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TRANSCRIPT

Cut #26: What is Web 2.0?

George Faulkner with David Barnes

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FAULKNER: Welcome to [ShortCuts](#), a weekly online broadcast brought to you by IBM. We're here to help you get the most of everyday Internet and e-mail tools. I'm George Faulkner.

This week's question came to us from Mike in Atlanta. It says, I keep hearing the phrase Web 2.0. What does that mean?

On the phone with us is ShortCuts Web 2.0 evangelist, David Barnes. With 15 years' experience in all things World Wide Web, David specializes in the current wave of convergence of 2.0 developments.

He spends his work life on the Web and in front of customers watching how the Web is evolving and ways to converge Web 2.0 and business. Welcome to ShortCuts, David. It's great to have you on the show. What can you tell our listeners about what Web 2.0 is?

BARNES: So what Web 2.0 really is is a combination of two things: the technology that we run in a Web browser now, and then the principles and the practices and the social way that we use the Web like we never did before.

First there's the technology aspect of Web 2.0. And what that is is that we learned how to use browsers in ways we never before thought possible.

We saw Google Maps and all of us went, wow! I had no idea a browser could do that.

So the technology aspect now, I honestly can use my browser for my word processor, and my spreadsheet, and mapping,

and wow, that really changes things because I don't have to install them on my hard disk.

Then there's the social aspect, and this is where it really made a change. Before I just went somewhere, I read something, I left and went somewhere else. Now I go there and I contribute. Now I go there and I add something.

We look at the social software or social networking. So I'll give you an example. YouTube. It's massively popular. People want to contribute. There's lots of information. I put videos out there where I instruct people, and I watch other people's videos. So now I'm contributing.

There are wikis, and a wiki is simply a Web page where I can contribute, and then you can contribute, and I can edit some things, and we do it together collaboratively. And now we've got wikipedia. It's now becoming one of the greatest sources of information on the Internet because a whole bunch of people got together and continue to add to it. And so now it's not just me reading, I'm involved in this. That really changes everything.

Here's another example. There's a place called flickr a lot of people might be familiar with.

I can upload pictures, but I also tag the pictures. So my picture might say dog, Maltese, running. So if somebody searched on running dog, or Maltese dog, they would see how I tagged it.

Before, to find things on the Net, I had to hope that somebody marked their page that way. But now we people start to tag it and honestly there's a thought about the Web is now us, and we are now the Web. That's what's really changing with 2.0.

And so the other most significant thing is, it goes everywhere—literally everywhere. I enjoy collecting watches. I collect watches with people all around the world. We share information. We go out in a forum. We teach each other.

This is far different than the way that we used to interact with the Web. And so the social aspects of it are what really changes it.

But it's terrific because it becomes my Web and your Web, and it's society's Web rather than just, you know, somebody putting up a picture and me clicking on a link.

FAULKNER: That's a fantastic and very clear answer, David. I thank you for that. It is a remarkable thing that what was once a very traditional platform, information coming from the top down, something that we're all very, very used to here all over the world, has now been turned on its side.

BARNES: Absolutely. And you know, everybody has become a contributor.

And the Web finds the things that are of most interest to me, so we are the contributors now. It's no longer a one group that controls to millions of people; it's millions of people contributing to millions of people.

FAULKNER: Yes. Welcome to the world of self publishing and social networking. Fantastic information. Thanks so much for joining us today. For a transcript of today's show, visit us on the Web at ibm.com/shortcuts. There you'll find more information on this week's topic. And again, if you've got a question for our experts, write us at cuts@us.ibm.com. From all of us at ShortCuts, thank you for listening.

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