

“Network of You” Facts at a Glance

- IDC estimates that by 2010, about 70 percent of the world's digital data will be created by individuals. For corporations, information is inflating from such disparate causes as surveillance cameras and data-retention regulations.
- Add it all up and IDC determined that the world generated 161 billion gigabytes - 161 exabytes - of digital information last year. That's like 12 stacks of books that each reach from the Earth to the sun. Or you might think of it as 3 million times the information in all the books ever written, according to IDC.
- IDC estimates that the world had 185 exabytes of storage available last year and will have 601 exabytes in 2010. But the amount of stuff generated is expected to jump from 161 exabytes last year to 988 exabytes (closing in on 1 zettabyte) in 2010, a six-fold increase from 2006.
- Consumers bought 739.7 million gigabytes of hard-drive storage space last year. That is 11 times what they bought in 2003.
- In the U.S. alone, \$600 million worth of external hard drives were sold in 2006, up 53% from 2005, The NPD Group, a market research firm, says.
- By 2010, the total amount of data will overwhelm the total amount of digital storage by a factor of nearly 2 to 1. 2007 is the year that our ability to stuff bits into the digital universe will outstrip our ability to store them.
- From now until 2010, IDC said it expects information will sport a compound annual growth rate of 57 percent to hit the 988 exabyte mark.
- Only 48 million people routinely logged onto the Internet in 1996. Last year, there were 1.1 billion users on the Internet. IDC expects another 500 million users to come online by 2010.
- Digital pictures are the leading usurpers of gigabytes. IDC said images taken from digital cameras, camera phones, medical scanners and security cameras will absorb the largest number of bytes, topping 500 billion by 2010. No surprise when you consider images captured on consumer digital cameras in 2006 exceeded 150 billion worldwide, while the number of images captured on cell phones hit almost 100 billion.
- From 1998 to 2006, the number of e-mail mailboxes grew from 253 million to nearly 1.6 billion. During the same period, the number of e-mails sent grew three times faster than the number of people e-mailing.
- IDC predicts 250 million IM accounts by 2010.
- 1 billion songs a DAY shared online. In an unsupported statistic, Apple says it's managed to hawk around two billion downloads since it started in 2003.
- About a quarter of the digital universe is original (pictures recorded, keystrokes in an email, phone calls), while three quarters is replicated (emails forwarded, backed up transaction records, Hollywood movies on DVD).
- In other key findings, by 2010, while nearly 70% of the digital universe will be created by individuals, organizations (businesses of all sizes, agencies, governments, associations, etc) will be responsible for the security, privacy, reliability, and compliance of at least 85% of that same digital universe, IDC says.
- But the growth of the digital universe is uneven. "Emerging economies" - Asia Pacific without Japan and the rest of the world outside North America and Western Europe - now account for 10% of the digital universe, but will grow 30%-40% faster than mature economies.