Personal Learning Environments
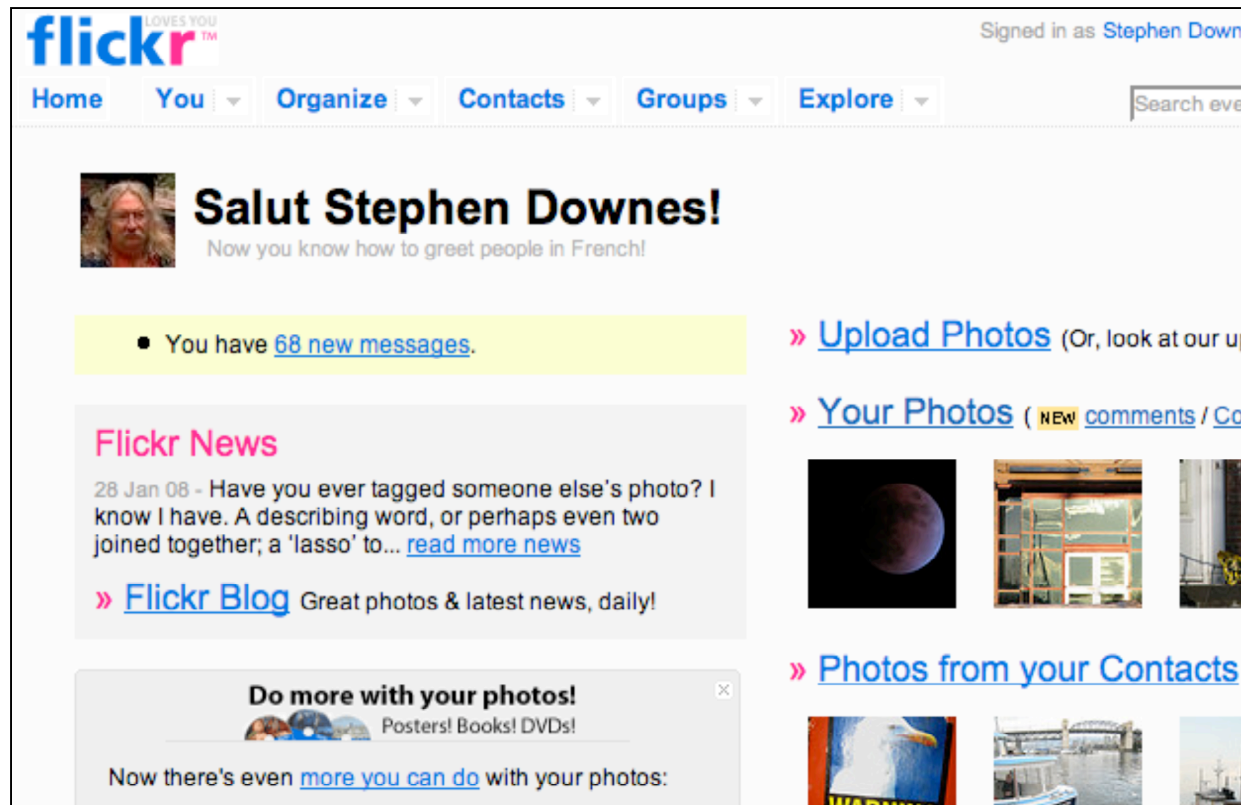
Stephen Downes
September 25, 2008

What is my personal learning environment?

- A place to store (and share) my photos

http://www.flickr.com

- A place to store (and share) my videos

http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4126240905912531540

- A place to write an essay with my colleague in Montreal

- A way to stay up to date - *right* up to date

http://www.google.com/reader
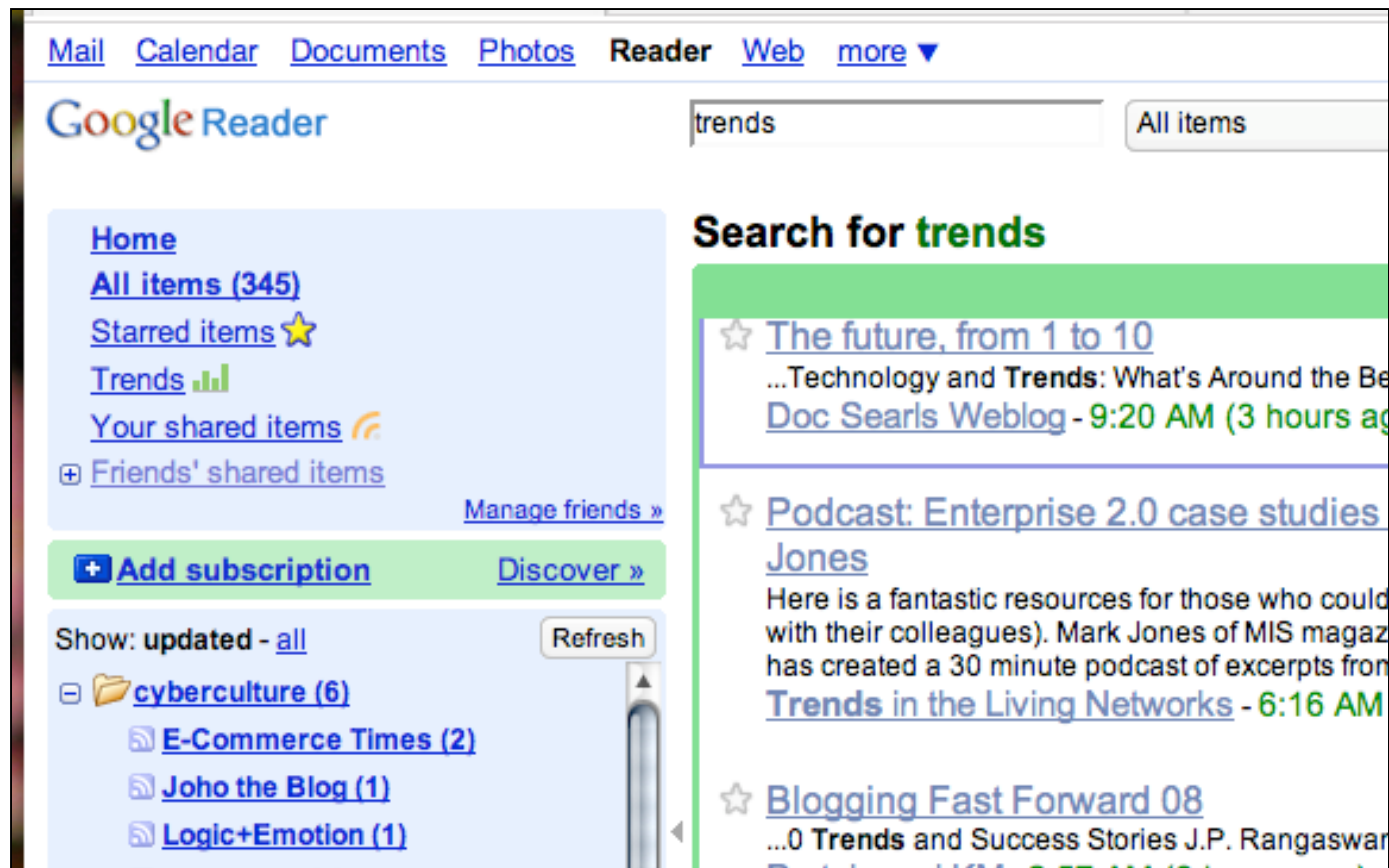
- A way to save on phone calls

