The War for the Web

Tim O'Reilly

Web 2.0 Expo NY
November 17, 2009
I really love the web
Browser Wars

Best viewed in Netscape

Best viewed in Internet Explorer

- Others (Opera, Safari, PSP...)
- Firefox, Mozilla, Camino, etc.
- Netscape classic
- Internet Explorer for Windows
Introducing the Google Chrome OS

7/07/2009 09:37:08 PM

It's been an exciting nine months since we introduced the Google Chrome browser. Already, over 30 million people use it regularly. We designed Google Chrome for people who live on the web — searching for information, checking email, catching up on the news, shopping or just staying in touch with friends. However, the operating systems that browsers run on were designed in an era where there was no web. So today, we're announcing a new project that's a natural extension of Google Chrome — the Google Chrome Operating System. It's our attempt to re-think what operating systems should be.

Google Chrome OS is an open source, lightweight operating system that will initially be targeted at netbooks. Later this year we will open-source its code, and netbooks running Google Chrome OS will be available for consumers in the second half of 2010. Because we're already talking to partners about the project, and we'll soon be working with the open source community, we wanted to share our vision now so everyone understands what we are trying to achieve.

Speed, simplicity and security are the key aspects of Google Chrome OS. We're designing the OS to be fast and lightweight, to start up and get you onto the web in a few seconds. The user interface is minimal to stay out of your way, and most of the user experience takes place on the web. And as we did for the Chrome browser, we are going back to the basics and completely redesigning the underlying security architecture of the OS so that users don't have to deal with viruses, malware and security updates. It should just work.

Google Chrome OS will run on both x86 as well as ARM chips and we are working with multiple OEMs to bring a number of netbooks to market next year. The software architecture is simple — Google Chrome running within a new windowing system on top of a Linux kernel. For application developers, the web is the platform. All web-based applications will automatically work and new applications can be written using your favorite web technologies. And of course, these apps will run not only on Google Chrome OS, but on any standards-based browser on Windows, Mac and Linux thereby giving developers the largest user base of any platform.
News Corp. Considers a Google Ban

By Andrew LeVasseur

News Corp. Chief Executive Rupert Murdoch set the Internet abuzz Monday after an interview appeared online in which he said the company is considering blocking Google from being able to search its Web sites.

During the wide-ranging Sky News Australia interview (he and interviewer David Speers veered from the free-versus-paid debate to President Barack Obama’s job performance), Mr. Murdoch said that consumers shouldn’t have had free access to information online that they paid for in
How Murdoch Can Really Hurt Google And Shift The Balance Of Power In Search

By Michael Arrington on November 13, 2009 194 Comments

I've mostly been a spectator in this whole Rupert Murdoch de-indexing his news sites from Google circus. First because I didn't really believe he even knew what he was talking about (or how much traffic it'd lose), and more recently because Chuck Schneverd took the story here at TechCrunch.

But suddenly this is a fascinating story to me for a bunch of reasons. This may be less about the self-destruction of traditional journalism and more about the search wars.

Matthew's CEO Jason Calacanis, who used to work for Murdoch's Digital Chief Jonathan Miller when the two were at AOL, posted a video last week (embedded below) with a simple suggestion: Not only should Murdoch de-index from Google, but he should get Bing to pay him for the exclusive right to index it.

If other media companies joined Murdoch Google could actually find itself in a very difficult position, where they had content that Google didn't, if you know what I mean. Will Street Journal ads, you
Toolbars that hide the URL
Be careful

For the safety and privacy of your Facebook account, remember to never enter your password unless you’re on the real Facebook web site. Also be sure to only download software from sites you trust.

http://radar.oreilly.com

Continue Cancel

To learn more about staying safe on the internet, visit our Security Page. You can also check out the malware and phishing Wikipedia articles.

Are you a site owner seeing this URL in your referer logs? It means that a Facebook user shared a link to your content with their friends. Establish better contact with your audience with these Facebook products:

Advertising Blog Share Connect

Facebook © 2009 English (US)
Facebook in 2010: no longer a walled garden

by David Recordon | @dawman92 | comments: 18

A lot of what I’ve been working on the past two years has been built on the assumption that the model that social networks use today will fundamentally change. Social networks have largely been built on the premise of being walled gardens in such a way that users can’t communicate or share content or friends across networks; put simply this is what keeps a Facebook user from being able to send a message to a MySpace user. This is the same model that destroyed AOL, CompuServe and Prodigy’s ISP businesses when normal people chose the Internet itself versus their thoughtfully curated walled gardens.

