Work on Stuff that Matters

Tim O’Reilly

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ETech
March 9, 2009
BIDS TO HALT FINANCIAL CRISIS
RESHAPE LANDSCAPE OF WALL ST.

By FLOYD NORRIS
and VIKAS RAJAJ

Wall Street and the federal
government played a game of
chicken over the weekend, and
neither side backed down, push-
ing Lehman Brothers toward
bankruptcy and setting off wor-
ries of a worldwide self-off when
marketers open on Monday.

While some feared a precipi-
tous decline in the markets, oth-
ers hoped that Bank of Ameri-
ca’s surprise announcement Sun-
day that it was hoping Merrill Lynch
might provide enough insur-
ance to calm investors.

“‘That would be very green news,’ said Alan Greenspan, the
chief investment strategist for
Charles Schwab & Company, who
said the bank of America’s $50 billion
or $20 billion offer, a price far
higher than Merrill’s close on Fri-
day but less than a third of what
the stock was worth early last
year, before the mortgage crisis
began to damage financial firms.

With major Asian markets
closed for a holiday on Monday,
the answer regarding investor re-
sponse could well until European
markets open, and, after that, the
American exchanges.

In the Lehman talks on Sun-
day, the government, worried
about the precedents it had set in
helping to rescue the investment
bank Bear Stearns and the mort-
gage finance giants, Fannie Mae
and Freddie Mac, wanted Wall
Street to collectively take the
risk that Lehman’s assets were
worth far less than the firm
claimed. The firm, worried
about their own capital, balked,
though in the end they may take
on some of the risk as Lehman’s
investments are unwound.

Both the government and Wall
Street shake up

Clockwise from top left, Richard Fuld Jr. of Lehman, John Thain
of Merrill Lynch and Kenneth Lewis of Bank of America.

Residents of Galveston Island, in Texas, lacking services like
power and water after Hurricane Ike, were evacuated Sunday.

After Surviving Storm, Fleeing
A Fetid, Devastated Galveston

By JAN URENDA

GALVESTON, Tex. — For
days of people stuck on an
increasingly cold Galveston Is-
land, the aftermath of Hurricane
Ike is proving to be far worse
than the storm itself.

With no water or power, no
working toilets, no food or
shelter, people faced growing
public health concerns here on
Sunday. More than 2,000 resi-
dents who had defied an evacua-
tion order were taken off the is-
land, and some officials tried to
much heat or too little food.

Across coastal areas of Texas,
officials on Sunday mounted
the largest rescue operation in
the state’s history. [Page A11]”

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• Photo by Jeff Kubina: http://www.flickr.com/photos/kubina/47264499/in/set-1030659/

Monday, March 9, 2009
Not an investment bubble - a reality bubble!

• Financial crises
• Worst income inequality since the Gilded Age
• Oil price shock
• Global warming
• Decline in science literacy & education
• Water scarcity
• Exotic diseases
• Aging populations and soaring health costs
• Decline in US economic competitiveness and innovation
• Dysfunctional political system
Throw Sheep At Your Friends

Yes you read that right! Throw animated sheep at your friends!

Become a Fan
Block Application
Share +

About this Application

4.5 out of 5
Based on 1 review

Users:
319 monthly active users

Category
Just for Fun

This application was not developed by Facebook.

Throw Stuff At Your Friends

This application was not developed by Facebook.
A lot of people thought I was saying to work on non-profits, or maybe social ventures...
I’m actually saying that the world’s great challenges are also the world’s great opportunities
What we choose to fight is so tiny!
What fights us is so great!
If only we would let ourselves be dominated
as things do by some immense storm,
we would become strong too, and not need names.

When we win it's with small things,
and the triumph itself makes us small.

--Rainer Maria Rilke, The Man Watching
Better Place is working to build an electric car network, using technology available today. Our goals? Sustainable transportation, global energy independence and freedom from oil.
Shai Agassi at #TED: Arguments about getting off oil reminiscent of args against "getting off slavery" in 1800s Britain.

3:31 PM Feb 5th from twirlr
Making solar cheaper than coal
March 6, 2009 4:00 AM PST

By Martin La Monica
Staff Writer, CNET News

The day after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, Emmanuel Sachs decided that it was time to get back into the solar-energy business.

Starting in the 1970s, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology mechanical-engineering professor had made significant contributions to solar, including a cell-making technique now used by Evergreen Solar. But once research funding for solar photovoltaics—converting sunlight into electricity—dried up in the 1980s, Sachs diverted into other fields, including 3D printing to help designers quickly build prototypes.