http://www.skype.com
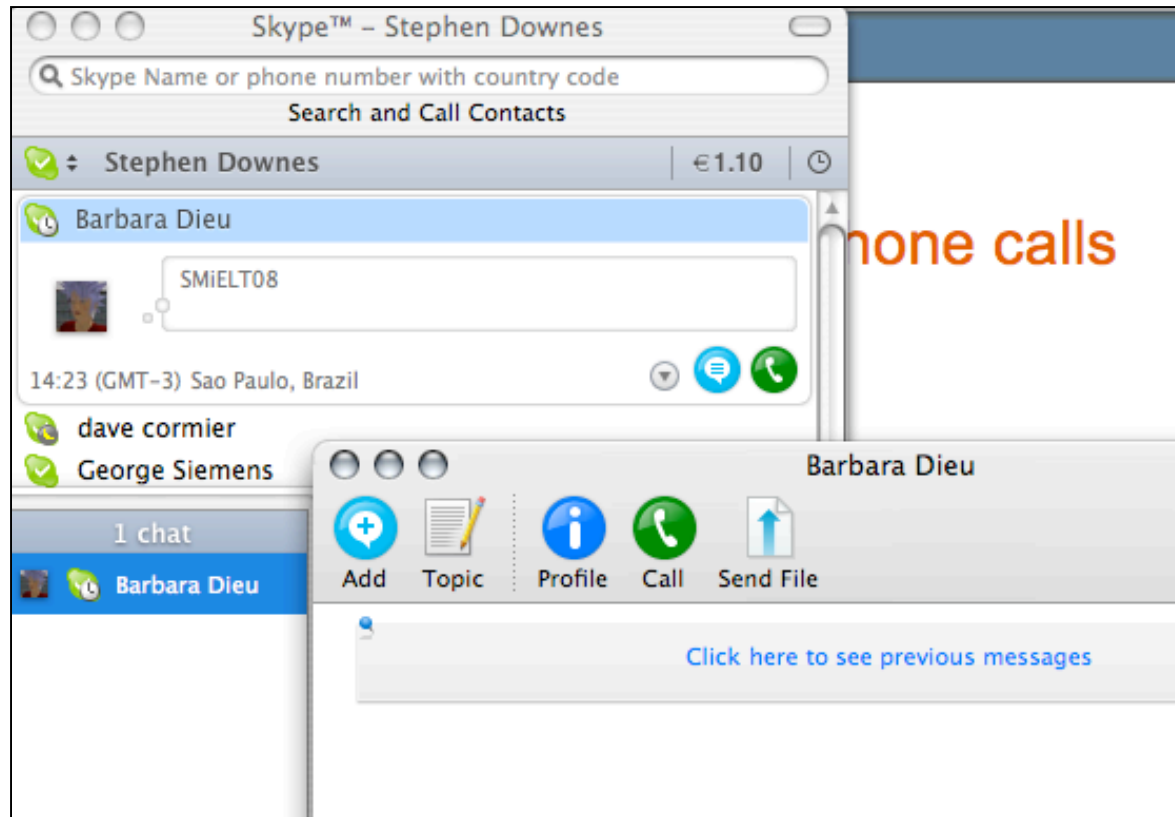
- Knowing where I'm staying before I get there

http://maps.google.com
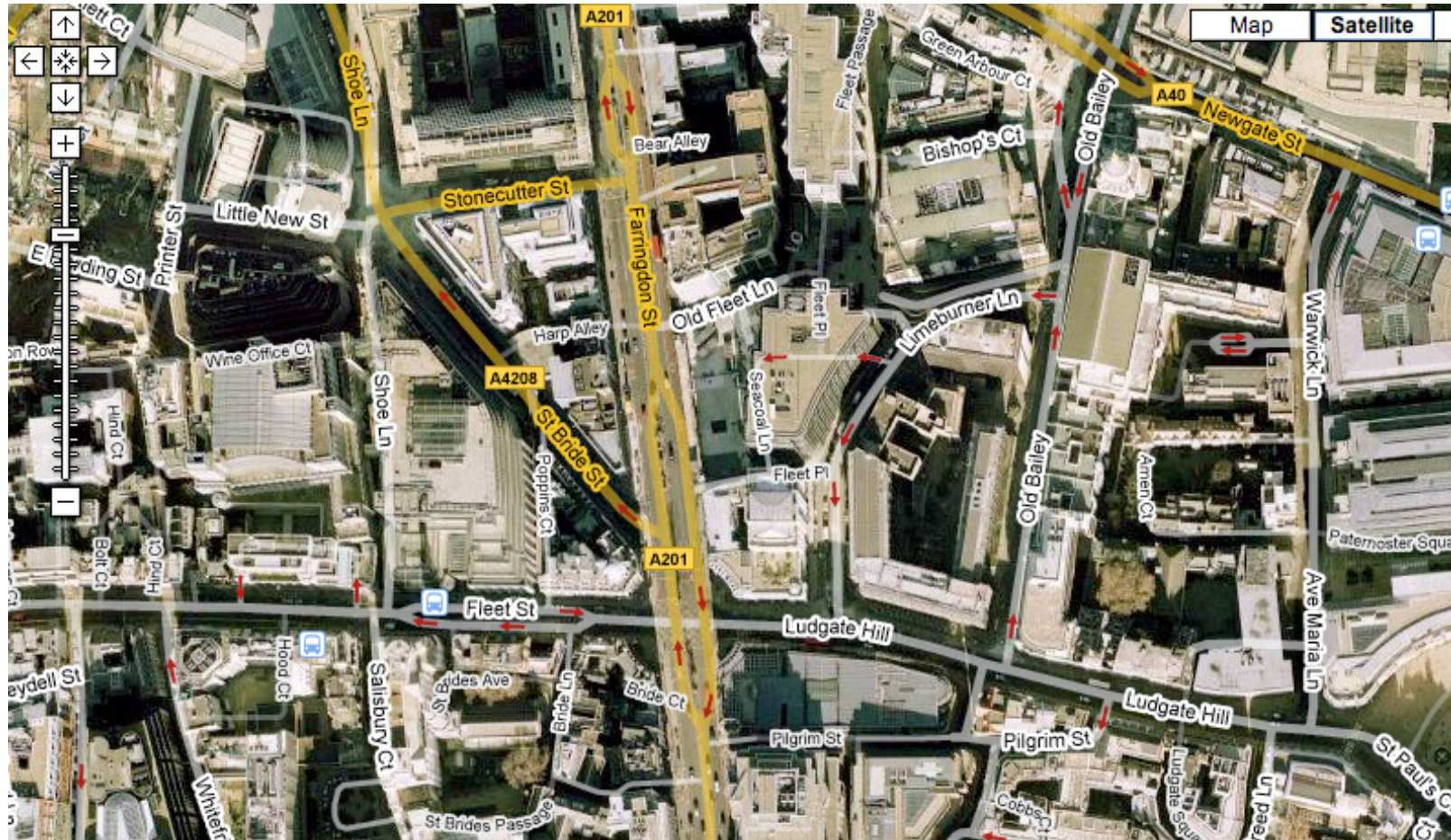
- # An Easy Way To Draw Pictures

http://www.gliffy.com
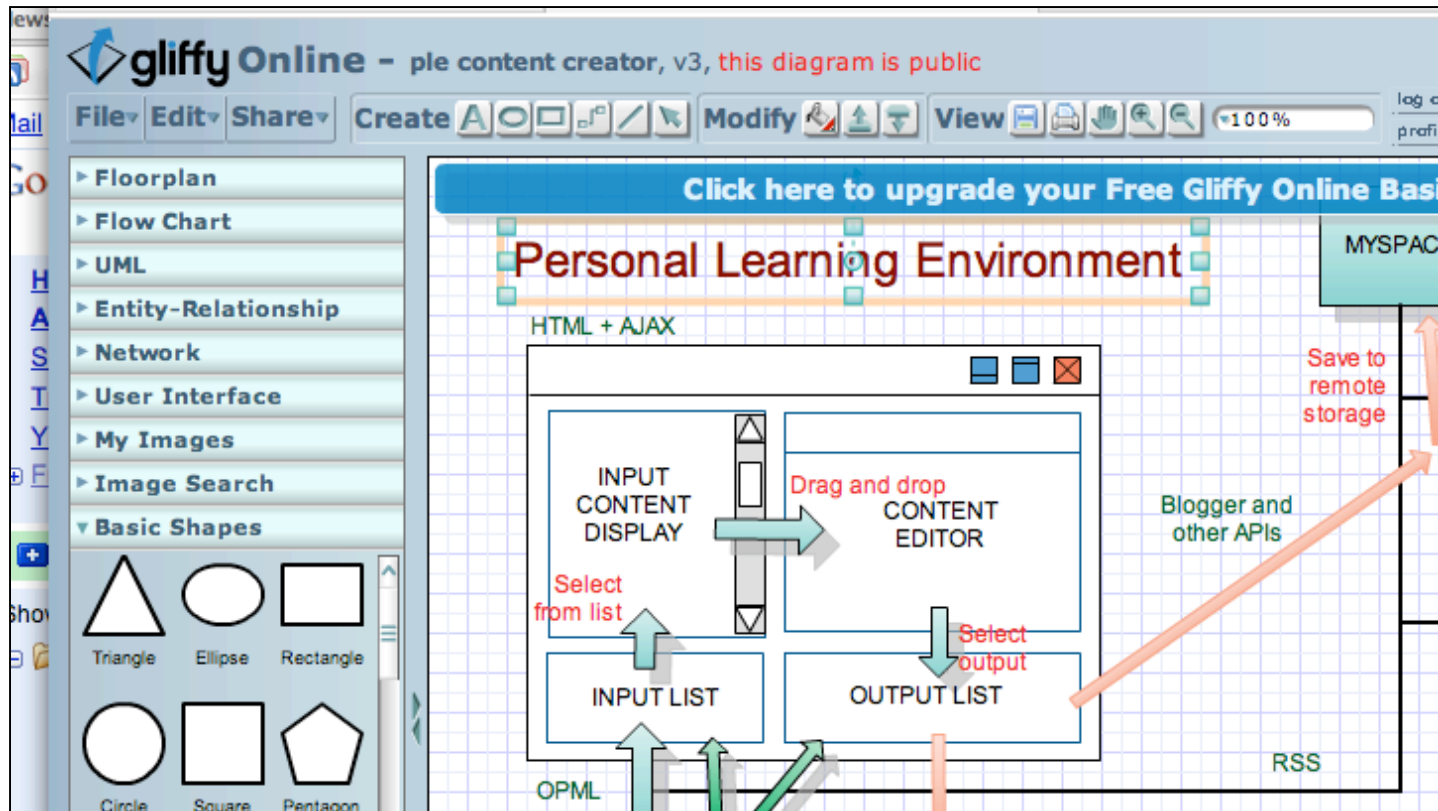
What do personal learning environments mean for learners?