Over the past year we’ve seen an uptick in the infrastructure, development tools and projects designed to build the social web (i.e. I define the social web as something that is inherently decentralized, just like the web itself). On top of that, MySpace has gone from being one of the most developer-friendly social networks to the most open source in existence. With MySpace I’m able to use my account to sign into other sites via OpenID, share my activity using Activity Streams, build applications using OpenSocial, interact with their APIs using OAuth and access APIs that not only allow the creation of new content within MySpace’s garden but also extract data from it.

While Facebook has made significant contributions to open source projects, ranging from some of their own to memcached, they’ve largely been absent from much of the progress around building the social web (remember, I define it as being inherently decentralized). Instead, like Microsoft they have willfully ignored many industry efforts in favor of their own proprietary development platforms. To their credit, they’ve been one of the most innovative social networks over the past two years, pushing the boundaries of what’s been thought of as possible with features like social tagging in photos, Newsfeed, Platform...
web 2.0
The Internet as Platform
Windows Azure is a cloud services operating system that serves as the development, service hosting and service management environment for the Windows Azure platform. Windows Azure provides developers with on-demand compute and storage to host, scale, and manage web applications on the Internet through Microsoft datacenters.

Windows Azure is an open platform that supports Microsoft and non-Microsoft languages and environments. To build applications and services on Windows Azure, developers can use their existing Microsoft Visual Studio® expertise. In addition, Windows Azure supports popular standards and protocols including SOAP, REST, XML, and PHP.

Use Windows Azure to:
- Run commodity processes in the cloud
- Build, modify, and distribute scalable applications with minimal on-premises resources

Get Started Now
- A familiar development experience
- On-demand scalability
- Reduced time-to-market for your applications

Learn More
Get Tools & SDK
Run your web apps on Google's infrastructure.
Easy to build, easy to maintain, easy to scale.

Java™ Language Support

App Engine recently unveiled its second language: Java. This release includes our Java runtime, integration with Google Web Toolkit, and a Google Plugin for Eclipse, giving you an end-to-end Java solution for AJAX web applications. The Java runtime is now available for anyone to use, so please give it a try and send us your feedback.
- Get the full scoop in our Java blog.
- Click over to YouTube to watch our Campfire One announcements.
- See our docs for other new features like Orion support, database import, and access to file-sized data.

Grow Beyond The Free Quotas

App Engine developers can now purchase additional computing resources beyond the free quota limits. Scale your application to millions of users and pay only for what you use. App Engine will always be free to get started so you can try it out with no risk.
- Learn more from our blog and pay on the new paid quota features.
- For details on quotas and pricing, see our docs.
**S-cloud** (ˈdiː klaʊd əlso ˈdɛl-ə-to klaʊd) n. 1. an API that abstracts the differences between clouds.

Start an instance on an internal cloud, then with the same code start another on EC2 or Rackspace. Deltacloud protects your apps from cloud API changes and incompatibilities, so you can concentrate on managing cloud instances the way you want.

**Deltacloud** gives you:
- REST API (simple, any-platform access)
- Support for EC2, RHEV-M, Rackspace, VMware ESXi and more coming soon
- Backward compatibility across versions, providing long-term stability for scripts, tools and

One level up, **Deltacloud Portal** provides a web UI in front of the Deltacloud API. With Deltacloud Portal, your users can:
- View image status and states across clouds, all in one place
- Migrate instances from one cloud to another
- Manage images locally and
Apple Is Growing Rotten To The Core: Official Google Voice App Blocked From App Store

Earlier today we learned that Apple had begun to pull all Google Voice-enabled applications from the App Store, citing the fact that they "duplicate features that come with the iPhone." Now comes even worse news: we've learned that Apple has blocked Google's official Google Voice application itself from the App Store. In other words, Google Voice — one of the best things to happen to telephony services in a very long time — will have no presence at all on the App Store. If there's ever been a time to be furious with Apple, now is it.

A Google Spokesperson has told us the following:

We work hard to bring Google applications to a number of mobile platforms, including the iPhone. Apple did not approve the Google Voice application we submitted six weeks ago to the Apple App Store. We will continue to work to bring our services to iPhone users — for example, by taking advantage of advances in mobile browsers.