To Sachs, September 11 was a reminder of the perils of an oil-dependent U.S. energy policy. The events that transpired that day were jarring enough to prompt him to restart his solar research. Nearly eight years later, he is chief technical officer at 1366 Technologies, a company formed two years ago to commercialize the work he had done at MIT.

“I first got into solar photovoltaics as an idealistic young person,” said Sachs, who is now in his mid-50s and is on leave from MIT for two years. “What really got me in full-time (again) was some of the same but also recognizing that there were a lot of issues at play, including national security...and climate change.”

“I first got into solar photovoltaics as an idealistic young person. (Now there are) a lot...
vision

In 2006, less than two percent of the world's energy consumption was supplied by renewable sources. One reason for this is the relatively high cost of producing renewable energy. Makani Power is seeking to harness high-altitude wind energy to produce energy at an unsubsidized real cost significantly below that of the least expensive coal-fired power plants, the current benchmark of the lowest cost source of power.

why high-altitude wind?

Along with solar, wind represents the only renewable source of energy that is substantially larger than the world's current energy needs. Moreover, all of the renewable energy technologies (wind, solar, tidal, hydroelectric, biomass, geothermal), high-altitude wind has the largest energy per square foot. Capturing a small fraction of the global high-altitude wind energy flux could be sufficient to supply the current energy needs of the globe. Makani is developing high-altitude wind energy extraction technologies aimed at the most powerful wind resources.
Plug into a Greener Grid: RE<C and RechargeIT Initiatives

A significant amount of global greenhouse gas emissions are generated by coal-fired power plants and vehicles. To slow global warming, we must radically — and quickly — cut these emissions. Plug-in vehicles offer a major opportunity to reduce oil use and corresponding emissions while renewable energy sources – solar, wind, geothermal and others – could supplant a major portion of the planet's electricity generated from coal.

Google.org is confronting the climate crisis on two fronts: We're working on developing utility scale renewable energy cheaper than coal (RE<C) and accelerating the commercialization of plug-in vehicles through the RechargeIT initiative. Our over-arching vision is that one day a large portion of the world's vehicles will plug into an electric grid fueled by renewable energy.

Develop Renewable Energy Cheaper Than Coal (RE<C)

RE<C will work to develop electricity from renewable energy sources that is cheaper than electricity produced from coal with a goal of producing one gigawatt of renewable energy capacity — enough to power a city the size of San Francisco — in years, not decades. As part of this effort, Google.org is making strategic investments and grants, advancing key public policies, and using Google products to unlock critical information.

Renewable energy is clean, abundant, and inexhaustible. However, electricity from renewables today is generally more expensive than electricity from coal. RE<C is focused on making renewable energy cheaper than coal-fired power which today is the predominant source of electricity worldwide and a large contributor to global warming pollution.

Initially, this project to create renewable energy cheaper than coal will focus on advanced solar thermal power, wind power technologies, and enhanced geothermal systems – but we'll explore other potential breakthrough technologies, too. The company has created a renewable energy R&D group within Google's engineering ranks and is looking for talented engineers, technologists, energy experts and others to join.

In addition, Google.org is taking several significant steps to advance RE<C. First, we are making strategic grants and investments that demonstrate a path toward producing renewable energy at a cost below that of coal-fired power plants. Google.org will also continue to advance public policies that accelerate the development of renewable energy. Finally, we'll use Google's innovative products and resources to unlock information that enables innovation and raises awareness about the benefits of renewable energy.
NASA-Cisco climate project to flash 'Planetary Skin'

By MICHAEL BURNHAM, Greenwire
Published: March 3, 2009

Climate science isn’t exactly sexy, but the name of the U.S. space agency's latest project has some sizzle.

NASA and Cisco Systems Inc. are developing "Planetary Skin" -- a marriage of satellites, land sensors and the Internet -- to capture, analyze and interpret global environmental data. Under terms of an agreement announced during a Capitol Hill climate summit today, NASA and Cisco (Nasdaq: CSCO) will develop the online collaborative platform to process data from satellite, airborne and sea- and land-based sensors around the globe.

The goal is to translate the data into information that governments and businesses can use to mitigate and adapt to climate change and manage energy and natural resources more effectively, NASA and Cisco officials said Wednesday.
A SMARTER PLANET
WILL BE INSTRUMENTED, INTERCONNECTED, INTELLIGENT.
PEOPLE WANT IT. WE CAN DO IT.
“Big Hairy Audacious Goals”

--Jim Collins and Jerry Porras, Built to Last
Technology Quarterly

Brain scan

The internet's librarian

Mar 5th 2009

From The Economist print edition

Brewster Kahle wants to create a free, online collection of human knowledge. It sounds impossibly idealistic—but he is making progress

FOR a man who has set himself a seemingly impossible mission, Brewster Kahle seems remarkably laid back. Relaxing in the black leather recliner that serves as his office chair, his stockinged feet wriggling with evident enthusiasm, the founder of the Internet Archive explains what has driven him for more than a decade. "We are trying to build Alexandria 2.0," says Mr Kahle with a wide-eyed, boyish grin. Sure, and plenty of people are trying to abolish hunger, too.