"We learn how to do things by doing the things we are learning to do."

— Aristotle
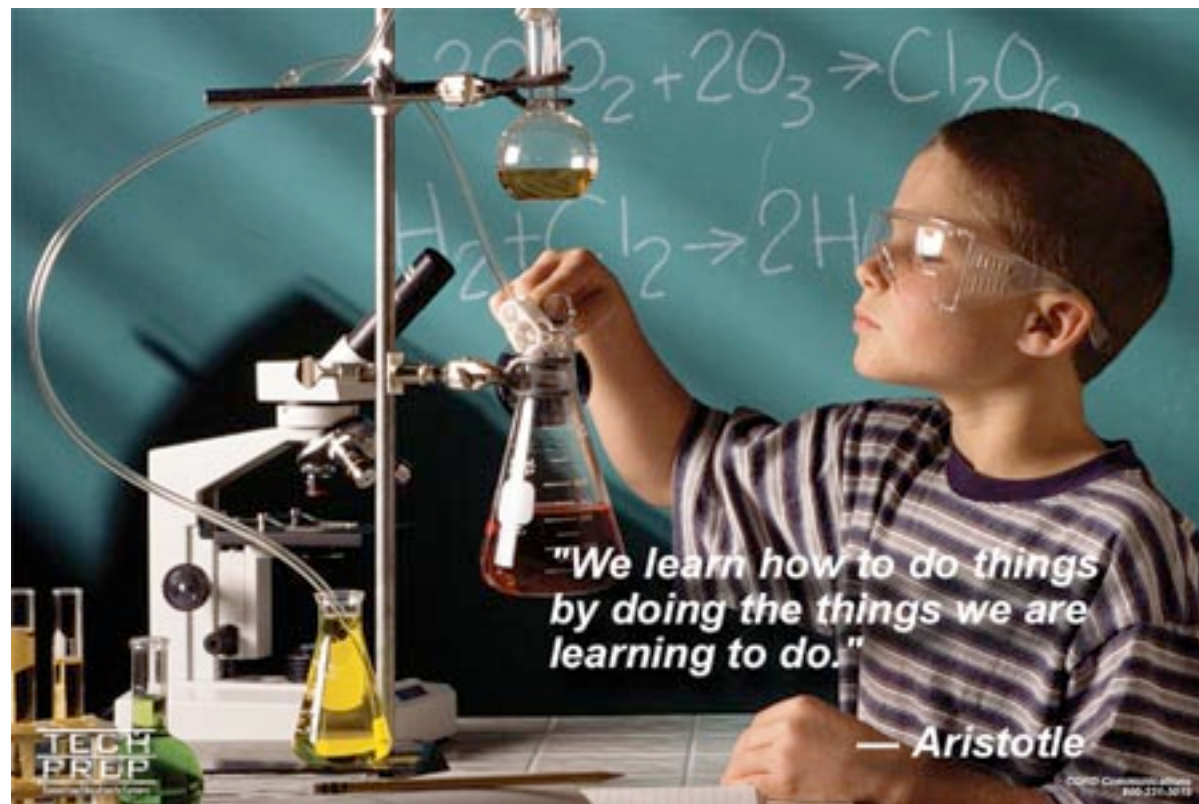
- A world of free learning resources…

Don't like the word 'free'? Deal with it…

Three Views of Learning Resources:

1. Learning Resources as a *thing*

- Book, content object, etc

2. Learning Resources as *events*
– *Class, lecture, seminar, meeting*

- The first two models are *information-theoretic* and *medium-based* models
  - They stress *content*
  - They stress *rules*

John saw the boy in the park with a telescope

3. Learning Resources as *flow*
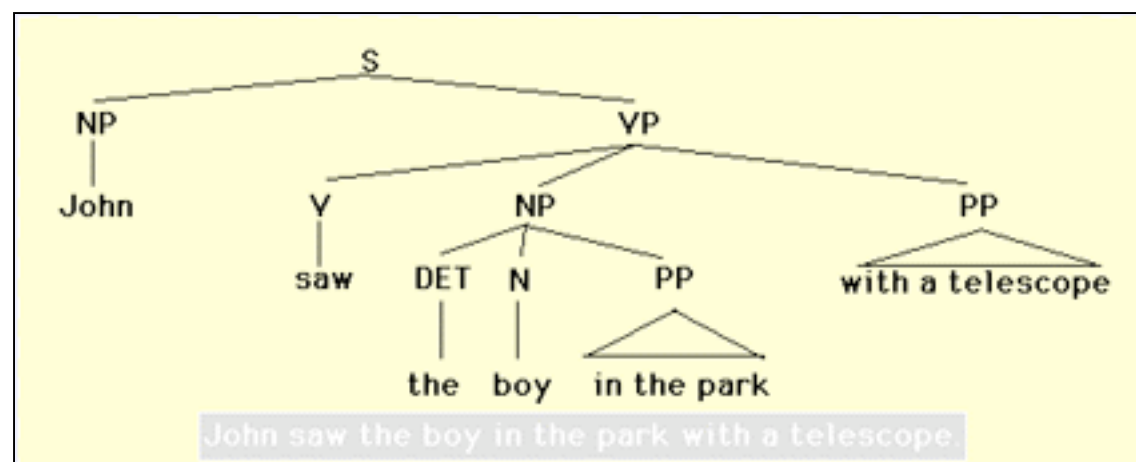
– Stresses experience
– Stresses pattern recognition

What does this look like?

