



Christopher Null (of Yahoo) may be the self-proclaimed 349<sup>th</sup> most powerful person on the web, but that did not stop him from taking a huge amount of his time to write about the top-fifty ([http://news.yahoo.com/s/pcworld/20070305/tc\\_pcworld/129301](http://news.yahoo.com/s/pcworld/20070305/tc_pcworld/129301))

#### 1. Eric Schmidt, Larry Page, and Sergey Brin (**Executives at Google**)

When your stock price can top \$500 a share, you're collectively worth \$33 billion in cash, and you run the most trafficked search engine on the Internet, you can afford to do, well, pretty much whatever you want. Sergey Brin and Larry Page's little project from Stanford has grown into the Web's most talked-about powerhouse, and one of the few names on this list to have morphed into a verb. Schmidt left Novell to join the board of directors at Google in 2001 and soon became the company's CEO. Having conquered the online advertising world, Google seems to be gearing up for an acquisition spree, its headline-grabbing purchase of YouTube marking a big step toward complete domination of the Web.

#### 2. Steve Jobs (**CEO of Apple**)

No doubt you're sick of the media bonanza surrounding the every move of Apple's CEO, but when one man's appeal for DRM-free music reverberates around the world, it's hard to ignore the power he wields. Jobs popularized legal music downloads and legal TV and movie downloads. And though the iPhone won't be released for five months, its demonstration at MacWorld Expo suggested that this product might finally popularize Internet browsing on a mobile device.

#### 3. Bram Cohen (**Co-founder of BitTorrent**)

P2P systems like KaZaA and eDonkey are so last year. The future is all about BitTorrent, the brainchild of math wizard and programming wunderkind Bram Cohen. BitTorrent, developed in 2001, has gained in popularity as a way to download large files (like movies) by sharing the burden across hardware and bandwidth. The technology's adeptness at handling large files got Cohen in trouble with the Motion Picture Association of America, which ordered BitTorrent to remove copyrighted content from its network. But that setback hasn't slowed it down. Reportedly, more than a third of all Web traffic now comes from BitTorrent clients. BitTorrent and the entertainment heavyweights have since joined forces. The newly released BitTorrent Entertainment Network launched recently with thousands of industry-approved movies, television shows, games, and songs for sale and rental.



#### 4. Mike Morhaime (**President of Blizzard Entertainment**)

In the world of online gaming, there is World of Warcraft and there is everything else. With 8 million players worldwide, Blizzard earns about \$1.5 billion a year on WoW. And each player is breathlessly beholden to Mike Morhaime for the chance--if it ever comes--to obtain that Blade of Eternal Justice. As with Second Life (see #17), entire real-world businesses are based around the game.

#### 5. Jimmy Wales (**Founder of Wikipedia**)

Many onliners treat Internet encyclopedia Wikipedia as their first and last stop in researching a topic; and its user generated content has become so reliable that Nature magazine declared it "close to [Encyclopaedia] Britannica" in accuracy. The site has been cited as a source of information in more than 100 U.S. court decisions since 2004. But its popularity has also made Wikipedia a target for spammers--so much so that Wikipedia temporarily blocked the entire country of Qatar from making edits. To thwart spammers, Wales decided to slap "nofollow" tags on external links, telling search engines to ignore the links in order to avoid artificially inflating the search engine ranking of the link targets. This strategy ensures that Wikipedia's prominence in search results will continue to grow. But Wikipedia may just be the beginning for Wales. He recently launched his own search engine, WikiSeek, which searches only sites mentioned in Wikipedia.

#### 6. John Doerr (**Venture capitalist for Kleiner, Perkins, Caulfield & Byers**)

A former salesman for Intel, John Doerr has been the king of Silicon Valley venture capital for 27 years, investing in tech businesses ranging from Sun Microsystems to Amazon.com to Google. Jeff Bezos (see #24) once described Doerr as "the center of gravity in the Internet." He has also put his money behind his politics, backing controversial state ballot initiatives in California involving alternative energy and stem-cell research.

