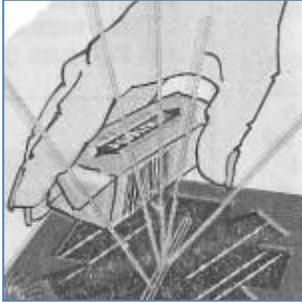


“Diginomics” – History of a new time



On June 26, 1974 —

As Marsh’s Supermarket in Troy, OH, opened for business, checker Sharon Buchanan received her first customer, Clyde Dawson. Reaching into his grocery cart, the first item he picked up was a 10-pack of Wrigley’s Juicy Fruit chewing gum. As Sharon received the item, she did something that had never been done before — she “scanned” it across a laser light. Immediately, the price of 67 cents popped up on her register ... and product scanning was born!

Today, that pack of Wrigley’s gum is on display at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History.

Additional Reading on the History of the Bar Code:

[“A Short History of Bar Code”](#)

[Barcode – Wikipedia](#)

Cashless Dreams are Born

Through the 1970s and into the early ’80s, sugarplum images of “going cashless” was in everybody’s head. Mass media reports and industry surveys at the time projected that a real cashless society loomed very near, very soon.

- HOUSTON CHRONICLE, August 31, 1971 – *“Few Believe it, But Society May Become Checkless.”*
- ASSOCIATED PRESS, January 1, 1975 – *“Cashless Society Said Possible in Decade: All Transactions Would Be Electronic”*
- CHANGING TIMES magazine, October 1975 – *“Get Ready for Cashless, Checkless Living”*

Interviews of industry leaders, bankers and futurists of every brand painted a remarkable picture of a cashless society that was being heralded as the next technological evolution. It was in this pool of expectation that at least two authors produced books on the subject:

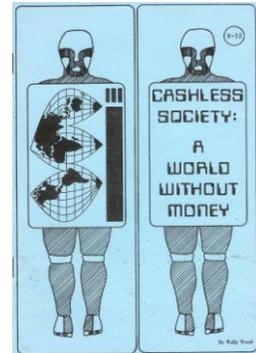
- *Robert Hendrickson* – THE FUTURE OF MONEY (1970); THE CASHLESS SOCIETY (1972)
- *Wally Wood* – CASHLESS SOCIETY: A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY (1976)

Hendrickson wrote: *“All that is necessary is to wait out a short term in the cycle of human history and a cashless **society** will inevitably befall us ... because this is a development that is automatic and inevitable.”*

As Hendrickson hinted, it’s no longer a matter of “if” — but “when”!

1976

Wally Wood's research into an evolving cashless society finally culminated into authoring his first book on the subject entitled: **CASHLESS SOCIETY: A WORLD WITHOUT MONEY**. Published by SRC Publishing in Oklahoma City, this small 40-page book predicted a totally digitized economic system in the 21st century that would be monitored and managed by a centralized computer network. Wood called the network "CenCom," for Central Computer. CenCom would oversee all financial transactions at every level, from electronic payroll deposits to electronic payments of bills to purchases of gasoline at the gas pump to soda machine purchases. Retail stores would be accessible only through the use of a private digital code at the store's locked doors. All purchases would either be approved or disapproved by CenCom based on one's "daily allocated budget" (deposited earnings [divided by] pay period [7days; 14 days ...]).



At the time the original manuscript was written, "mag" stripes on plastic cards had not been established, there were *no* debit cards, and the Universal Product Code (UPC) affixed to retail items was still experimental. It would be nearly ten years later — 1983 — that *Newsweek* magazine, in its January 3 edition, would be among the earliest to present the concept of an *Information Superhighway* to the public ... eventually to be known as *The Internet*.

1998

In considering a number of requests that a sequel to his book be written, Wood realized that the term *cashless society* had, in his words, "fallen on hard times" since the '70s and early '80s. The term had dropped out of the public media almost entirely. He wondered if there couldn't be another term, phrase or word that would best describe what a "cashless society" would be about. Practically speaking, a cashless society could be nothing else but an economic system gone electronic. *Digital. A digital economy ... totally digitized!* Then it hit him — **diginomics!** Digital economics!



WALLACE WOOD has a background in print and broadcast journalism since the early 1970s, with a specialty in futuristic trends in politics, economics and technology. Author of *Cashless Society: A World Without Money* (1974) and *The Embedded Internet: The Final Evolution* (2000), he is founder of the Shuttle News Service (1987) and the National Space & Technology Association (2003-2013), and editor of DiginomicsCentral.com and OurTransparentWorld.com.

In December 1998, Wood published his first online and hard copy article on the "new word" entitled, "*DIGINOMICS: Reviewing the New Globalized Digital Economy*." That original article is presented here:

TransWorld Monitor

Reviewing the Trends and Issues of a World in Transition

Vol. 2 / No. 48

December 1, 1998

“DIGINOMICS”

*Reviewing the New Globalized
Digital Economy*

There definitely is a change in the wind globally. Can you feel it? It's a change that is rapidly sweeping the world. It's touching every nation on earth. It seems to be moving at a momentum outside the control and general influence of current world leaders and social designers. It's a global phenomenon that warrants its own identity. Generically, it's known as the *New Global Economy*. We're calling it ... *Diginomics* ... because, at its essence, it is economics conducted almost exclusively within the realm of electronics. Digital Economics.

It's a new eco-political paradigm that will transform the world historically from its monetaristic roots to that of *invisible* digital money.

This is not some sci-fi vision of the distant future, either. Already a myriad collection of writers, authors, journalists and economists have published their observations in one form or another. For example, **Ray Hammond** writes in 1996 under the title, *Digital Business: Surviving and Thriving in an On-Line World*: “The emerging *network economy* will cause widespread *dis-intermediation* (def.: the elimination of middle distribution channels) and it is clear that only those companies which move quickly to the new model will survive and thrive.”

From the book, *THE DIGITAL ECONOMY*, author and IT consultant **Don Tapscott** writes, “This new global situation is turning the world economy upside down. The economy for the Age of Networked Intelligence is a *digital economy*.”

Joel Kurtzman, executive editor for *Harvard Business Review*, states in his 1993 book, *THE DEATH OF MONEY*: “Few people realize that money, in the traditional sense, has met its demise. Fewer still have paused to reflect on the implications of that fact.

“In the *new world of money*,” he continues, “even the largest banks no longer need vaults. Instead, they store their money on disk drives and computer tapes, and they protect those funds not by hiring brawny guards, but by employing brainy Ph.D. mathematicians and software specialists to write secret codes.”

Welcome to the brave new world of *Diginomics!*

TWM

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