- User generated Content
  - Personal, opinionated
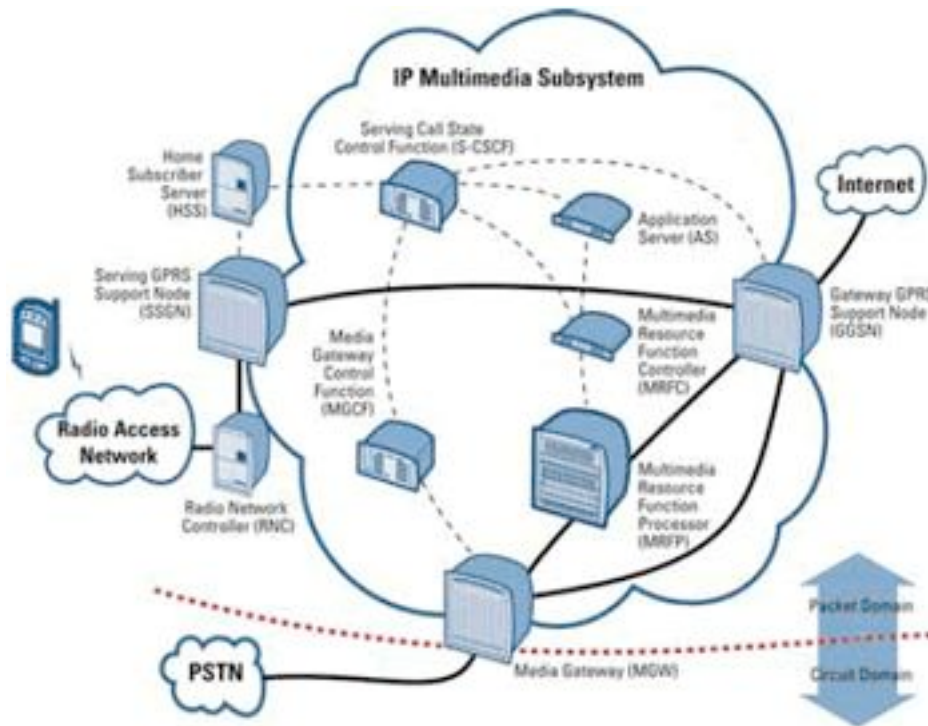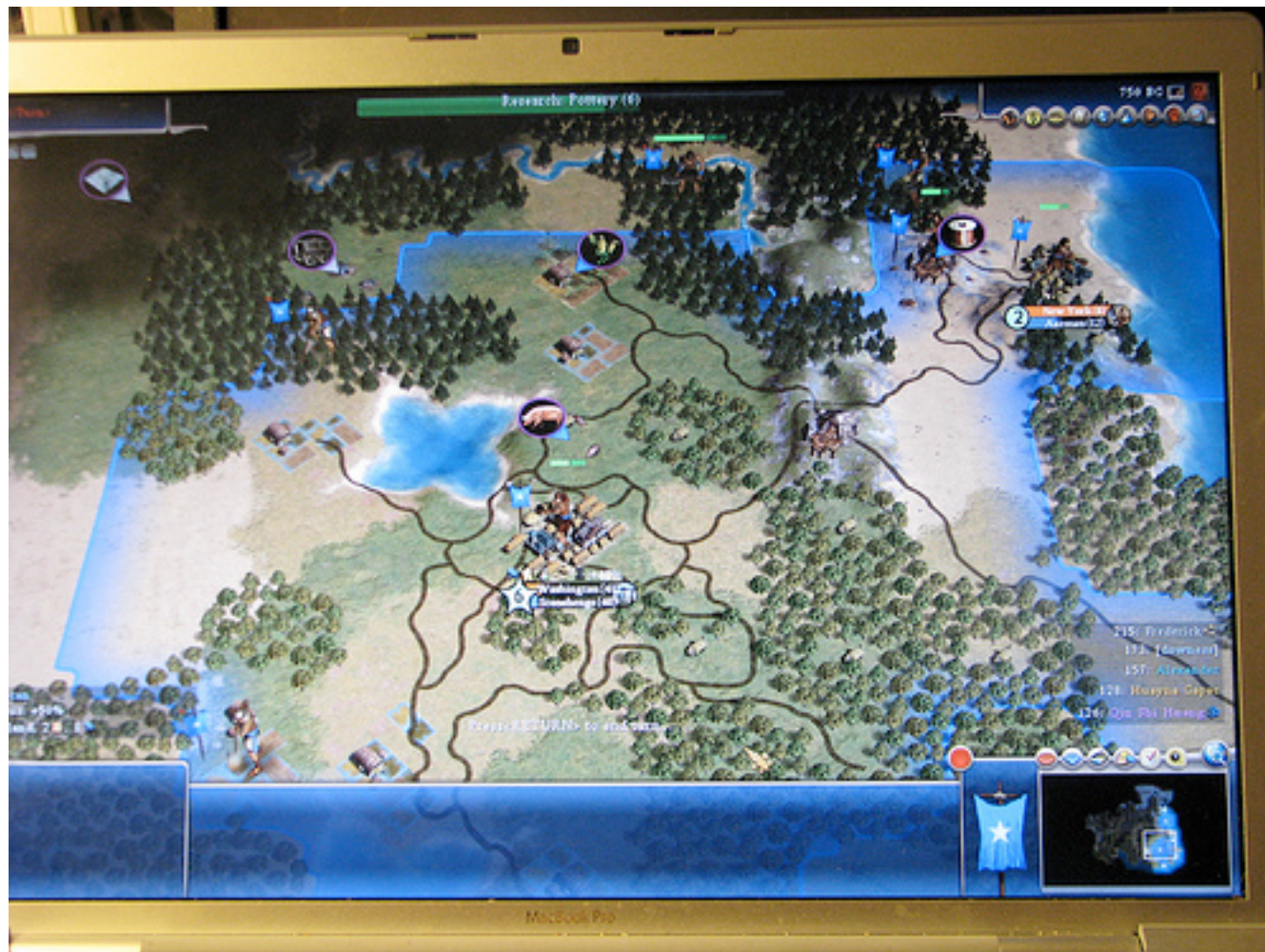
• Network of interactions

Figure 1: IP Multimedia Subsystem (IMS).
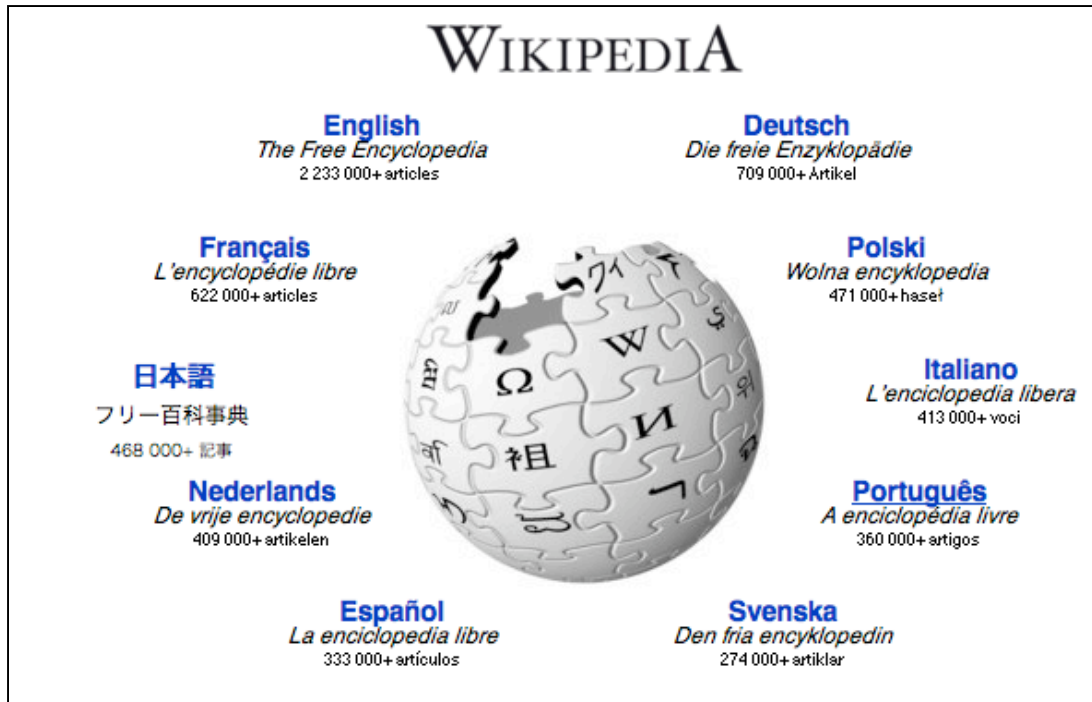
- Immersive Learning