Of course, it's not hard to guess who's behind the restriction: our old friend AT&T. Google Voice scares the carriers. It allows users to send free SMS messages and get cheap long-distance over Google Voice's lines. It also makes it trivial to switch to a new phone service, because everyone calls the Google Voice number anyway. Carriers have known about Google Voice for a long time,
Facebook iPhone Dev Quits Project Over Apple Tyranny

By Jason Kranz in November 11, 2009  308 Comments

“My decision to stop iPhone development has had everything to do with Apple’s policies,” Joe Hewitt.

Facebook developer Joe Hewitt, the man behind the immensely popular Facebook application for iPhone, has just tweeted 1 that he’s done with the project:

“Time for me to try something new. I’ve handed the Facebook iPhone app off to another engineer, and I’m onto a new project.”

We reached out to Hewitt for more details, and he attributed his decision to quit the project entirely on Apple’s tyrannical App Store approval policies:

My decision to stop iPhone development has had everything to do with Apple’s policies. I respect their right to manage their platform however they want, however, I am philosophically opposed to the existence of their review process. I am very concerned that they are setting a horrible precedent for other software platforms, and soon gatekeepers will start inflicting the lives of every software developer.

The web is still unrestricted and free, and so I am returning to my roots as a web developer. In the long term, I would like to be able to say that I helped to make the web the best mobile platform available, rather than being part of the transition to a world where every developer...
“You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means.”
What Web 2.0 is Really All About

weblink

We’re building an internet operating system
Building the Internet Operating System

MAY 13–16, 2002 • WESTIN SANTA CLARA, SANTA CLARA, CA

“Peer-to-peer and Web Services are only the first steps towards the emergence of a distributed Internet operating system.”
“You keep using that word. I do not think it means what you think it means.”
“Data is the Intel Inside”
The Internet Operating System is a Data Operating System

- Its subsystems are databases of
  - People
  - Places
  - Things
  - Prices
  - Documents
  - Images
  - Sounds
  - Relationships
  - Trust metrics
  - ...

- and services that help people use them
  - Search
  - Payment
  - Matching and Recognition
  - ...

Google Shrinks Another Market With Free Turn-By-Turn Navigation

by Brady Forrest | @brady | comments: 10

Google has announced a free turn-by-turn navigation system for Android 2.0 phones such as the Droid. Google Maps Navigation is only available in the US right now. Google's release of a navigation system is huge, but not unexpected, given TomTom (owner of former US mapping data provider Tele Atlas (Radar post)), Navis (owner of mapping data provider NAVTEQ), Garmin and other personal navigation devices (PNDs). That it is free will fundamentally change the industry (and sell a lot of Android 2.0 phones in the...
Search in plain English
Search by voice
Traffic view
Search along route
Satellite view
Street view

Google Maps Navigation brings the speed, power and simplicity of Google search to your car. If you don’t know the address you’re looking for, don’t worry. Simply enter the name of a business, a landmark or just about anything into the search box, and Google will find it for you. Then press “Navigate”, and you’re on your way.

Traffic view
Google Maps Navigation determines your current location and zooms in on your route, so you’ll see clear, easy-to-read turn-by-turn directions. If there’s traffic, an arrow will point to the block with the light. To zoom out to see a wider map view or to zoom in, simply zoom on the map. You can also press the left or right arrow key to browse your route, and then press the OK button when you’re ready to begin navigation.

Traffic view
Google Maps Navigation uses the same satellite imagery as Google Maps on the desktop to help you get to your destination. Turn on the satellite layer for a high-resolution, 3D view of your upcoming route. Besides looking cool, satellite view can help you make sense of complicated maneuvers.

Street View
Google Maps Navigation uses the same satellite imagery as Google Maps on the desktop to help you get to your destination. Turn on the satellite layer for a high-resolution, 3D view of your upcoming route. Besides looking cool, satellite view can help you make sense of complicated maneuvers.

Street View
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An application that depends on *cooperating* cloud data services:

- Location
- Search
- Speech recognition
- Live Traffic
- Imagery
Do we see the beginning of a showdown?

- Apple to Google: you can’t run Google Voice on the iPhone
- Google to Apple: the new Google Maps with free turn-by-turn directions is only available for Android devices
Google Redefines Disruption: The “Less Than Free” Business Model

I like to think of myself as an aficionado of business disruption. After all, as a venture capitalist it is imperative to understand ways in which a smaller company can put the canes bets on a home run. Here's one. 
Here's the kicker

Only Google can offer these services completely free
There are only two players in this game.
The Navigation Destination

Tele Atlas delivers the digital maps and dynamic content that power some of the world's most essential navigation and location-based services. The information is the foundation for a wide range of personal and in-car navigation systems and mobile and Internet mapping applications that help users find the people, places, and services they need, wherever they are.