#### 7. Craig Newmark (**Founder of Craigslist**)

His Web site has no ads, charges absurdly low fees to a small fraction of its visitors, has a ".org" domain, and employs 23 people. Yet despite its humble appearance, Craigslist racked up 14.1 million page views last December and was the 52nd most viewed site last December according to comScore Media Metrix. Newmark's Craigslist has become an addiction for many, who impulsively refresh the listings of free stuff, "rants & raves," and personal ads while shirking their day jobs. Most importantly, it has almost singlehandedly demolished the offline classified advertising business. (In the San Francisco Bay Area alone, one study found, the site drains up to \$65 million annually from local newspapers' help-wanted ads.) Take that, old media!



#### 8. Peter Levinsohn (**President of Fox Interactive Media**)

Fox Interactive Media, owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, is one of the Web's most powerful entities, controlling 13 sites that range from uber-popular MySpace.com to controversial FoxNews.com. A complement to News Corp's array of traditional film and television properties, this Internet-focused division ranked among the top 10 visited properties in the world in December 2006, according to comScore World Metrix. And there will probably be more to come, as Fox Interactive still has \$2 billion in acquisition money to play around with, according to TechCrunch.

#### 9. Marissa Mayer (**VP for search products & user experience at Google**)

Google's product czar oversees the search giant's increasingly diversified list of Web services and tools, such as Google Maps, Google Desktop, and Google Base--an eBay-esque e-commerce service. The first lady of Google joined the company as its first female engineer in 1999 (she was approximately employee #20) and worked on developing Google's now-familiar minimalist look. But don't accuse her of all work and no play; according to Google's Web site, she organizes employee movie nights.

#### 10. Chad Hurley and Steve Chen (**Founders of YouTube**)

Despite Google's acquisition of the company, YouTube founders Chad Hurley (CEO) and Steve Chen (CTO) look like they'll be shaking things up for some time to come. The Internet video kingpin announced plans to pay users for videos, and it has signed several big-media content partnerships (with MTV, NBC, Warner Music, and others). Fellow co-founder Jawed Karim left the company to pursue a master's in computer science at Stanford University.

Important People #11 through #15

#### 11. Kevin J. Martin (**Chairman of Federal Communications Commission**)

He may look innocent and unassuming, but Martin is arguably the most powerful bureaucrat on the Web. He took over the reins of the FCC in 2005, and to date he has encountered minimal controversy and none of the scandals that predecessor Michael Powell suffered. But that doesn't mean he couldn't cut off your Internet connection like that if he really wanted to.



12. Brad Templeton (**Chairman of the board at Electronic Frontier Foundation**)

If you've ever found yourself on the wrong side of an electronic copyright or privacy scuffle, you know that Brad Templeton and the Electronic Frontier Foundation are your friends. They've defended file-sharers sued by the Recording Industry Association of America and filed complaints against America Online for disclosing subscriber search terms; currently they're fighting to unmuzzle bloggers who published leaked documents related to Eli Lilly's alleged misrepresentation of side effects of the drug Zyprexa. Templeton's passion about copyright and free speech is not surprising.

13. Henry Chon (**CEO of Cyworld**)

Don't call Cyworld a Korean MySpace; MySpace is an American Cyworld. In South Korea, an estimated 25 percent of the population (and 90 percent of people in their teens and twenties) have Cyworld accounts, where individuals design miniature animated avatars to represent them in its unique online space. In 2006 CEO Henry Chon brought Cyworld to U.S. shores. Though Cyworld hasn't yet achieved comparable success here, MySpace shouldn't rest easy if Chon's track record is any indication of future competition.

14. Shana Fisher (**Senior VP for strategy and M&A at InterActiveCorp**)

InterActiveCorp chairman and CEO Barry Diller loves his online enterprises. After a buying binge, IAC now owns Ask.com, Citysearch, Expedia, Match.com, Ticketmaster, and a host of other service-oriented Web businesses. But who tells Diller where to plunk down the cash? That would be his mergers and acquisitions advisor, senior VP Shana Fisher, who determines exactly where and when IAC should invest. Her control over IAC's purse strings makes her arguably the most powerful woman on the Internet.

