

# Technology for Developing Regions

Eric Brewer  
U.C. Berkeley  
brewer@cs.berkeley.edu

## ABSTRACT

Moore's Law and the wave of technologies it enabled have led to tremendous improvements in productivity and the quality of life in industrialized nations. Yet, technology has had almost no effect on the other five billion people on our planet. In this talk I argue that decreasing costs of computing and wireless networking make this the right time to spread the benefits of technology, and that the biggest missing piece is a lack of focus on the problems that matter. After covering some example applications that have shown very high impact, I present some of our own preliminary results, including the use of novel low-cost telemedicine to improve the vision of real people, with over 20,000 patients examined so far. I conclude with some discussion on the role of database researchers in this new area.

## Biography of the Speaker

Dr. Brewer focuses on all aspects of Internet-based systems, including technology, strategy, and government. As a researcher, he has led projects on scalable servers, search engines, network infrastructure, sensor networks, and security. His current focus is in (high) technology for developing regions, with projects in India, Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda among others, and including health care, education, and connectivity.

In 1996, he co-founded Inktomi Corporation with a Berkeley grad student based on their research prototype, and helped lead it onto the Nasdaq 100 before it was bought by Yahoo! in March 2003. In 2000, he founded the Federal Search Foundation, a 501-3(c) organization, which created the official US government portal with President Clinton, [www.FirstGov.gov](http://www.FirstGov.gov).

He was named a "Global Leader for Tomorrow" by the World Economic Forum, by the Industry Standard as the "most influential person on the architecture of the Internet", and by Forbes as one of their 12 "e-mavericks", for which he appeared on the cover.

Permission to copy without fee all or part of this material is granted provided that the copies are not made or distributed for direct commercial advantage, the VLDB copyright notice and the title of the publication and its date appear, and notice is given that copying is by permission of the Very Large Data Base Endowment. To copy otherwise, or to republish, to post on servers or to redistribute to lists, requires a fee and/or special permission from the publisher, ACM.

VLDB '07, September 23-28, 2007, Vienna, Austria.  
Copyright 2007 VLDB Endowment, ACM 978-1-59593-649-3/07/09.