

Dan's Desk

Life without the Internet

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Have you wondered what life would be like without the Internet at our fingertips anymore? Having experienced this very situation recently, due to an extensive outage at our office complex, I can tell you it would take some adjustment. If you ever watch shows like 'The Walking Dead,' then you get an idea of what a disconnected society would be like, but hopefully minus the zombies!

Now, I will be the first to admit that I may be out of the ordinary with my dependency upon the Internet, due to the main nature of my business; repairing and upgrading computers. But I would bet that most of my time on the Internet is like yours; surfing the web, communicating with friends and family via Skype etc., doing email, streaming movies and performing financial transactions. I do the extra tasks of downloading programs/updates, performing product activations, locating drivers and Windows fixes more than the normal person, along with the research required to solve various error messages and program version incompatibilities. So, when my Internet is unavailable, I'm really limited in the functions that can be performed.

Let's look at those functions that we take for granted while using the Internet and what alternatives we have:

Surfing the web – this is the main information source for most people today, I would guess. So back to TV, radio, the library and reading daily newspapers. The previous generation of Wikipedia – Encyclopedia Britannica is back! I can get my first and worst job back - selling them door to door. Remember the Microsoft (Encarta?) annual encyclopedia on CDs?

Communicating – Cell phones will get really streamlined without all the Internet and related display functions and just back to basic phone call capabilities.

Email – back to the delay of mailing and receiving letters. Typewriters and carbon paper will come back from the dead to provide the capabilities of writing legibly and multiple copies (that is what CC means after all – carbon copy for additional parties). Actually, I can still use the PC and a printer for the main reason PCs were first justified in businesses – word processing.

Streaming movies – check your local theatre for playing times – you can no longer watch your show on demand. Or you can use that DVD/ Blu-ray player for more than streaming – back to discs. Maybe I can restart the movie rental business that I was in back in 1979!

Financial transactions – remember standing in long lines at the bank? Having to access your money only at the branch where your account is based? How about ticker tape machines for those who are addicted to following the stock market?

Well my Internet is back now, so back to work I must go.