15. Niklas Zennstrom and Janus Friis (**Founders of Skype and KaZaA**)

It seems like Niklas Zennstrom and Janus Friis just can't stop themselves. First they built the popular (though malware-addled) peer-to-peer file-sharing network KaZaA; then they followed that endeavor up by building the amazingly popular VoIP software Skype. After selling Skype to eBay (see #28) for \$2.6 billion, the duo has gone back to the drawing board to produce Joost (formerly "The Venice Project"), a P2P video distribution service that is currently in private beta form. Will Zennstrom and Friis pull off a trifecta of killer apps? After being forced to settle an RIAA lawsuit over KaZaA for more than \$100 million, they are negotiating directly with content providers as they prepare for Joost's official launch.



16. Matt Mullenweg (**Developer of Wordpress blogging site and software**)

Matt Mullenweg can barely buy a drink, but this 22-year-old open-source enthusiast developed WordPress, the open-source publishing software favored by blogging diehards around the world. In 2004, WordPress became well-enough known that Web publishing powerhouse CNet hired Mullenweg to work on it and other projects. Mullenweg quit in 2005, however, to work full-time on WordPress, which today is more like a content-management system, with various templates, widgets, and plug-ins, and Askismet antispam protection (we reviewed the service in January 2007.)

17. Philip Rosedale (**CEO of Linden Lab**)

Philip Rosedale took the MMORPG (massively multiplayer online role-playing game) concept and spun it into the Web's most talked-about virtual destination: Second Life. But don't call it just a game. For more and more "residents," Second Life has become a first life, where they can do everything in the virtual world from getting married to launching businesses that function exclusively within the site's confines. Many real-world businesses have opened Second Life branches, too. In fact, Second Life has become so popular that the inevitable backlash has begun: Nick Denton's Valleywag (see #45) has compared the game's economy to a pyramid scheme

18. Jon Lech Johansen (**Creator of DeCSS decryption program**)

Better known as DVD-Jon, Jon Lech Johansen is the Norwegian hacker who broke the encryption system used on DVD movies, thereby allowing them to be copied. He released the DeCSS decryption program in 2002 and was promptly prosecuted in his homeland. Eventually acquitted, Johansen went on to crack Apple's iTunes DRM (repeatedly) while working as a software developer in the United States. Beaten to the punch in cracking high-definition DVD formats by the still-anonymous muslix64, who created "backup" programs for HD DVD late last year and for Blu-ray Disc in January, Johansen nonetheless remains the renegade that big media fears most.

19. Jerry Yang, David Filo, and Terry Semel (**Executives at Yahoo**)

Google's product innovations and its blockbuster purchase of YouTube for \$1.65 billion may have pushed Yahoo out of the limelight, but the Web giant led by founders Yang and Filo and CEO Terry Semel are fighting back. In the past two years, Yahoo has acquired online photo-sharing site Flickr and social bookmarking site Del.icio.us. It also continues to launch new properties such as Yahoo Food and Yahoo Pipes (for creating custom data feeds). Yahoo's recent switch to the Panama advertising platform represents another attempt to recapture ad revenue from Google. (Full disclosure: The author of this story writes a blog hosted at tech.yahoo.com.)



20. Jack Ma (**CEO of Alibaba.com**)

Want to do business in China without springing for a plane ticket to Shanghai? Alibaba.com is your best bet. Founded by Jack Ma in 1999, this massively successful business-to-business e-marketplace is the best place online to meet people and trade proposals and product offers. (Ma has been quoted as saying that the firm got its bizarre start when he was kidnapped in Malibu and released on the condition he help his captor start a business in China.) In 2005, Yahoo (see #19) made a multibillion-dollar investment in Alibaba, which now runs Yahoo China. The venture recently became mired in scandal, when it provided information that led to the imprisonment of a Chinese journalist accused of leaking state secrets.

21. Brewster Kahle (**Director of Internet Archive**)

Since 1996, the nonprofit Internet Archive has been collecting terabytes of data--old books, movies, music, and radio shows. Meanwhile, another feature, called the Wayback Machine, has been quietly taking snapshots of Web history to memorialize where we browsed. Take a look at the Internet Archive's old snapshots of your favorite Web sites and you may be shocked at how different they used to be. Kahle cofounded the Internet Archive with the goal of "preserving our digital heritage," but don't let the humble curatorial pose fool you: Kahle has also challenged changes to U.S. copyright law in Kahle vs. Gonzales, a high-profile First Amendment legal case.

