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Doubleyou, Doubleyou, Doubleyou ?!?

"WWW": What is all the fuss about?

It's the 21st century now, so we don't expect to be asked what the Internet is. It comes, therefore, as a great surprise to be asked, "What is all this doubleyou doubleyou doubleyou business mentioned in the Helvetia?"

Well it's not actually all that simple to explain. Many allegories involving empty yoghurt cups and bits of string pop into mind but they don't seem to truly embrace the spirit of the Internet.

We started by asking some kids what they think because, as we all know, kids know everything best...

"It's on the computer and has Google and you can see the weather."

- Sascha, 4yrs old.

"A place you can search stuff. You can play games but only sometimes and not all games."

- Luca, 7yrs old.

"It is for Skyping, playing games, booking flights, ordering food, finding recipes, ordering mail, buying new things, watching movies, looking at pictures and ordering canvases."

- Cedric, 6yrs old.

"WWW" Stands for World Wide Web. The World Wide Web refers to the information available from computers all over the world connected to each other via a network of wires, fibre optic cables and radio waves. This web of computers is called the Internet. Making sure that all these computers can communicate with one another, are hundreds and thousands of humble IT (Information Technology) geeks and nerds tirelessly beaver away in dark corners around the globe.

When you use the Internet, by visiting the Swiss Society Website for example, you click on links that join websites together. This network of links is called the World Wide Web.

So how about finding a website with information you need but don't know the address? You need a directory of enquiries, something that will search through all the content on the Internet and provide you with a really simple and intuitive interface. Google to the rescue! This is what Google does. It is by far the most complex and valuable function they provide.

A recent statistic provided by www.worldwidewebsite.com estimates that the indexed World Wide Web consists of at least 8.67 billion pages. That's 8,670,000,000 different sources of information that may or may not relate to your specific search requirements. Without Google and other search providers, the World Wide Web would be next to useless.

The Internet provides a perfect platform for social networking, with Facebook being the most popular. Facebook allows members to publish their current thoughts instantly to ALL their on-line friends at once. In turn, these friends make comments, provide encouragement, make jokes or ignore you. An approximation of real life but without the face-to-face, tactile experience.

They call this the Information Age. What the Internet has done is to make information instantly accessible to anyone at any place. This opens up a whole range of possibilities that were, until about 20 years ago, exclusively in the minds of science fiction authors. The Internet has changed the way we do business and communicate with one another.

So hopefully this sheds some light on what all the fuss is about.

By David Latham

Swiss abroad camp: a personal account by Natalie Hess

Natalie Hess from the Auckland Club has visited a Swiss Camp and tells us about her experience. Thank you Natalie!

Can you imagine going overseas, meeting strangers, going places and doing all the fun activities you can think of? Well, this is Swiss Camp. Instantly, you make good friends which I still have from my experience. Almost every day we hiked, bussed and rode the train to many places around Switzerland. We had competitions, exciting activities, hikes and loads of free time planned for us to spend with our friends. Every night ended with competitions and delicious dessert made by the amazing cooks.

There was a spa day, casino night, a dance and heaps of challenging activities made by our friendly camp councillors.

I highly recommend Swiss Abroad camp. It was smooth running and a lot of fun. You can even get funding to help you get there! Take the chance of a lifetime.

By Natalie Hess

Natalie Hess performing on August 1st 2012 in Auckland