- New Roles
  - For students - as creators of learning
  - For teachers - as coaches and mentors
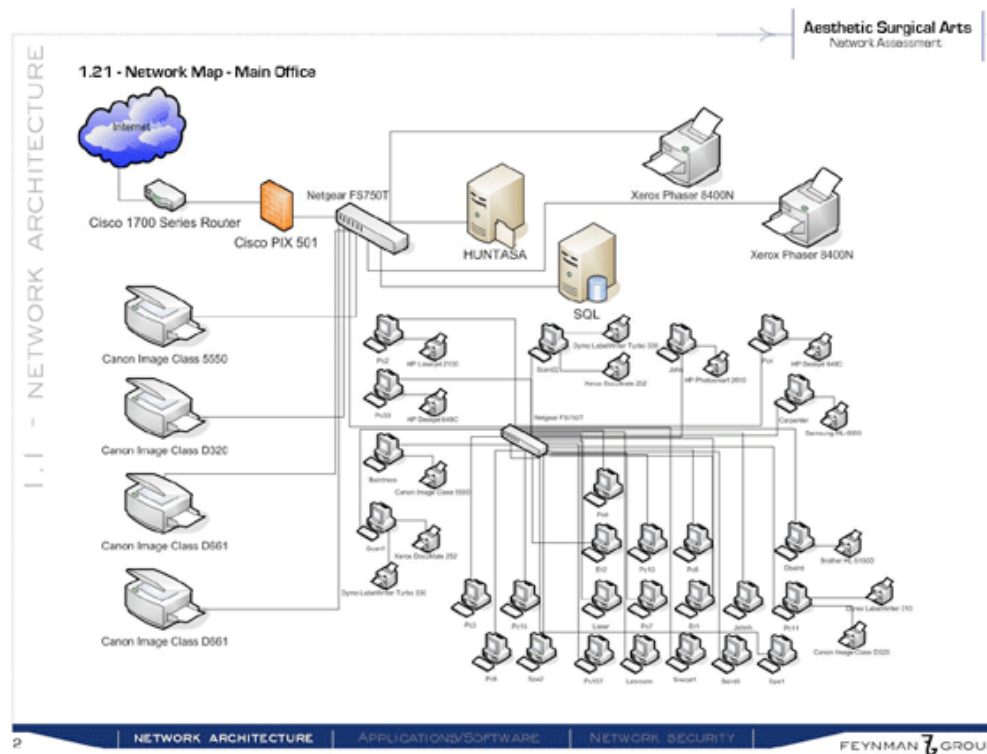 - For the rest of us - as teachers

- Web of user-generated content (eg. Wikipedia)…

http://www.wikipedia.org
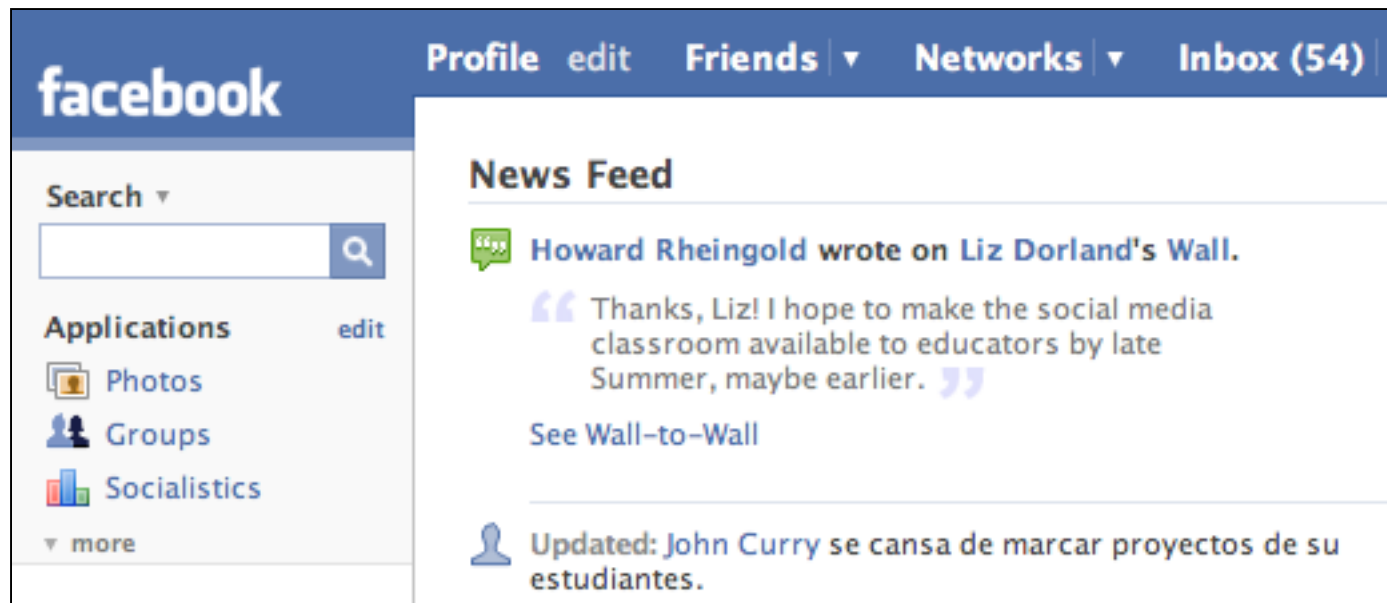
Learning as a network phenomenon…

Issues:

- Too much information, filtering info
- Too many sources to scan, new sources
- Localization, personalization, relevance
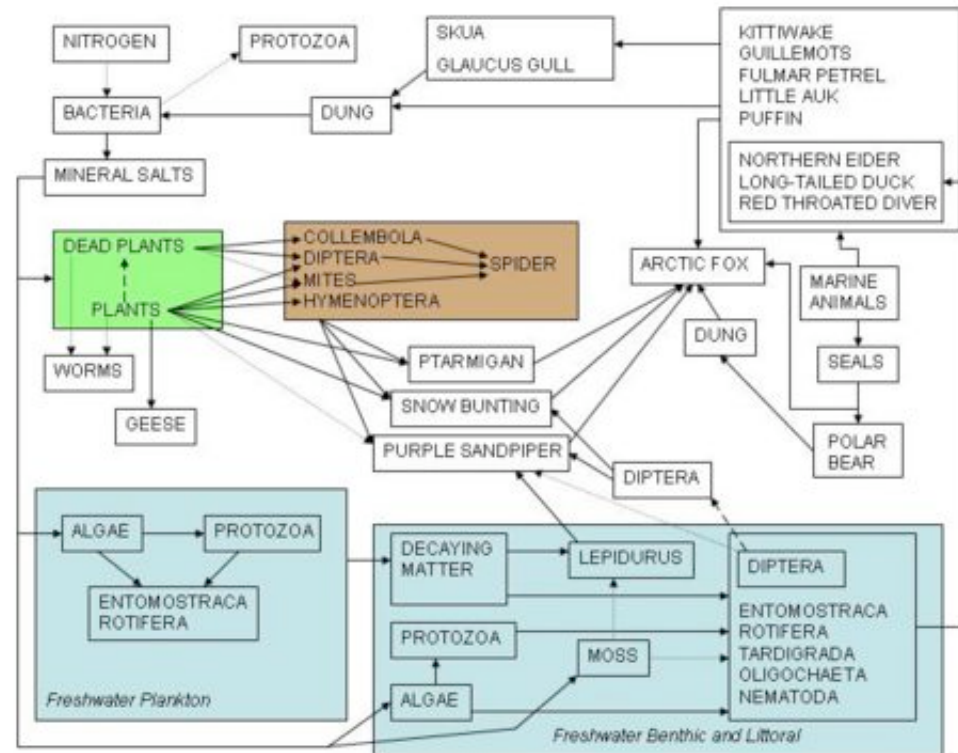
Response: Network Semantics

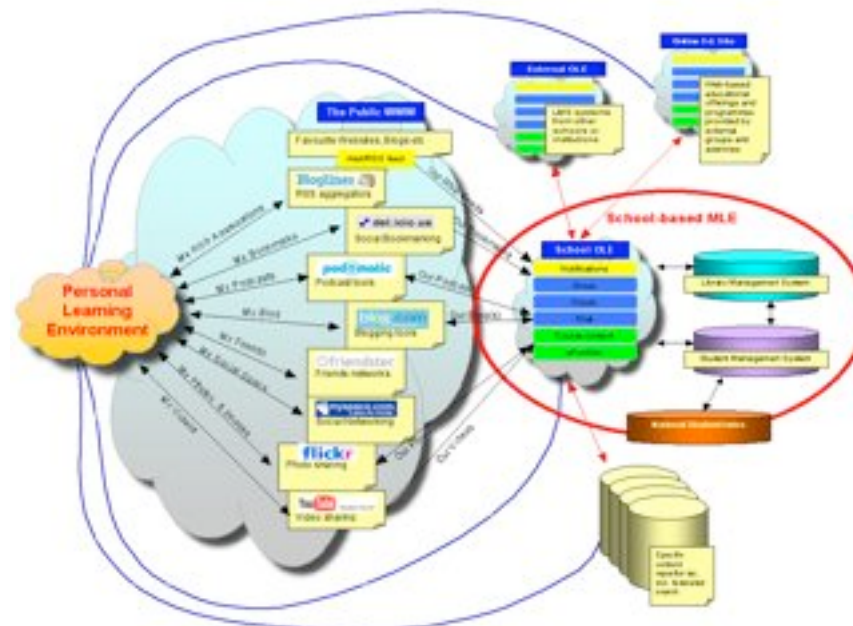- Social networks and communities (entails a genuinely portable (and *owned*) identity

http://www.facebook.com

- Networks of interactions (aggregate, remix, repurpose, feed forward) – syndication