22. Ray Ozzie (**Chief software architect of Microsoft**)

In 2006, when Bill Gates abdicated the position of chief software architect at Microsoft after 30 hands-on years, observers applauded his choice of successor: software visionary Ray Ozzie. The creator of Lotus Notes and Groove collaboration software is now charged with ensuring Microsoft's technological relevance in an age in which the Web threatens to replace the traditional desktop OS. A pioneer in computer-based collaboration, Ozzie seems well equipped to do the job. One piece of unsolicited advice, Ray: You might consider updating your blog as a first step.

23. Markos Moulitsas Zuniga (**Blogger at Daily Kos**)

The left's most high-profile voice on the Web, Markos "Kos" Moulitsas, is a political powerhouse without equal online. His blog draws comments from liberals ranging from Nancy Pelosi (news, bio, voting record) to Jimmy Carter, and Moulitsas even launched a conference (broadcast in part on C-Span) for like-minded political activists. Kos's endorsements haven't always triumphed, but his backing of Ned Lamont was influential in opponent Joe Lieberman's loss of the Democratic Senate primary in Connecticut last year, though Lieberman eventually won the general election as an independent.



#### 24. Jeff Bezos (**CEO of Amazon**)

He may have launched Amazon.com with the goal of developing it into a big online bookstore, but Bezos proved that schlepping books and CDs across the country was just a first act. The next round: adding toys, T-shirts, and power tools. And now, for scene three, Bezos has thrown himself into Web services. What does it mean? Just the start of a new framework for developing Web sites, including "utility computing" services that let you buy server time at a rate of 10 cents an hour. While we wait to find out how his newfangled grid computing strategies pan out, don't forget that Bezos will sell you a Barbie Fashion Fever Grow 'N Style Styling Head for 50% off.

#### 25. Robert Scoble (**VP of media development at PodTech.net**)

You know a grassroots movement is a success when big business wants to join in. And for once, big business--namely Microsoft--did it right. This was largely due to Robert Scoble. At the time a Microsoft employee, he blogged about the company and revealed a human--and sometimes egg-covered--side of the Redmond empire. The glimpse into Microsoft's inner workings, cool technologies, and smart people shattered (or at least dented) the Microsoft stereotype. Microsoft blogs have subsequently become an integral part of the company's communication with users. In 2006 Scoble left Microsoft for PodTech.net, where his video podcast Scoble Show features interviews with geeks. Recent guests include PC World's editor in chief Harry McCracken, who stopped in to debate the eternal question: Mac or PC? Scoble has also interviewed 2008 presidential candidate John Edwards, whose outspoken bloggers got him into hot water.

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26. John Battelle (**Chairman at Federated Media Publishing**)

Entrepreneur and journalist John Battelle has had a ringside seat for the unfolding of Webs 1.0, 2.0 (he cohosts the Web 2.0 Summit conference with Tim O'Reilly--see #36), and (in its preliminary stages) 3.0. In addition, he founded what some would call the Vanity Fair and the People Magazine of the Internet era: Wired Magazine and The Industry Standard. His most recent venture, Federated Media Publishing, represents the A-list of online content. Its slate of more than 50 sites includes 43 Folders, Ars Technica, BoingBoing, and TechCrunch. Battelle's 2005 book *The Search: How Google and Its Rivals Rewrote the Rules of Business and Transformed Our Culture* and his blog Searchblog are required reading for anyone who wants to understand the constantly evolving landscape of the tech industry.

27. Lawrence Lessig (**CEO of Creative Commons**)

Acknowledging his kinglike status in the field, Wired once called him the "Elvis of Cyberlaw"--and the name stuck. Lawrence Lessig is a professor at Stanford University Law School and founder and chair of Creative Commons (CC), a nonprofit initiative that promotes a free but nonrevocable licensing system for online works. Designed to enable copyright holders to share content and yet still control it, a CC license spells out whether the holder wants to require attribution, restrict commercial use, or allow derivative works under specified circumstances. Musical acts such as DangerMouse and David Byrne have made songs available under the CC's Sampling Plus license for noncommercial sharing and commercial sampling, while restricting advertising uses of it. A wealth of Creative Commons-licensed media is stored in searchable form at the Creative Commons Search page.



