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The ever-expanding Internet is becoming an essential source for entertainment, business and education. The Internet links millions of computers and anybody with a basic personal computer and basic communication equipment can take part in it. Working 24x7x365 with the help of the Internet is the huge the World Wide Web or simply the Web.

If the Internet is like the electric power running in the network of wires within your home, the Web is different things like light bulbs and fans (applications). The capability of the Web to deliver multimedia database at a stroke of the keyboard or a move of the mouse is nothing but the eighth wonder of the world.

This is truly the age of distributed computing, network services and innovative web solutions. With the evolvement of the Net, new ways of computing are made possible. Network computing is one possible development that promises greater compatibility and efficiency than personal computing.

Modern network services are geared towards replacing the personal computing (fat client) with network computing or â€˜thin clientâ€™. Unlike a fat client computer (which needs large amounts of processing power, disk space and data servers), a thin client computer needs less memory and no disk storage and so is much cheaper. Instead of storing application programs and data in local hard disk, the fat client computer simply downloads programs from a central server into its RAM as needed. This will make computing cheaper like never before.

Network computing has been made possible because the computer industry has agreed hardware and software standards, including a new language, Java. Whether the present Internet infrastructure (phone lines, cables etc) has the required capability, speed and consistency to support network computing remains to be seen.

The Internet and the Web is constantly evolving. In the future, heavy computers, wires and cables will be made redundant and network services will require to maintain the few central servers only, instead of a number of personal servers at every stage. Already, we are witnessing innovative web-based solutions (virus protection programs, for example) to solve many PC problems, which earlier required manual installation.

The scenes depicted in sci-fi and futuristic movies may one day come true, as we all will be connected via networked computers. Every human activity will be recorded and accounted, reducing crimes and human misery. While some experts maintain that it will create the new set of problems, the future looks optimistic. Let us wait and watch.

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