An ecology…

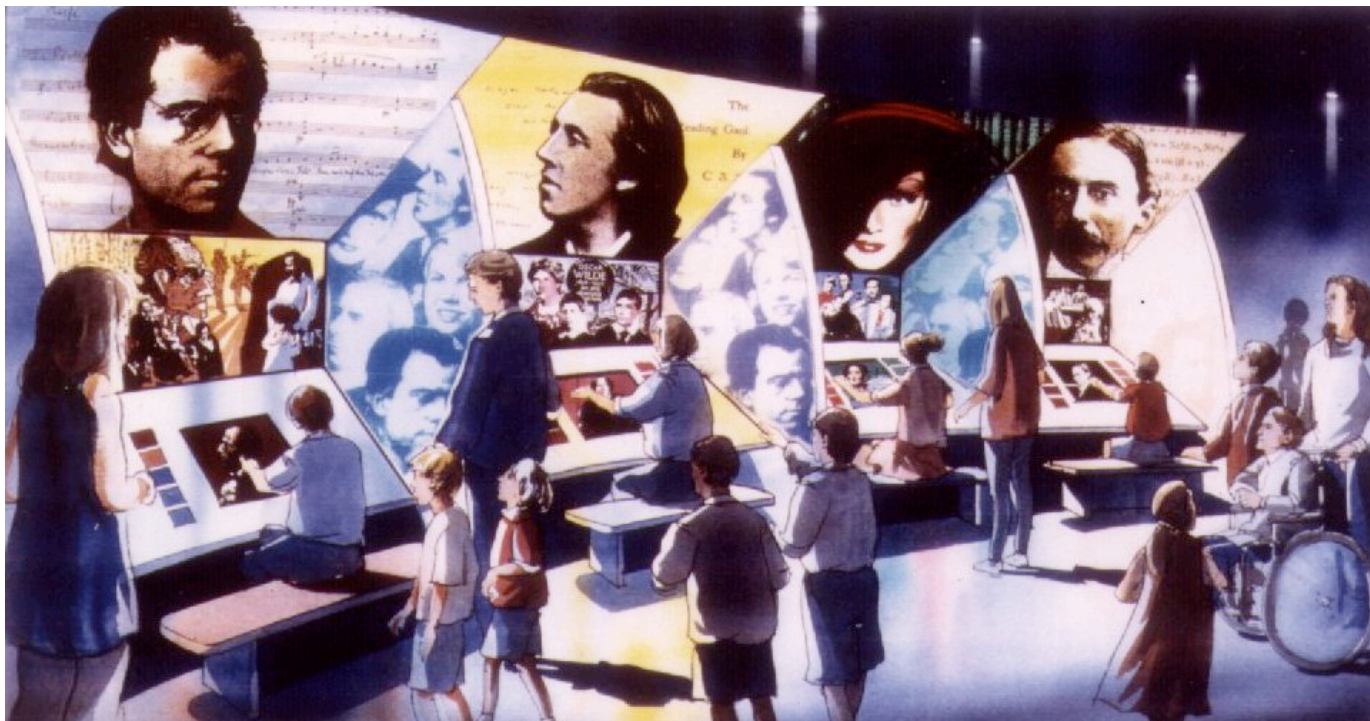- The *personal* learning centre

Autonomy

- The Network is Diverse – multiple views, multiple technologies
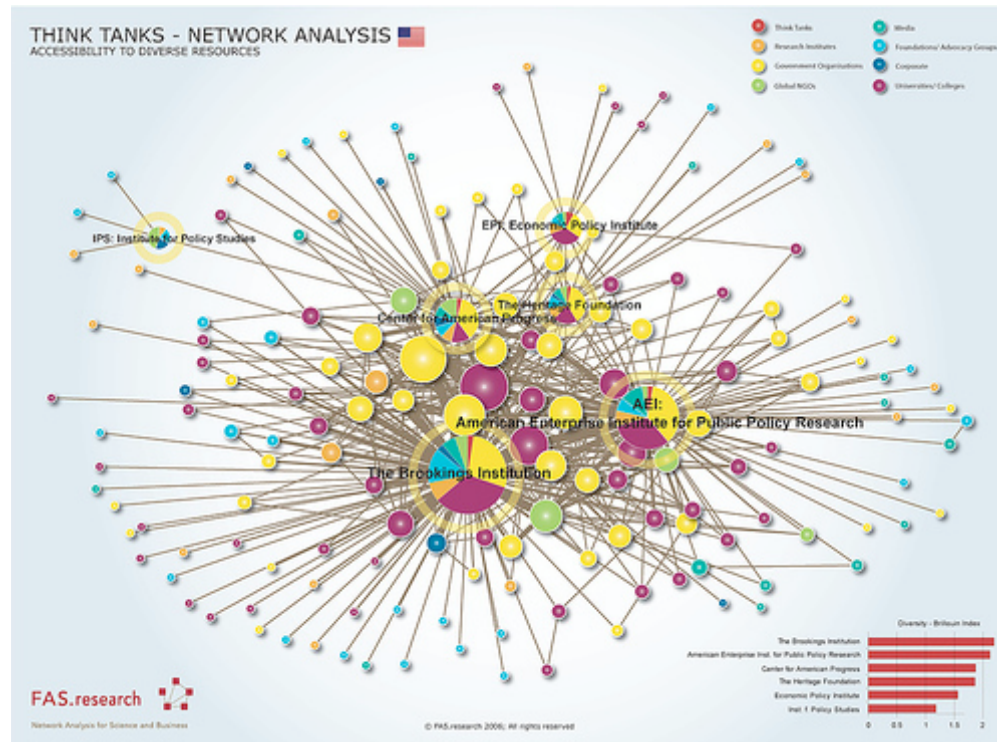
- The Network is connected and interactive (*not* 'integrated') – small pieces, loosely joined

http://www.biography.org.uk/real.htm

The Network is *open*
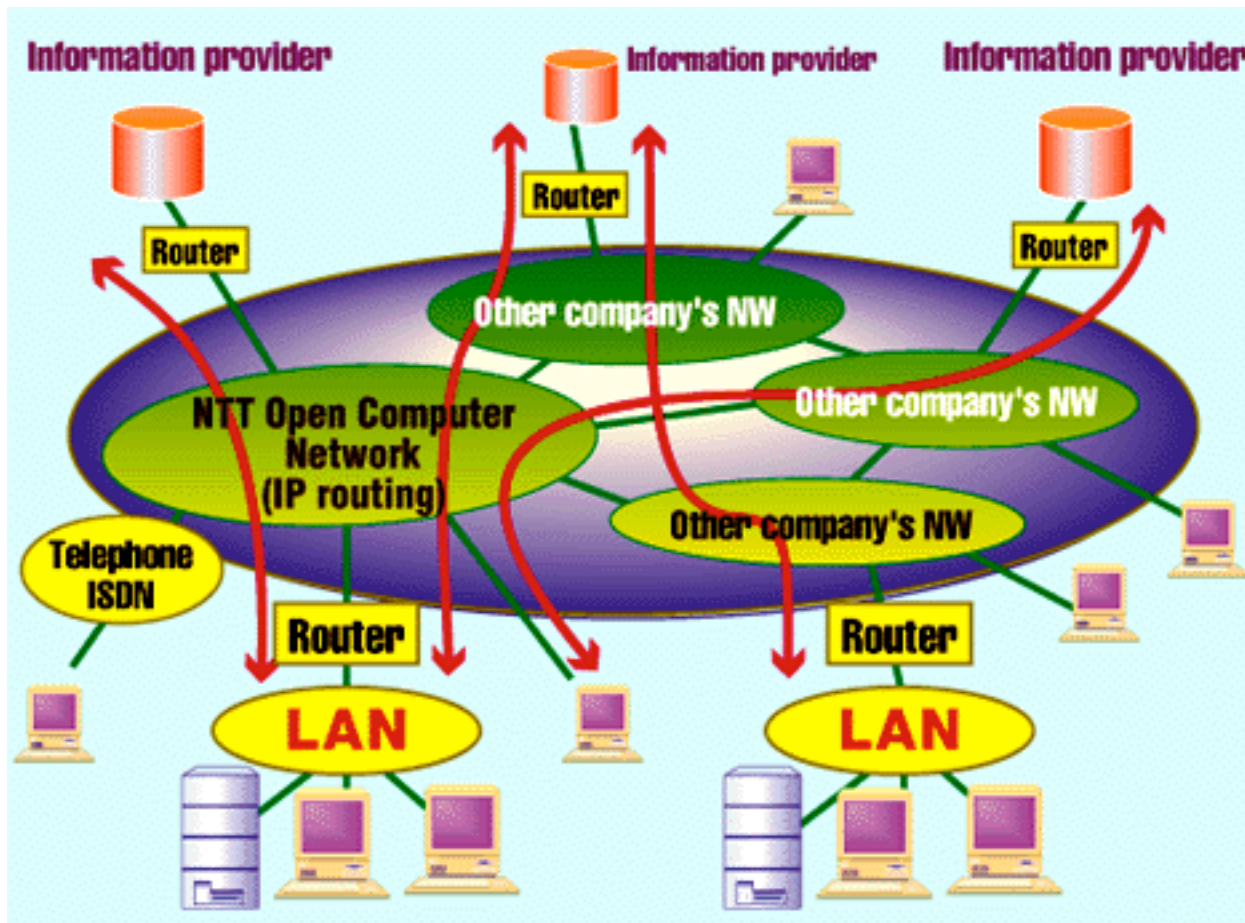
What are the key technologies?