#### 28. Meg Whitman (**CEO of eBay**)

If there's an industry that eBay doesn't touch, we haven't found it yet. Whether trying to score a PlayStation 3 on opening week or laboring to complete your set of Thundercats action figures, you have probably visited the venerable king of all auctions. But Meg Whitman, whose tenure as CEO of eBay is now approaching nine years (an era by dot-com standards), has more on her mind than just vintage GI Joe dolls and state quarters. She's also boss of the Web's largest online payment system, PayPal, and proud new owner of the most popular VoIP system, Skype (see #15).

#### 29. Ron Wyden (**U.S. Senator of Oregon**)

Oregon's senior U.S. Senator, a Democrat, has long ranked as one of Capitol Hill most influential voices on technology issues. During his tenure, Wyden has authored or co-authored the Science and Technology Emergency Mobilization Act, the Cyber Security Research and Development Act, and the controversial CAN-SPAM Act. (Hey, they can't all be winners.) More recently, Wyden has introduced a bill called the Internet Nondiscrimination Act, which would prevent telecom companies from charging more for delivering content faster.

#### 30. Michael Arrington (**Founder of TechCrunch**)

An entrepreneur and former attorney who cofounded Canada's answer to Netflix (Zip.ca), Michael Arrington turned his attention in 2005 to blogging about Web startups. Almost overnight he became a sensation, eliciting the kind of fawning attention from dot-com wannabes that is normally reserved for the likes of men with surnames like Gates and Jobs. With TechCrunch properties now sprawling across six domains, the often-irascible Arrington is indisputably the most powerful technology blogger working today.

#### 31. Bruce Schneier (**Cryptographer**)

Whether his focus is the Transportation Security Administration's latest boneheaded security procedures or the question of how secure a 12-character password really is, Bruce Schneier offers the most lucid (and most profoundly influential) musings on computer security you're likely to find online or off. Schneier's recent writings on security problems associated with the war on terrorism--abroad, at home, and online--are required reading.



32. Kevin Rose (**Founder of Digg**)

Everyone who has a story on the Web wants Kevin Rose's users to "digg it." The former TechTV host (and colleague of Leo Laporte--see #47) founded Digg.com in 2004, bringing the power of social networking to the news. Digg's algorithm lets users submit their favorite news stories and vote them up (or down). Digg's expansion beyond technology news to mainstream news categories in June 2006 prompted BusinessWeek to slap a goofy-looking picture of Rose on its cover along with an eyebrow-raising valuation estimate of \$60 million. Whether Rose is a multimillionaire or not, his site has plenty of clout on the Internet.

33. David Farber (**Founder of Interesting-People.org**)

Since the early 1990s, David Farber has been running the Interesting-People mailing list. It started as a small e-mail list for friends and colleagues (the interesting people) and turned into the mother lode of online mailing lists. Interesting-People takes on topics from 9/11 to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act to Net neutrality and is rife with highly opinionated commentary from some very influential people. Farber is currently a professor of computer science and public policy at Carnegie Mellon University. His past positions include a stint as chief technologist for the Federal Communications Commission.

34. John Hinderaker, Scott Johnson, and Paul Mirengoff (**Authors at PowerLine**)

Political candidates can no longer afford to ignore political blogs, and PowerLine is among the most influential political blogs out there. This neoconservative triumvirate--three lawyers who met while attending Dartmouth College--gained their street cred during "RatherGate," when they assembled compelling arguments that the Killian documents, which Dan Rather used in a 60 Minutes newscast on George W. Bush's National Guard service, were fake. Initially, Rather and CBS News poo-pooed the PowerLine bloggers; but in the end, CBS admitted the forgery and Rather resigned.



35. Vinton G. Cerf (**Chairman of ICANN Board of Directors, and VP at Google**)

Owing to his role in developing the TCP/IP protocols on which the Net depends, Vinton G. Cerf is one of the founding fathers of the Internet. Much of his work on the protocols occurred during the 1970s and early 1980s while he was employed by DARPA, the Department of Defense's Advanced Research Projects Agency. (In honor of their work, Cerf and partner Robert Kahn received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005.) Currently, Cerf chairs ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), and in 2005 he became Google's vice president and chief Internet evangelist. He has been a strong advocate of Net neutrality, notably in an appearance before the Senate Judiciary Committee. He is also working with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory on an Interplanetary Internet for more-robust space communication systems.

