



The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data

By Michael P. Lynch

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With far-reaching implications, this urgent treatise promises to revolutionize our understanding of what it means to be human in the digital age.

We used to say "seeing is believing"; now googling is believing. With 24/7 access to nearly all of the world's information at our fingertips, we no longer trek to the library or the encyclopedia shelf in search of answers. We just open our browsers, type in a few keywords and wait for the information to come to us. Indeed, the Internet has revolutionized the way we learn and know, as well as how we interact with each other. And yet this explosion of technological innovation has also produced a curious paradox: even as we know more, we seem to understand less.

While a wealth of literature has been devoted to life with the Internet, the deep *philosophical* implications of this seismic shift have not been properly explored until now. Demonstrating that knowledge based on reason plays an essential role in society and that there is much more to "knowing" than just acquiring information, leading philosopher Michael Patrick Lynch shows how our digital way of life makes us overvalue some ways of processing information over others, and thus risks distorting what it means to be human.

With far-reaching implications, Lynch's argument charts a path from Plato's cave to Shannon's mathematical theory of information to Google Glass, illustrating that technology itself isn't the problem, nor is it the solution. Instead, it will be the way in which we adapt our minds to these new tools that will ultimately decide whether or not the "Internet of Things"—all those gadgets on our wrists, in our pockets and on our laps—will be a net gain for humanity. Along the way, Lynch uses a philosopher's lens to examine some of the most urgent issues facing digital life today, including how social media is revolutionizing the way we think about privacy; why a greater reliance on Wikipedia and Google doesn't necessarily make knowledge "more democratic"; and the perils of using "big data" alone to predict cultural trends.

Promising to modernize our understanding of what it means to be human in the digital age, *The Internet of Us* builds on previous works by Nicholas Carr, James

Gleick and Jaron Lanier to give us a necessary guide on how to navigate the philosophical quagmire that is the Information Age.

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Editorial Review

Review

“A bracing challenge to Internet enthusiasts.” (Booklist)

“Lynch effectively presents the case for rationality against factional loyalties and insists that there should be vigorous promotion of scientific methods and thinking in public discourse. . . . An excellent, much-needed contribution to the constant battle to sort truth from falsity.” (Kirkus Reviews, starred review)

“[Lynch] pursues his argument with commendable seriousness, clarity, and attunement to historical context. . . . He has written an intelligent book that struggles honestly with important questions: Is the net turning us into passive knowers? Is it degrading our ability to reason? What can we do about this?” (David Weinberger - LA Review of Books)

“[A] fascinating new book. . . . Lynch has been writing about this topic for a long time, and passionately.” (Jill Lepore - The New Yorker)

“Lynch’s basic argument is that if we understand better the conditions under which knowledge is produced and disseminated?conditions he explores clearly and cogently?then we will become more ‘responsible’ knowers.” (Wall Street Journal)

About the Author

Michael P. Lynch is the director of the Humanities Institute and a professor of philosophy at the University of Connecticut. His previous books include *True to Life*, an Editor’s Choice by the New York Times Book Review. A recipient of the Medal for Research Excellence from the University of Connecticut’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Lynch has held grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and is a frequent contributor to the New York Times. He lives in Storrs, Connecticut.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anthony Powell:

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a stroll, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or read a book eligible *The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data*? Maybe it is to become best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can more intelligent than before. Do you agree with it is opinion or you have different opinion?

Charles Stephens:

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absolutely yes. People is human not only a robot. Then we request again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer will probably unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative with spending your spare time, the book you have read will be The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data.

Jesus Sandiford:

The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data can be one of your starter books that are good idea. We recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The article author giving his/her effort to put every word into delight arrangement in writing The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data yet doesn't forget the main point, giving the reader the hottest along with based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be among it. This great information may drawn you into brand new stage of crucial considering.

Kayla Congdon:

Is it you actually who having spare time then spend it whole day by simply watching television programs or just lying down on the bed? Do you need something totally new? This The Internet of Us: Knowing More and Understanding Less in the Age of Big Data can be the solution, oh how comes? A fresh book you know. You are therefore out of date, spending your extra time by reading in this fresh era is common not a nerd activity. So what these guides have than the others?

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