Shop for map updates
Why upgrade your map? You'll have improved navigation, more information, and more coverage.

Report map changes
Reads change daily and we map these changes immediately, with our mobile mapping vehicles, and with the feedback we receive from our customers everywhere.

Connect with Tele Atlas
Watch us on CNN
Say what you want and get it.

Tellme for You  Tellme for Businesses
The big question

- If the Internet becomes an operating system, what is the architecture of that operating system?

One Ring to Rule Them All
The big question

- What is the architecture of that operating system?

Small Pieces Loosely Joined
Navigating the Future: Take Me to Bob

by Brady Forrest | @brady | comments: 11

Google has just announced a free turn-by-turn navigation app for Android 2.0 in the US (Radar post). Google Maps Navigation relies on Google’s own mapping for routing you. As with many navigation devices you can search Business Listings. However, they are also including data not traditionally available to navigators. In the promo video Google demonstrates that you can ask to be taken to “The King Tut exhibit.” GNUN will determine that it’s in Golden Gate Park and route you. This is “because it is connected to the internet it is using all of the latest information on the internet.”

This is huge. To be able to request implicit destinations based off of real-time information is something that has never been available before. What new queries will be available to us because of this? Google has a lot of data. How much of it can be assigned a location? Lots. There are millions of HTML files out on the internet. Here are some of the useful queries:

*“Take me to Bob Smith” – If Bob is your friend on Latitude then Google Maps Navigation can take you to him. If Bob moves then GNUN could re-route you. I wonder if they will enable the chase scenario?
*“Drop me off in time for the #48 bus” – Google knows the public transit schedule. So not only can it drop you off at the nearest stop, it could drop you off at the stop that will ensure the shortest multi-modal trip.
*“Show me homes under $50K in Capitol Hill” – Via Google Base, Google has real estate information (it has had neighborhood data for quite sometime).
*“Take me to my next appointment” – If you use Google Calendar and you accurately fill out the location field then this is a snap.
*“Take me to the nearest Winter Coat Sale” – Using Adsense for Google Maps, GNUN can easily lead you to local sales.

Take me to the nearest friends and to the nearest Social South SF and So are amazing!
"Take me to Bob Smith" - If Bob is your friend on Latitude then Google Maps Navigation can take you to him. If Bob moves then Google could even re-route you. I wonder if they will enable this feature.

"Drop me off in time for the 448 bus" - Google knows the public transit schedule. So not only can it drop you off at the nearest stop, it could drop you off at the stop that will ensure the shortest multi-modal trip.

"Show me homes under $60K in Capitol Hill" - Via Google Base, Google has real estate information (it has had neighborhood data for quite some time).

"Take me to my next appointment" - If you use Google Calendar and you accurately fill out the location field then this is a snap.

"Take me to the nearest Winter Coat Sale" - Using Adsense for Google Maps, GAN can easily lead you to local sales.

"Take me to the bar my friends go to the most" - Using Social Graph API and the new, experimental Social Search to tap into Foursquare, GAN can determine where your friends go, aggregate their destinations and lead you to their favorite watering hole.

"Take me to the largest event" - Using a combination of Latitude and its new access to the Twitter Firehose (which will soon include location - Radar post), Google can determine where people are.

"Take me on a tour of the top 10 historical sites here" - Using Wikipedia Google can determine what the sites are and where you should be taken. Alternatively, Google could take you on user-generated tour.

"Take me to the most picturesque place near here" - Several years ago Google bought Panoramas, a location-based photo site. Google can determine which place nearby has had the most photos of it taken.

"Take me on a tour of the site from Around the World in 80 Days" - Google already geocodes many of the books it scans (just see this map). This racing is quite possible.

"Take me to the EPA's protected sites" - Government data is becoming more available. This is just one possible governmental query. You could also ask to go on a tour of TARP fund recipients or Democratic donors.

Obviously not all of them will be enabled, but I bet that within a year some of them will be. What other scenarios can or should they implement?
My Advice to Google (and other web giants)

- Be rigorous in making sure that the user benefits
  - Free turn-by-turn: big user win
  - Free speech recognition: big user win
  - Automated translation: big user win
  - Free docs and spreadsheets: big user win
  - Face recognition: big user win
  - Google Book search: big user win

- When you forget this, you lose
  - Froogle: Attempt to eat Amazon’s lunch with no unique benefit to users
  - Google Checkout: attempt to eat PayPal's lunch with no unique benefit to users
  - Google Knol: attempt to eat Wikipedia's lunch with no unique benefit to users
  - Google Profiles: attempt to eat Facebook's lunch with no unique benefit to users
“Do what you do best. Link to the rest.”