36. Tim O'Reilly (**Founder and CEO of O'Reilly Media**)

O'Reilly coined the phrase "Web 2.0," and he continues to cohost (with John Battelle--see #26) the industry's must-attend Web 2.0 Summit conference. The Harvard-educated publisher laid his foundation in computer manuals. (Many a computer enthusiast would immediately recognize the intricate black-and-white line drawings of animals that grace the covers of O'Reilly books.) But his company has grown to incorporate the new media--blogs, podcasts, and online news--he espouses.

37. Drew Curtis (**Founder of Fark.com**)

Lewd, crude, and traffic-generating, Fark.com invites its community of ad hoc commentators to participate in an ongoing brutal but frequently witty dissection of current news stories that sometimes turns into news itself. When the site recently greenlighted a news item under the descriptive headline "Anna Nicole Smith's condition downgraded to dead," Reuters and other international news outlets reported the crack. The enterprise is still primarily run by one guy: founder and smart-ass Drew Curtis. In January 2007, he launched FarkTV on the SuperDeluxe comedy video site. He is also scheduled to release a book titled *It's Not News, It's Fark: How Mass Media Tries to Pass Off Crap as News* in May 2007. (Yeah, but your media watchdog wants crap!)

38. Gabe Rivera (**Creator of Techmeme**)

Gabe Rivera has created a powerful content-analysis algorithm that scans traditional news media and blogs, identifies the important stories, and organizes them into easy-to-read clusters. His goal: to find the next big news story so that you don't have to. That's why influential bloggers, decision makers, and news junkies find his site Techmeme a must-read.



39. Dave Winer (**Blogger and author of RSS 2.0**)

If you are wasting hours a day perusing podcasts, then you have Dave Winer to thank or blame (depending on your point of view). He was one of the inventors of podcasting--and one of the first bloggers. Winer started his Scripting News blog, which is still well read, back in 1997. He also co-authored the SOAP protocol, an instrumental element in operating-system-independent Web services. Nevertheless, his work on RSS--the technology behind Web content feeds--is what really earned him his fame. That, plus his ability to persuade the New York Times to use RSS and his work in amending it to support media files (giving birth to the podcast), makes him the father of modern-day content distribution.

40. Mike Schroepfer (**VP of engineering at Mozilla**)

In the ongoing browser war, Mike Schroepfer is a five-star general who leads a massive but decentralized open-source army of staff and volunteer engineers. Its mission: to improve what is right now the best Web browser on the planet, Firefox. The open-source nature of Firefox permits a faster development cycle for incorporating new features and security fixes. The proof of its success is Internet Explorer 7's adoption of FireFox features such as tabbed browsing. See our recent comparative review, "Radically New IE 7 or Updated Mozilla Firefox 2--Which Browser Is Better?"

41. Perez Hilton (**Hollywood Blogger**)

Love him or hate him, this controversial blogger (real name: Mario Lavandeira) has changed the face of celebrity journalism. Hilton's hugely popular Web site offers around-the-clock access to celebrity gossip and photos, but that's not the only reason that he's on our list. Hilton is involved in a legal battle with photo agency X17, which has accused him of using its copyrighted photos without permission. Hilton claims that posting the photos on his site is legal, amounting simply to fair use of newsworthy images. The \$7.6 million federal lawsuit could have lasting effects on how bloggers everywhere use digital photos online.

42. P. Graham, T. Blackwell, R. Morris & J. Livingston (**Founders of Y Combinator**)

Rather than sinking a whole lot of money into a handful of companies that may (or may not) turn into the next big Google, venture capital firms like Y Combinator dole out smaller sums to potential mini-Googlees. Y Combinator commits to two rounds of funding and dispenses less than \$20,000 (expense money, really) to coders so they can work, work, work on a prototype to parlay into more funding. In exchange, Y Combinator asks for 2 to 10 percent of the company's stock. Startups that these guys have funded include Reddit (acquired by CondeNast), Kiko, and Weebly.