It would be easy to dismiss Mr Kahle as an idealistic fruitcake, but for one thing: he has an impressive record when it comes to setting lofty goals and then lining up the people and technology needed to get the job done. "Brewster is a visionary who looks at things differently," says Carole Moore, chief librarian at the University of Toronto. "He is able to imagine doing things that everyone else thinks are impossible. But then he does them."

Mr Kahle is an unostentatious millionaire who does not "wear his heart on his sleeve," says John Port, a well-known technology figure in Silicon Valley.
YES WE SCAN

THE COMMITTEE TO REBOOT .GOV

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David Halperin  
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nominum.com

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jedsundwall.com

David Gold  
spindlelaw.com

Want a poster?

Affiliations are for identification purposes only. Want to join the committee?
“We need to connect citizens with each other to engage them more fully and directly in solving the problems that face us. We must use all available technologies and methods to open up the federal government, creating a new level of transparency to change the way business is conducted in Washington and giving Americans the chance to participate in government deliberations and decision-making in ways that were not possible only a few years ago.”

- From Barack Obama’s campaign platform on technology
Vivek Kundra nominated as Federal CIO. This is great news. Vivek is a rock star!
Digital Public Square

The Office of the Chief Technology Officer has launched the District of Columbia’s Digital Public Square which puts you, the citizen, in the driver’s seat to discover how District agencies work, participate in the democratic process and connect with your government.

Discover

Popular Downloads
- Crime Incidents
  - Download DC Index Crime data. Updated daily.
  - Metadata
- Juvenile Arrests and Charges
  - Download Juvenile Arrests and Charges Data. Updated daily.
  - Metadata
- Purchase Orders
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- Public Space Permits
  - Download Public Space Permits Data. Updated daily.
  - Metadata
- IT Staff Augmentation Procurements
  - Provides information about the District’s IT Staff Augmentation Procurements.
  - Metadata

Participate

Featured Applications
- iLive.at
  - Live or plan to live in DC? Then iLive.at is for you! Enter a DC address and iLive.at will present you with information tailored to that exact location.
  - Go there > Download source code
- D.C. Historic Tours
  - DC Historic Tours is a slick Google Maps mashup that combines custom walking tour creation with Flickr photo feeds and Wikipedia entries.
  - Go there > Download source code

Connect

Twitter
- DCRA Off-Campus Housing Initiative
- Dcra: @vulcansmuse Follow these, they're more useful. @wmata @DCMetrored @DCMetrorange @DCMetrongo @DCMetroblue @DCMetroryellow
  - dcca: @jland We're checking with OCTO now. Our stuff goes there (which it is) and then to you. We'll get it figured out and I'll let you know.
  - dcca: @sipreani What happened? Why DCRA?

Apps for Democracy on Twitter
- apps08: Great post by OhMYgov about #apps08: http://tinyurl.com/dnykte
  - apps08: @Steve_Cobb yeah there should be the bronze sponsor level open for startups! http://twintech3.eventbrite.com
  - apps08: Apps for Democracy has been entered for a United Nations Public Service Award! http://tinyurl.com/76k85q #apps08 @mlblaze Howdy!
Gov 2.0 Summit: The Platform for Change

"We must use all available technologies and methods to open up the federal government, creating a new level of transparency to change the way business is conducted in Washington, and giving Americans the chance to participate in government deliberations and decision-making in ways that were not possible only a few years ago."

—From Barack Obama’s campaign platform on technology

The Obama administration signals a sea change in the way our government will use technology for our greater good, as well as the way citizens will contribute to running our nation. The Web 2.0 principles of user engagement, rapid development, and real-time intelligence that guided President Obama during his campaign are the same principles that will shape the future of our political operating system.

But the task of reinventing government is too important to be left solely to the government. Gov 2.0 Summit, a new government technology conference co-produced by O’Reilly Media and TechWeb, capitalizes on the momentum for change and broad engagement, creating a non-partisan forum for addressing the monumental challenges our nation faces. Gov 2.0 Summit is a place for technologists to rise to the call of public service, offering up their internet expertise to its best and highest purpose.

