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For Ethernet and innovation, life begins at 40

Next May, Ethernet celebrated its 40th anniversary. NetEvents interviewed Bob Metcalfe, co-inventor.

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Manek Dubash, Editorial Director NetEvents, interviewed at [Xerox PARC](#) (Research Center Palo Alto) to co-inventor of Ethernet, Robert Metcalfe.

In the interview, Metcalfe starts mentioning other Ethernet project architects, as the co-inventor Dave Boggs, Butler Lampson, Charles Thacker, and David Liddle. Metcalfe acknowledges that, indeed, the development of Ethernet is a product of the participation of hundreds of people, so apologies for not being able to mention all.



Metcalfe Bob and Dave Boggs, inventors of Ethernet.

In the interview, Metcalfe explains that initially, [Ethernet](#) consisted of a single node, transmitting to himself; designed for the purpose of testing and debugging. Later tests started with two nodes, Michelson and Morley were named in honor of homonyms physical discrediting theory called "[ether](#)". The denomination was, therefore, ironic.

Later developers enthusiasts Ethernet installed on all workstations Xerox Research Centre. Years later, in the late 1970s, Ethernet would spread worldwide.

Manek Dubash said that in the course of 20 years, Ethernet has spread from a Xerox office, the entire research center in Palo Alto, and then to the ends of the world. The question then the reasons why Silicon Valley is such a special place, "where it all began".

"What factors led then in the '70s to Silicon Valley became a center of innovation, ideas, exchange of goods and services, etc.?" Says Editorial Director NetEvents.



Manek Dubash, Editorial Director NetEvents.

"It starts with people, individuals attracted to this epidemic free enterprise system, a system with great respect for science, education, engineering and entrepreneurial capacity," replies Metcalfe, who also joked saying, "And, by the way, the weather, did I mention the weather? ". Metcalfe and then keep in mind that Silicon Valley had a tradition for decades, as a center of innovation."Innovation then becomes a standard, something that is expected of you," he added.

Then, Metcalfe explains the reasons why Ethernet is considered a key factor for technological innovation.

"We did not have Google, in fact, had not even Internet. Today, researchers can find by clicking the material and research done previously. They can also find partners in the field and opportunities for collaboration. That gives us a kind of collective intelligence created through connectivity. This, in turn, accelerates innovation. "

Bob Metcalfe mentioned then a series of events to be held in Silicon Valley on 22 and 23 May 2013, to mark the 40th anniversary of Ethernet (in which part IT Journal). The first is a day of activities organized by PARC in Mountain View, California, on the history and innovation associated with Ethernet. Then there will be a gala with various activities in the [Museum of the History of Computing](#) . The next day there will be various meetings between industry representatives Ethernet, which is currently a USD 100,000 million, with the international media.

Bob Metcalfe, who besides being the co-inventor of Ethernet and Director of the [MEF](#) (Metro Ethernet Forum) is Director of Innovation at the University of

Texas, says from this perspective the motivations of current innovative. It states: "We seek freedom and prosperity, and innovation is the engine that drives the virtuous circle between freedom and prosperity. There are, of course, many forms of innovation. The interests us in particular is emanating from Xerox PARC, where professors perform scientific research, it becomes a product, is produced as a product students, and these students become the vehicle, in the embodiment of innovation , to bring it to market. "



Bob Metcalfe talks to future innovators.

This channeling of knowledge to the market has two branches, according to Metcalfe. One is to apply them to existing enterprises and the second, his favorite is the creation of new innovative companies.

Manek Dubash concludes that after remembered and celebrated the history of Ethernet in the events of May, the focus will be on innovation in the future, ie the way to go.

Dubash adds that innovation is vital to foster progress and make the world a better place to live. Ethernet, in this context, is an innovation that connects people and institutions globally.

Manek Dubash concludes by recalling the important contribution made by [MEF](#) in this regard.

Full video of the interview:

All photographs: Video Captures [NetEvents](#).