- Jeff Jarvis
The rise of OpenID, OAuth, and Facebook Connect

- Logins to Typepad from alternative providers

growth of alternative authentication providers. The results are a bit shocking.

User sign ups between 2 and 3 months ago (June 28 to July 28)

User sign ups between 1 and 2 months ago (July 28 to Aug 28)

User sign ups in the past month (Aug 28 to Sept 28)
Build and grow with Facebook Connect

Connecting people everywhere.

Facebook Connect is a powerful set of APIs for developers that lets users bring their identity and connections everywhere. Developers can access a user's:

- Identity: name, photos, events, and more.
- Social Graph: friends and connections.
- Streams activity, distribution, and integration points within Facebook, like stream stories and Publishers.

Use this information to create more engaging experiences on your website. Facebook Connect is free, so what are you waiting for? Be a part of making the Web more social and connecting people everywhere.

What are the benefits of implementing Facebook Connect?

Facebook Connect delivers a number of benefits, including:

**Traffic**
Enable over 300 million Facebook users to share your content with their friends on Facebook. Let users publish a story, invite their friends, or send an event. Their friends then click back to your site.

**Engagement**
Users can immediately find their friends and engage. More friends leads to more activity and more appeals. Connected users create 15-40% more content than
OAuth — An open protocol to allow secure API authorization in a simple and standard method from desktop and web applications.

An OAuth security issue has been identified and addressed in version 1.0b of the OAuth Core protocol. For a description of the problem, please refer to the advisory, issued on April 21, 2009.

For Consumer developers...
If you're building...
- desktop applications
- dashboard widgets or gadgets
- Javascript or browser-based apps
- webpage widgets

OAuth is a simple way to publish and interact with protected data. It's also a safer and more secure way for people to give you access. We've kept it simple to save you time.

For Service Provider developers...
If you're supporting...
- web applications
- server-side APIs
- mashups

If you're storing protected data on your users' behalf, they shouldn't be spreading their passwords around the web to get access to it. Use OAuth to give your users access to their data while protecting their account credentials.

Get started...

OAuth is an open source project being developed by a small group of dedicated individuals.
Social Graph API (Labs)

Build critical mass on your website

With so many websites to join, users must decide where to invest significant time in adding their same connections over and over. For developers, this means it is difficult to build successful web applications that hinge upon a critical mass of users for context and interaction. With the Social Graph API, developers can now use public connections their users have already created in other web services. It makes information about public connections between people easily available and useful.

Only public data

The API returns web addresses of public pages and publicly declared connections between them. The API cannot access non-public information, such as private profile pages or websites accessible to a limited group of friends.

How do I start?

1. Learn more about the Social Graph
2. Review the API Documentation
3. Try out the Example Applications

Video Introduction

[Video Link]
A simple, open, server-to-server web-hook based pub/sub protocol & open source reference implementation.

A simple, open, server-to-server web-hook based pub/sub (publish/subscribe) protocol as an extension to Atom and RSS.

Providing push notifications for Atom (pushing a URL). The notifications can be delivered via webhooks.

The protocol is decentralized and free. No company is at the center of this controlling it. Anybody can run a hub, or anybody can ping (publish) or subscribe using OpenHubs.

Overview

Code license: Apache License 2.0
Libraries: pubsubhubbub, atom, rss

Featured wiki pages:
- ComparingProtocols
- DesignPrinciples
- DevelopersGettingStartedGuide
- Hub
- Hosted
- PublisherClients

Links:
- Protocol Spec
- FAQ
- Lcs, Demo Hub, feed it!
- Video demo

Feeds:
- Project feeds

Groups:
- Discussion

Project owners:

Project contributors:
- el@hopperon.co.uk
- brinfin, kevsan, expax, jalek geconort, codemind, gilach, @yahoo.com.
Welcome to the homepage for the Google Wave Federation Protocol. If you're just learning about Google Wave, you may wish to also check out http://wave.google.com. You may also want to read about the federation effort in the Introduction blog post.

Please browse the site to learn more about the community principles, review the draft protocol specifications, read the architecture white papers, and most importantly: get involved.

As part of Google's Wave Federation Doc, we have open sourced the Operational Transformation (OT) implementation, which is the primary algorithm that manages the collaborative experience inside Google Wave, as well as the underlying wave model. To encourage early experimentation with the federation protocol, we also built a basic open source client/server. Check out the source code and get started with the introductory documentation.

