i- : A Prefix Whose Time has Come

What puts the i- in iSchool? Why "the history of information"?
"You, the American people, have made our passage into the global information age an era of great American renewal."

Bill Clinton, Farewell Address, Jan 19, 2001

"The information age is opening up new possibilities for all of us, for our children and for the entire nation. . . ." Bill Gates

"Revolutions in communications and technology have created a global economy of high-tech, high-wage jobs that can be located anywhere there's an internet connection -- an economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge. Education is now the currency of the Information Age." Sen. Barack Obama, 11/20/07
The First Information-Age President?

It's the result of Clinton being the first information age president. *Washington Post, 1/22/99*
The First Information-Age President?

George W. Bush is the first Information Age president.  
*Seattle Times, 8/27/06*
The First Information-Age President?

Obama is clearly poised to be the nation's first "wired" president. Richmond Times-Dispatch, 11/13/08
The First Information-Age President?

Clinton was the first Web president. Bush is the first digital president. Obama is the first online social networking president." David Almacy, White House Internet director, 2005-2007
Senator Barack Obama has run the first campaign of the information age, and win or lose he has set the standard for how campaigns will be run from this point forward. *New Geography*, 10/9/08
If President-elect Barack Obama had run in 2004, he would not have won the election, says HuffingtonPost founder and political pundit Arianna Huffington. That's partly due to the variety of web 2.0 technologies that were available to the Obama campaign that either weren't around or weren't used effectively during the last election...

"Were it not for the internet, Barack Obama would not be president," said Huffington. "The McCain campaign didn't have a clue. The problem wasn't the age of the candidate, it was the age of the idea. The internet has killed Karl Rove's politics".
information age
The period beginning around 1970 and noted for the abundant publication, consumption, and manipulation of information, especially by computers and computer networks.

Defining the "Information Age"

**Information Age** is a term that has been used to refer to the present era, generally beginning within ten years of 1990. The term alludes to the global economy's shift in focus away from the production of physical goods and towards the manipulation of information. Wikipedia
"Information" and Information Technology

History 3493 (Oklahoma U.) The Cultural History of Information.

Prerequisite: junior standing or permission of instructor. An introduction to the history of information technologies and communications media from the printing press to the internet. Topics will include the print revolution, the advent of electronic communications, the growth of broadcast media, the development of the digital computer, and the internet boom.
Does history of Information = history of IT?
Tracing Technological "Antecedents"
Ask a silly question: "What was the first computer"?

- Antikythera mechanism, ca. 150 B.C.
- Abacus 2400, B.C.
- Stonehenge, 3100 B.C.
- Pascal's calculator, 1624
- Ishango bone, 20,000 B.C.
Who was the first suicide terrorist?
What are "Information Technologies"?

What makes for "Information technology"?
Prototypical instances of modern "IT"
More marginal instances of "information technologies"
What isn't IT?
Rethinking "Information Technologies"
Rethinking "Information Technologies"
Rethinking "Information Technologies"
Rethinking "Information Technologies"
Complicating the Story, 1: The Interconnection of Technologies

One way to tell the history of printing
Complicating the Story, 1: The Interconnection of Technologies

Times Printing Press --

Foudrinier Machine, 1811
Complicating the Story, 1:
The Interconnection of Technologies

Times Printing Press --

Foudrinier Machine, 1811

Stephenson's Rocket, 1827
Complicating the Story, 1: The Interconnection of Technologies

- Foudrinier Machine, 1811
- Strap-iron rails
- Times Printing Press --
- Stephenson's Rocket, 1827
Complicating the Story, 1: The Interconnection of Technologies

Times Printing Press --

Foudrinier Machine, 1811

Stephenson’s Rocket, 1827

Strap-iron rails

Every technology sits in a technological custard…
Complicating the Story, 2: The Social Setting of Technologies

The 19th c. newspaper required….

Specialization of Skills

Specialization of Commercial Roles
Complicating the Story, 2: The Social Setting of Technologies

The 19th c. newspaper required….

Growth of Literacy
Complicating the Story, 2: The Social Setting of Technologies

Other factors: Availability of capital
Emergence of professional journalism
Shifts in political partisanship, relaxation of censorship
Rise of science & "objectivity"
All history = a triumphant (and, often, ineluctable) progress toward the present state…

… the history of our country during the last hundred and sixty years is eminently the history of physical, of moral, and of intellectual improvement.

Thos. Babington Macaulay, 1848

That great, growling engine of change -- technology.

Alvin Toffler, 1970.
Plan of the Course
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