

WELCOME TO THE INTERNET 1996 EXPOSITION

[<http://park.org>]

World expositions have a long, proud tradition. From the Crystal Palace of 1851 to the 1939 New York World's Fair, world's fairs were how people were introduced to the new technologies that came to define the industrial age. From electricity and the telephone to the ice cream cone, the hamburger, and the postcard, world's fairs have left a legacy.

“Yesterday, I went for the second time to the Crystal Palace. It is a wonderful place, vast, strange, new, and impossible to describe. Its grandeur does not consist in one thing, but in the unique assemblage of all things.”

Charlotte Brontë, Letter of 1851

As our society leaves the industrial age and enters a new age of information, it is time for a new kind of world's fair. The Internet 1996 World Exposition will last all of 1996. This is the first world's fair where anybody can open a pavilion and where anybody can participate. Though different in many ways from the industrial age expositions, this is still a real world's fair: over \$100 million in resources from industry and government all over the world has been contributed to make this a world's fair for the information age.

This fair is different in many ways from the great World Expositions, but it is not a virtual fair. Cyberspace is part of the real world, and this fair takes place in all corners of that world. It is also an ever-changing fair: we opened our construction site on January 1, and will continue construction throughout the year as people add pavilions, places, and events.

We think you'll be excited by the scope of this fair. You can learn about our exciting “Eiffel Tower” projects like Central Park and the Internet Railroad. And, like our industrial era counterparts, this World Exposition will have three goals:

- 1** Introduce people to the Internet and show them how this technology works, much as people learned about railroads, lighting, radio, and other technologies in prior world expositions.
- 2** Draw together engineers and industry to build public works projects for the global village.
- 3** Challenge the state-of-the-art by providing a highly visible place for people in all walks of life—engineers, artists, researchers, and students—to show their efforts.

People do not move to cities without parks, schools, libraries, and other public facilities. If we want people to move to the global village, if we wish to see the birth of an information economy based on the global Internet, we need to provide people with a view of that world. A world's fair is a forum where people can learn about other cultures and can see the technology that will affect their lives in years to come. The fairs that live on in memories and history books are the ones that attracted people to a show, but left a legacy when the show was over. Join us at the Internet 1996 World Exposition and help us build a public park for the global village.

Carl Malamud

Secretary-General
Internet 1996 World Exposition