Web 2.0 - Core Technologies

Tools for worldmaking…

Social Networking
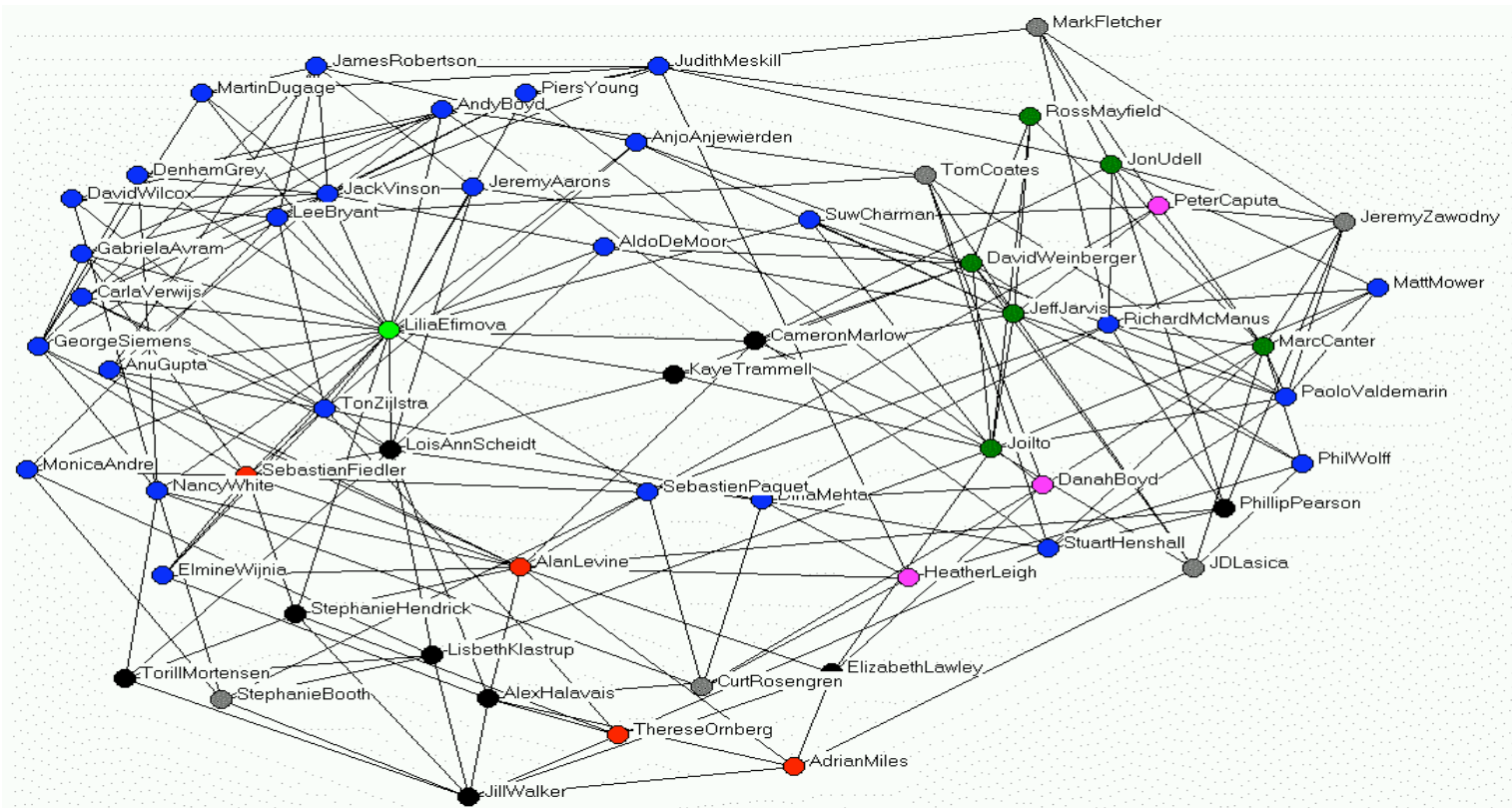
http://staffdev.henrico.k12.va.us/parents/socnetwork.htm

Tagging

Asynchronous Javascript and XML (AJAX)

Jesse James Garrett in February 2005.