Gov 2.0 Summit will bring together policy-makers, elected officials, upper management in city, state, and federal agencies, technology leadership in all levels of government, private-sector internet business leaders, contractors, and consultants to establish high-level thought leadership across the spectrum of stake-holders. The event will frame the important questions before us with the participation of government, industry, non-profits, and academia:

- How can we use technology to make government more transparent and accountable?
- How do we bridge the culture of Silicon Valley with the culture of Washington?
Take the long view
Tomorrow's ultimate woman on a star-flung crusade of vengeance and victory

At five, they slaughtered her parents and doomed her to slavery.

At seventeen, she escaped from Earth as a million-dollar fugitive.

At eighteen, she commanded an army in outer space.

Coded relay for Rissa Kerguelen through the Maison Renalle

The Rissa Kerguelen Saga Copyright ©1976 by F.M. Busby.
The Big Here and Long Now

by Brian Eno

It was 1978. I was new to New York. A rich acquaintance had invited me to a housewarming party, and, as my cabdriver wound his way down increasingly potholed and dingy streets, I began wondering whether he'd got the address right. Finally he stopped at the doorway of a gloomy, unwelcoming industrial building. Two winos were crumpled on the steps, oblivious. There was no other sign of life in the whole street.

"I think you may have made a mistake", I ventured.

But he hadn't. My friend's voice called "Top Floor!" when I rang the bell, and I thought -- knowing her sense of humour -- "Oh -- this is going to be some kind of joke!" I was all ready to laugh. The elevator creaked and clanked slowly upwards, and I stepped out - into a multi-million dollar palace. The contrast with the rest of the building and the street outside couldn't have been starker.

I just didn't understand. Why would anyone spend so much money building a place like that in a neighbourhood like this? Later I got into conversation with the hostess. "Do you like it here?" I asked. "It's the best place I've ever lived", she replied. "But I mean, you know, is it an interesting neighbourhood?" "Oh -- the neighbourhood? Well...that's outside!" she laughed.

The incident stuck in my mind. How could you live so blind to your surroundings? How could you not think of 'where I live' as including at least some of the space outside your four walls, some of the bits you couldn't lock up behind you? I felt this was something particular to
2033 Energy Mix
Units shown in Terawatts (TW)

(carbon-free)
Biofuels: 0.5

Fossil Fuels: 2

Existing Nuclear: 1

Existing Hydro / Renewables: 0.5

Photo Voltaic Solar: 2

Solar Thermal: 2

Geothermal: 2

Nuclear: 3

Wind: 2

Total: 15 TW
Scenario Planning and “Robust Strategies”
Scenarios for Oil Drilling: 1980–90

Forecasts by Major Oilfield Equipment Group
Scenarios for Oil Drilling: 1980–90

Active Rigs (Yearly Averages)

Forecasts by Major Oilfield Equipment Group

Actual
IBM’s original forecast for the PC
IBM’s original forecast for the PC
Scenario Planning

Singularity

Government saves us

We save ourselves

Global Economic & Environmental Collapse
Scenario Planning

Government saves us

Singularity

Global Economic & Environmental Collapse

We save ourselves

Monday, March 9, 2009
Choose your own adventure
1. Work on something that matters to you more than money
Deliberately Unsustainable Business Models

I once asked Eric Siegel, the Director of the New York Hall of Science, why museums are rarely innovative shining stars on the cutting edge of culture. He commented that as non-profits, museums are built to survive, not to succeed. Unlike startups and rock stars, museums aren’t structured to shoot for the moon and burn up trying. They’re made to plod along. Maybe it’s time to change that.

Last year, I met Mark Allen, the founder of Machine Project, an extremely cool “post-educational” space in Los Angeles that is part art gallery, part workshop space, part mad scientist party central. They host events like Dorkbake in which people design their own Easybake-esque ovens and then bake cakes in them. Next month, the space is being turned into a magic forest. Their mission statement is: “Machine Project exists to encourage heroic experiments of the gracefully over-ambitious.”

At one point, Mark commented that they have a “deliberately unsustainable” business model. In other words: do great stuff while you can, and when you can’t do it anymore, stop. This is the model that governs most businesses and artistic endeavors. It’s the reason terms like “jump the shark” exist. Most companies, rock bands, and sports teams are only brilliant for so long. Then they start to slide. Then they die.

CONTACT
Call me, email me, visit me, hire me!

And get a sneak peek of my book.

WHAT IS MUSEUM 2.0?
Museum 2.0 explores ways that web 2.0 philosophies can be applied in museum design. For more information, click here.

New to the blog? Check out the Museum 2.0 Living Archive to find posts that relate to your questions.