To learn more about the latest status of the federation protocol work, please check out this forum post.
The War For the Web
by Tim O'Reilly | @oreilly | comments: 54

On Friday, my latest tweet was automatically posted to my Facebook news feed, as always. But this time, Tim Goellivs noticed a difference: the link in the posting was no longer active.

It turns out that a lot of other people had noticed this too. Mashable wrote about the problem on Saturday morning: "Facebook Unlinks Your Twitter Links."

P.S. One prediction: Microsoft will emerge as a champion of the open web platform, supporting interoperable web services from many independent players, much as IBM emerged as the leading enterprise backer of Linux.

As it turns out, it wasn't just links imported from Twitter. All outbound links were temporarily disabled, unless users explicitly added them to links via an "attach" dialogue. I went to Facebook, and tried posting a link to this blog directly in my status feed, and the same behavior: links were no longer automatically made clickable. You can see that in the image that is the destination of the first link in this piece.

The problem was quickly fixed, with URLs in status updates automatically now linkified again. The consensus was that it was in fact a bug, but it's little surprise that people suspected otherwise, given the increasing amount of effort Facebook puts into warning people that they are leaving Facebook for the last time.

Invisible to Everyone?

The content was visible to everyone who had access to my Facebook account, regardless of whether they were in my friends list or not. It appears that this is only for use in Facebook, not the wider web.
Microsoft’s Qi Lu Talks About Bing (and Confirms Facebook and Twitter Real-Time Data Deal) at Web 2.0

by Kara Swisher

Posted on October 21, 2009 at 11:30 AM PT

Microsoft digital head Qi Lu took to the stage at the Web 2.0 Summit conference this morning, where he confirmed a "strategic" deal with both Facebook and Twitter to integrate real-time information into its user interface.

Can't. We're committed to cutting spending.
Microsoft's Bing search engine and Wolfram Alpha have reached a licensing deal that allows Bing to present some of the specialized scientific and computational content that Wolfram Alpha generates, according to a source familiar with the deal.

Representatives from Microsoft and Wolfram Research declined to comment on the deal.

Wolfram Alpha's unique blend of computational input and curated output has not taken the world by storm, but it is considered an interesting enough take on the business of internet search to attract high profile attention within the industry.

Wolfram Alpha does not return the usual list of links to pages with search keywords, instead providing answers to questions such as stock prices and physical constants.
Don’t just open up because you’re the underdog.
“Do the right thing. You will gratify some people, and astonish the rest.”

-Mark Twain
I had the good fortune of receiving an advance copy of Ken Auletta's forthcoming book, "Googled: The End of the World as We Know It." It's a fascinating read, one that raises a whole set of interesting dichotomies related to Google and their business practices. Contrast the fact that the Google business drives open and free access to data and intellectual property, so that the world becomes a part of their corpus of data – yet they tightly guard their own IP in order to how to navigate that data. Contrast that users and publishers who gave Google the insights to filter and search data are the ones who are then taxed to access that data set. Contrast Google's move into layers beyond web sites (e.g., operating systems, web browsers) with their apparent belief that they won't have issues stemming from walled gardens and tying. In Google we have a company that believes "Don't be evil" is sufficient a promise for their users to trust their intentions, yet it is a company that have never articulated what they think is evil and what is not (Google.com, anyone?).

There is a lot to think about in Auletta's book - it's a great read. When I began reading, I hoped for a prescriptive approach, a message about what Google should do, but instead Auletta provides the corporate history and identifies the challenging issues but leaves it to the reader to form a position on where they lead. In my case, the issue that hit me thinking most about was antitrust.

My bet is that in the coming few years Google is going to get nailed into an antitrust episode similar to what Microsoft went through a decade ago. Google's business has grown to dominate navigation of the Internet. Matched with their incredibly powerful and distributed monetization engine, this power over navigation is going to run headlong into a regulator. I don't know where (US or elsewhere) or when, but my bet is that it will happen sooner rather than later. And once it does happen, the antitrust process will again raise the thorny issue of whether regulation of some form is an effective tool in the fast-moving technology sector.
“TCP implementations should follow a general principle of robustness: be conservative in what you do, be liberal in what you accept from others.”

--Jon Postel in RFC 761 (Transmission Control Protocol, 1980)
That's how we get to this

Small Pieces Loosely Joined
And don't end up here

One Ring to Rule Them All