compiling all of the content from the Internet's millions of published web pages into one massive database. This index is constantly updated whenever information is added or changed.

When a user enters a keyword or phrase, Google Search uses a complex algorithm and certain syntax rules to rank the order in which search results are displayed. Many website administrators use Google as the benchmark for the success of their Search Engine Optimization efforts.

What's the Difference?

While Google is the web's largest platform for online searches, communications, and technologies, it's not synonymous with the Internet. The Internet can be thought of as what Google feeds on: the search engine indexes all of the millions of public web pages and then serves them up to Internet users in an organized and accessible manner.

In other words: the Internet could exist without Google, but Google couldn't exist without the Internet.