https://bpcatalog.dev.java.net/ajax/textfield-jsf/design.html
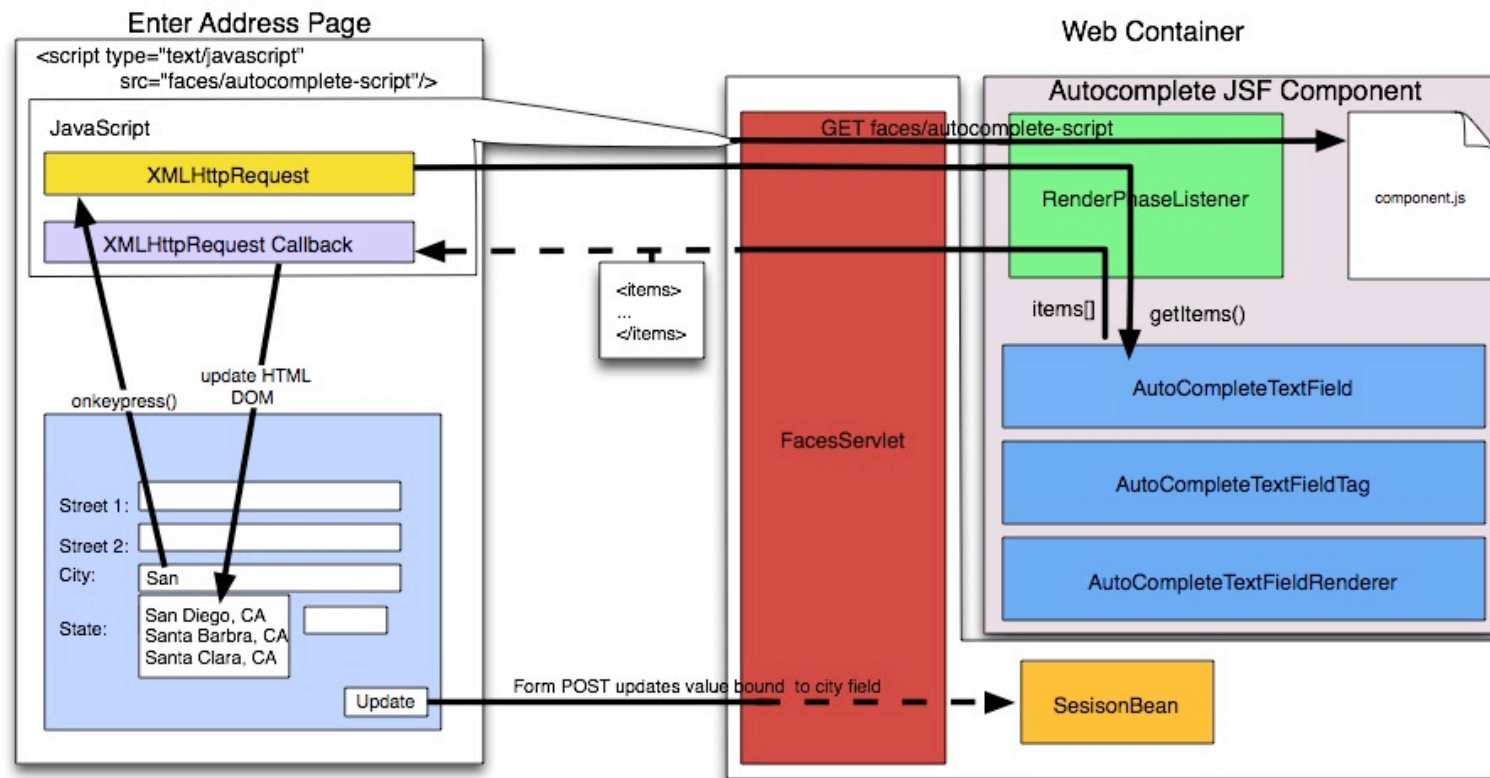
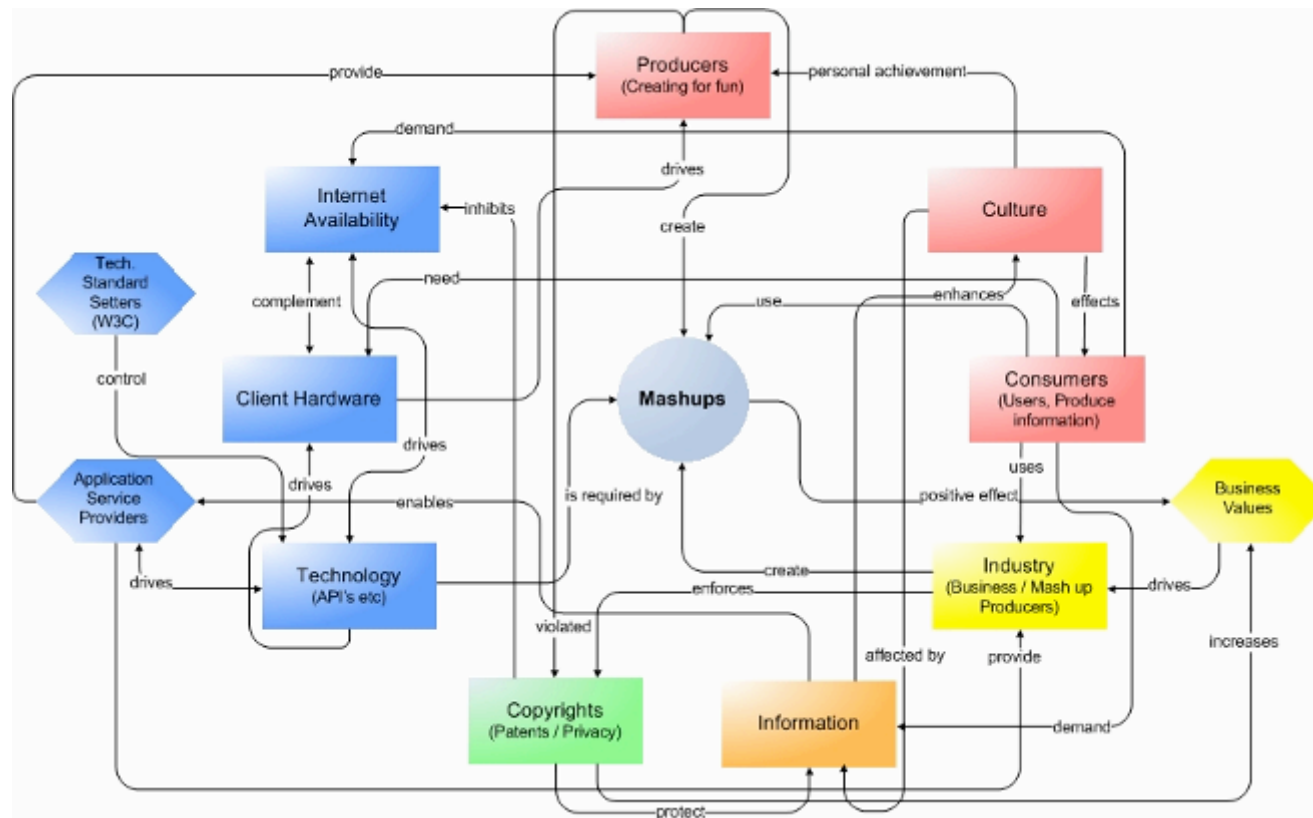# Representational State Transfer (REST)
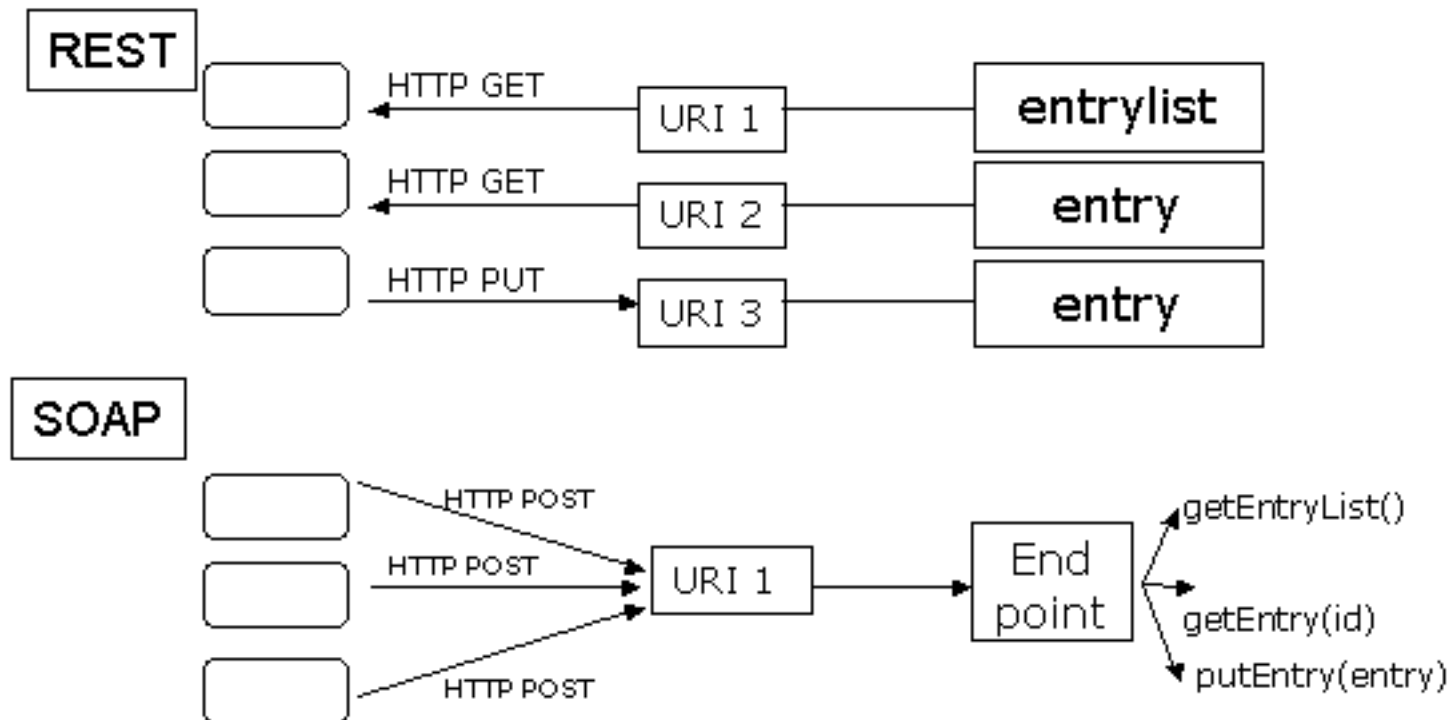
- principles that outline how resources are defined and addressed
- looser sense: domain-specific data over HTTP

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Representational_State_Transfer
http://itpro.nikkeibp.co.jp/article/Watcher/20060315/232492/

Application Program Interface (API) and Mash-Ups

Javascript Object Notation (JSON)

Cross Domain JSON

OpenID

Thanks!

http://www.downes.ca