Exhibiting Communications

Digital Narratives at the National Library of Medicine
THE ONCE AND FUTURE WEB
WORLDS WOVEN BY THE TELEGRAPH AND INTERNET
In the 1830s, Samuel F. B. Morse (1791-1872) invented the electric telegraph, a device that transformed the world. Yet, before he became known for his work as the inventor of the telegraph, Morse already cut a significant figure in American culture and society, as a distinguished painter and maverick political activist.

To learn more about Samuel F. B. Morse, touch a button below.
The sights, sounds and culture of telegraphy were celebrated in **popular songs** of the day as well as in a new medium that was sweeping the country, the **moving picture**. To see and hear the telegraph in song and film, touch a button.
Singing the Telegraph
The Telegraph on Record

Hey, Western Union Man
Performed by Jerry Butler
Written by Jerry Butler, Kenneth Gamble, and Leon Huff
Mercury Records, 1968

Whoa Western Union man
Send a telegram to my baby
Send a telegram, Send a telegram, whoa
Send a telegram to my baby

This is what I want you to say
I want you to tell her that I'm all alone
I tried to call her on the phone
Filming the Telegraph

The Post Telegrapher

Bison Films
1912

A western outpost comes under attack by Indians. When the post telegrapher is sent out on a scouting mission, his party is ambushed. Wounded, he somehow summons enough strength to scale a telegraph pole, tap the wire, and send a message asking for help.

QuickTime™ and a Sorenson Video 3 decompressor are needed to see this picture.
In the wake of Samuel F. B. Morse’s successful 1844 demonstration, governments and private companies \textit{raced to wire the world}. At great cost and effort, continents and cities were linked via \textit{transcontinental} and \textit{transoceanic telegraph networks}. By the early 20th century, telegraphic connections crossed and linked every landmass except Antarctica. The world was now wired.
A Multi-Medium

Another way to use the digital medium is to combine text, images, and sound in one piece, immersing the viewer in a multi-dimensional experience. The Sampling Broadway website, created by Annette Weintraub, wraps the viewer in the sights and sounds of everyday life in New York.
Show me how it works!
Bandwidth

Why are some connections to the Internet faster than others? Why does it take longer to send pictures and songs than words over the Internet? What are broadband technologies, and how do they work? Watch this animation to find out.

Touch PLAY button to start animation.
Innovators
J. C. R. Licklider
Leonard Kleinrock
Larry Roberts
Leonard Kleinrock

Computer scientist Leonard Kleinrock (1934–) played a key role in the development of the Internet. He developed the theory behind packet-switching, and his laboratory at UCLA was the home of the first node of the ARPANET, the forerunner of the Internet.

QuickTime™ and a Sorenson Video 3 decompressor are needed to see this picture.
The Telegraph Office
QuickTime™ and a Sorenson Video 3 decompressor are needed to see this picture.
Send A Message

Use the touch-screen keyboard to enter your message. When you are finished, touch Hear It or Send It.

GREETINGS TO MUSEUMS AND THE WEB 2002 FROM THE EXHIBITION PROGRAM AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE IN

Your Message

Your Message in International Morse Code

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Q W E R T Y U I O P
A S D F G H J K L
Z X C V B N M

Quit Return to Start Learn Morse Code
QuickTime™ and a Sorenson Video 3 decompressor are needed to see this picture.
Welcome to the Telegraph Office

Here is the Morse Code message that MORSE sent you. To decode your message, click on the DECODE button.

GREETINGS TO MUSEUMS AND THE WEB 2002 FROM THE EXHIBITION PROGRAM AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE IN BETHESDA MARYLAND.

THE ONCE AND FUTURE WEB
WORLDS WOVEN BY THE TELEGRAPH AND INTERNET

To visit the Home Page of "The Once and Future Web" exhibition at the National Library of Medicine, click here.
Learn Morse Code

Learning Morse Code isn’t that difficult.
Each letter of the alphabet is assigned its own configuration of dots and dashes.
Digitize This!

This program allows you to take a digital picture of yourself, manipulate the image and then email it to some friends.

To take your picture, look at the camera on top of the monitor. Make sure your image is centered in the frame. Then touch the red button.

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To take your picture, look at the camera on top of the monitor. Make sure your image is centered in the frame. Then touch the red button.
Digitize This!

To manipulate your image, touch the buttons around the picture. When you are finished, touch Email My Image.
Digitize This!

You can email your digitized image to up to three friends. This note will accompany your email.
Use the touch-screen keyboard to enter your name. Then touch Continue.

Hi. I'm visiting an exhibition about the history of the Telegraph and Internet called "The Once and Future Web" at the National Library of Medicine. I'm sending you a digital portrait that I created at the exhibition.

Enjoy,

(Your name will go here)