MUSEUM 2.0 IN WEEKLY EMAIL FORM
Enter your Email
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Taking a Road Trip

Taking a Road Trip

It’s not a tour of gas stations!
This might be where you end up

http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2008/06/12/opinion/0613-GAS-PUMPS_index.html
2. Create more value than you capture
I Knew Bernie Madoff Was Cheating, That's Why I Invested with Him

Posted Dec 12, 2008 12:45pm EST by Henry Blodget in Investing, Newsmakers, Banking
Related: ^DJI, &GSPC, ^IXIC

From ClusterStock.com, Dec. 12, 2008:

Interesting tidbits coming in about Bernie Madoff (read indictment here).

Specifically, we're hearing that the smart money KNEW Bernie had to be cheating, because the returns he was generating were impossibly good. Many Wall Streeters suspected the wrong rigged game, though: They thought it was insider trading, not a Ponzi scheme. And here's the best part: That's why they invested with him.

For years and years I've heard people say that [Bernie's] investment performance was too good to be true. The returns were too steady – like GE earnings under Welch – and too high given the supposed strategy.

One Madoff investor, himself a legend, told me that Madoff's performance "just doesn't make sense. The numbers can't be straight." Another sophisticated Madoff investor actually went through trade confirms in order to reverse-engineer the strategy and said, "it doesn't add up."

So why did these smart and skeptical investors keep investing?
THE GIANT POOL OF MONEY

Clarence Nathan was a man with three part-time jobs who earned about $45,000 a year, and yet a bank loaned him $540,000. The bank never checked his income.

"I wouldn't have loaned me the money, and nobody that I know would have loaned me the money," Nathan said. "I mean, I know guys who are criminals who wouldn't lend me that money, and they'd break your kneecap."

But this kind of lending happened, over and over again since 2003, leading to the mortgage crisis that has disrupted the global economy.

How did this mess happen? Through the news media you can pick up bits and pieces. But how many people really understand the housing crisis, why Bear Stearns went under, or sub-prime mortgages, or why the rest of the world was pulled under too?

These questions have bugged This American Life producer Alex Blumberg since early 2006 when someone told him about a NINA mortgage loan -- no income, no assets needed.

"Because I'm not much of a financial person, all my friends grew bored of talking about it with me," he said. The exception was Adam Davidson, NPR's international business and economics correspondent. Friends since working at WBEZ in Chicago in the 1990s, they've been
Scavengers frequently descend on abandoned houses, removing appliances, plumbing fixtures and, as in this kitchen, copper pipes.

Photo: Reuben Cox for The New York Times

RELATED
- Article: All Boarded Up
VICE CITY

RECENTLY, at a dinner party, a friend mentioned that he’d never seen so many outsiders moving into town. This struck me as a highly suspect statement. After all, we were talking about Detroit, home of corrupt former mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, beleaguered General Motors and the 0-16 Lions. Compared with other cities’ buzzing, glittering skylines, ours sits largely abandoned, like some hulking beehive devastated by colony collapse. Who on earth would move here?

Then again, I myself had moved to Detroit, from Brooklyn. For $100,000, I bought a town house that sits downtown in the largest and arguably the most beautiful Mies van der Rohe development ever built, an island of perfect modernism forgotten by the rest of the world.

Two other guests that night, a couple in from Chicago, had also just invested in some Detroit real estate. That weekend Jon and Sara Brumit bought a house for $100.

Let’s build a smarter planet.
Build a simple system - let it evolve
The first IBM PC
On May 31st, 2000, I signed up with a new service called LiveJournal. I was user 4,136 which entitled me a permanent account and street cred in some alternate geeky universe which I have not yet visited. I was living in the Sunshine Biscuit Factory in Oakland California and starting a company to dispatch couriers, taxis, and emergency services from the web.

One night in July of that year I had an idea to make a more “live” LiveJournal. Real-time, global, and all that jazz. This was before AJAX, web sockets, web 2.0, or any of that stuff.
Be friendly to those who extend you
$1,500
Beautiful Modern 2 bedroom bi-level 1 1/2 bath
Moore St & S Broad St
Philadelphia

e-mail

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<td>$1500</td>
<td>1bd</td>
<td>The Wanamaker House-Luxury Condo Building-Rittenhouse Square (1 block)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$1500</td>
<td>2bd</td>
<td>Loft – newly renovated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Be generous in boosting the work of others
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RECENT COMMENTS

- Hands-on RFID for Makers
  Thanks Brian and Shirley for the clarification.
- Hands-on RFID for Makers
  Thanks, Shirley; that's right, we'll be collecting the payment at the beginning.
- Hands-on RFID for Makers
  William, I believe the speakers will be collecting payment as the session begins. Credit card/cash, no checks.