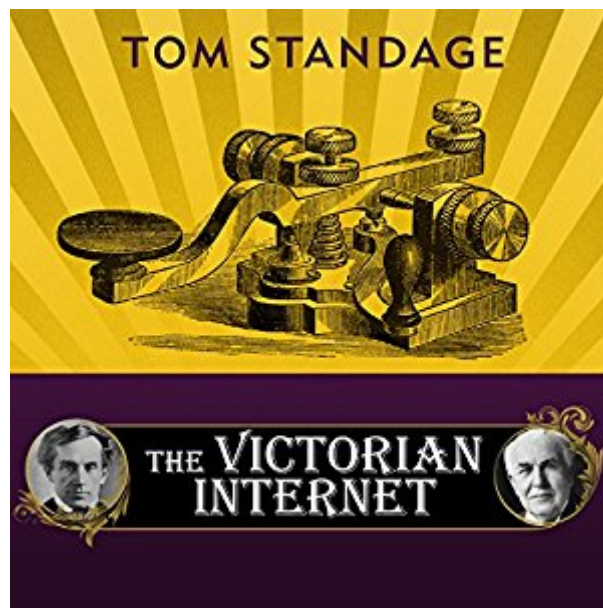


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# The Victorian Internet: The Remarkable Story Of The Telegraph And The Nineteenth Century's On-line Pioneers



## Synopsis

The Victorian Internet tells the colorful story of the telegraph's creation and remarkable impact and of the visionaries, oddballs, and eccentrics who pioneered it, from eighteenth-century French scientist Jean-Antoine Nollet to Samuel F. B. Morse and Thomas Edison. The electric telegraph nullified distance and shrank the world quicker and further than ever before or since, and its story mirrors and predicts that of the Internet in numerous ways.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The title of this book, 'The Victorian Internet,' refers to the 'communications explosion' that took place with the advent and expansion of telegraph wire communications. Prior to this, communication was notoriously slow, particularly as even postal communications were subject to many difficulties and could take months for delivery (and we complain today of the 'allow five days' statements on our credit cards billings!). The parallels between the Victorian Internet and the present computerised internet are remarkable. Information about current events became relatively instantaneous (relative, that is, to the usual weeks or months that it once took to receive such information). There were skeptics who were convinced that this new mode of communication was a passing phase that would never take on (and, in a strict sense, they were right, not of course realising that the demise of the telegraph system was not due to the reinvigoration of written correspondence but due to that new invention, the telephone). There were hackers, people who tried to disrupt communications, those who tried to get on-line free illegally, and, near the end of the high age of telegraphing, a noticeable

slow-down in information due to information overload (how long is this page going to take to download?? isn't such a new feeling after all). The most interesting chapter to me is that entitled 'Love over the Wires' which begins with an account of an on-line wedding, with the bride in Boston and the groom in New York. This event was reported in a small book, *Anecdotes of the Telegraph*, published in London in 1848, which stated that this was 'a story which throws into the shade all the feats that have been performed by our British telegraph.

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