43. Mikko H. Hypponen (**Director of antivirus research at F-Secure**)

F-Secure's security news blog, written by director of antivirus research Mikko H. Hypponen, is one of the Internet's go-to places for learning about the latest security threats. Too bad Sony BMG didn't think so. When directly approached by F-Secure, Sony BMG ignored Hypponen's warnings about a rootkit hidden within the antipiracy software used in certain SonyBMG audio CDs. Though F-Secure didn't initially go public with the news, Windows expert Mark Russinovich detailed the rootkit discovery process on his blog. The resulting embarrassment (and a third-party lawsuit over the rootkit) might encourage Sony to take Hypponen more seriously next time.

44. Rob Malda (**Founder of Slashdot.org**)

In 1997, Rob Malda (aka CmdrTaco) created Slashdot, the original blog with prioritized news content discussed in posts by snarky (and often highly technical) readers. In fact, the original news story often serves as a mere jumping off point for the site's meaty comments and discussions (fodder for links to more news stories). Even if you prefer Digg (see #32), Techmeme (see #38), Technorati, or some other news aggregation blog, don't forget that it all started with Slashdot. Authors and editors still consider it a badge of honor when their news story is "slashdotted," though increased competition from other sites has stolen a bit of Slashdot's thunder.

45. Nick Denton (**Founder of Gawker Media**)

Nick Denton's blog empire is so influential and so blogged about that you probably visit at least one of his 15 properties every day through one route or another. With titles that include New York City page six alternative Gawker, Washington, D.C., gossip rag Wonkette, L.A. equivalent Defamer, and tech news site Gizmodo, Denton's empire is unquestionably the most successful independent blogging venture on the Web right now, holding considerable sway over industries from automobiles to Hollywood to high tech.

46. Sir Tim Berners-Lee (**Director, World Wide Web Consortium**)

What do you do after you invent the World Wide Web and give it away for free? Start a consortium that works on making it better This British scientist designed the first Web browser, editor, and language protocol (HTTP) while employed as a scientist at CERN (the European Organization for Nuclear Research), and he founded the W3C in 1994. He has recently spoken in favor of Net neutrality. And like the old financial firm E.F. Hutton, when Berners-Lee talks, people listen.



47. Leo Laporte (**Creator of This Week in Tech (TWiT) Podcasts**)

For at least the past 15 years, the man behind Leoville has created, hosted, and written radio and television shows, most notably the former TechTV show Screen Savers. His personality-driven style demonstrated to the world that tech media could be fun. His most recent venture is the TWiT.tv podcast network, a listener-funded enterprise that has gathered some of the old TechTV crew and put them to work creating more than a dozen podcasts, including the eponymous "This Week in Tech."

48. Mohammed and Omar Fadhil (**Blogging in the voice of Iraq**)

Countless bloggers are filled to the bloviating point with opinions about the Iraq War. But the brothers Fadhil, who blog at Iraq the Model bring a perspective that few others can match--because they're Iraqis, based in Baghdad. Whatever your political leanings, you'll find it impossible to read the Fadhil's posts without acquiring a deeper understanding of the war, its implications, and its after-effects. There's no better example anywhere of how citizen journalism is changing the world.

49. Jesse James Garrett (**President of Adaptive Path**)

Garrett, the president of San Francisco Web design boutique Adaptive Path, didn't invent Ajax, the assemblage of technologies and programming techniques that gives Web-based applications such as Zoho's productivity apps and Google Maps desktop software-like interactivity and speed. But Ajax didn't really take off until Garrett identified and named it in an influential essay--and he remains one the most eloquent advocates for the innovative, effective techniques used in many of the best Web 2.0 sites and services.

50. Tila Tequila (**MySpace Personality**)

If you're friends with singer/model/actress Tila Tequila (nee Nguyen), you're hardly alone. Some 1.6 million MySpace users identify themselves similarly. Tequila proved that these MySpace friendships can generate power, fame, and wealth. In fact, she redefined the word "friend" to encompass an individual you've never met. Despite what you may think of Ms. Tequila's talents, she could certainly teach a course in the new Web economy, having channeled her online popularity into A-list (well, C-list) fame. She has posed for Stuff magazine, she has a part in an Adam Sandler film currently in production, and her MySpace page currently boasts more than 56 million page views and 1,734,374 comments.