LESSONS FROM ENGBERT'S DEMO@50

Can Engelbart’s techniques for accelerating change solve today’s great problems?

Erika Gregory, Ben Rattray & Erika Woolsey
Moderator, Paul Saffo

SOLVING TODAY’S GREAT PROBLEMS?

Computer History Museum
Solving Today’s Great Problems? Lessons from Engelbart’s Demo @50

Can Engelbart’s techniques for accelerating change solve today’s great problems?

7:15 p.m.  Welcome and Introduction
Marc Weber
Curatorial Director
Internet History Program
Computer History Museum

Honoring Doug
Guerrino De Luca
Chairman of the Board
Logitech

Tribute Video

Taking the Challenge Forward
Christina Engelbart
Cofounder and Executive Director
The Doug Engelbart Institute

Program Discussion
Erika Gregory
Managing Director
NSquare

Ben Rattray
Founder and CEO
Change.org

Erika Woolsey
Marine Biologist
Ocean Design Teaching Fellow
Stanford University

Moderator
Paul Saffo
Forecaster

8:15 p.m.  Audience Q&A

8:45 p.m.  Program Ends
Karen Myers
Lab Director
Artificial Intelligence Center
SRI International
PROGRAM

For Doug Engelbart and his team, the prize was not the revolutionary tools they previewed at their famous 1968 demo and which went on to revolutionize computing through today: Web-like clickable links, word processing, online collaboration, spell checkers, multiple windows, the mouse, networked information centers, and more. These were all stepping stones to Engelbart’s wildly ambitious goal – to help us master the world’s greatest challenges, by augmenting humanity’s collective problem-solving abilities.

Today’s urgent issues differ slightly from the 1960s. Climate change has nudged out overpopulation and pollution, while nuclear war and hunger remain high on the list. But we still face the same mismatch that worried Engelbart. As the general pace of change accelerates, problems grow in complexity far faster than our ability to solve them.

His solution was to address this head-on, by setting up his Augmentation Research Center at SRI International as a giant feedback loop: improved computer tools would lead to more capable users, who would in turn design a further improved generation of tools, and so on. He hoped this kind of snowball effect, which he called bootstrapping, would let users and their tools co-evolve to new levels of capability, much as language and writing did for our ancestors. At minimum, Engelbart hoped future knowledge workers would be able to build and iterate on each other’s work with the ease of a musical virtuoso playing an instrument.

50 years on, is Engelbart’s approach relevant to today’s urgent problems? The start of the event will introduce his work, and then moderator and leading futurist Paul Saffo will explore that question with a panel of experts on some of today’s major challenges. Saffo has been an author, forecaster, and educator at Stanford, Singularity University, and the Institute for the Future, and has studied and presented on Engelbart’s work for over two decades.

Tonight’s distinguished panel includes Stanford marine biologist and National Geographic Explorer Erika Woolsey, CEO of The Hydrous, whose work focuses on marine collapse and sea level rise; Erika Gregory Managing Director of Nsquare.org, a cross-sector collaboration that leverages both human and cyber networks to address nuclear risks; and Ben Ratray, co-founder of Change.org, to address large-scale change through networked initiatives.
ERIKA GREGORY

Erika leads a team that is exploring cross-disciplinary, collaborative approaches to reducing nuclear weapons threat, from engaging tech innovators to recasting the way nuclear weapons are portrayed in popular media. Part R&D lab, part venture fund, N Square’s approach reflects Erika’s long experience designing innovation programs in government, the corporate world, the NGO community and philanthropy.

BEN RATTRAY

Ben Rattray is the founder and CEO of Change.org, the world’s largest platform for social change. He has been named one of Time’s 100 Most Influential People in the World and one of Fortune’s 40 Under 40 rising young business leaders. A graduate of Stanford University and the London School of Economics, Rattray leads Change.org’s strategic vision and is a frequent public speaker about the intersection of technology and social change.

There are more than 75 million Change.org users in 196 countries, and every day, people use its tools to transform their communities – locally, nationally and globally. Whether it’s a mother fighting bullying in her daughter’s school, customers pressing banks to drop unfair fees, or citizens holding corrupt officials to account, thousands of campaigns started by ordinary people have won on Change.org, and more win every day.
ERIKA WOOLSEY

Erika Woolsey is a 2017–2018 Ocean Design Teaching Fellow, part of a cohort of fellows that bring deep experience in design, ocean science and international policy. The Ocean Design Teaching Fellow program is co-hosted with the Stanford d.school.

Erika is a marine biologist, ocean educator, and National Geographic Explorer. She conducted most of her research on the Great Barrier Reef in Australia where she investigated how warming oceans impact coral reefs. Erika is dedicated to translating scientific discovery into public understanding. She is CEO of The Hydrous, a nonprofit that combines science, design, and technologies like virtual reality and photogrammetry for ocean education.

Erika received her Ph.D. from James Cook University and the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, her Masters of Applied Science in Coastal Management from the University of Sydney, and studied Biology and Art History at Duke University.

MODERATOR, PAUL SAFFO

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About Logitech

Logitech designs products that have an everyday place in people’s lives, connecting them to the digital experiences they care about. Over 35 years ago, Logitech started connecting people through computers; now they are designing products that bring people together through music, gaming, video and computing, so they can create, achieve and enjoy more.

SRI International

About SRI International

SRI International creates world-changing solutions to make people safer, healthier, and more productive. SRI, a research center headquartered in Menlo Park, California, works primarily in advanced technology and systems, biosciences, computing, and education. SRI brings its innovations to the marketplace through technology licensing, spin-off ventures and new product solutions.

ABOUT CHM

The Computer History Museum is the world’s leading institution exploring the history of computing and its ongoing impact on society. It is home to the largest international collection of computing artifacts in the world, including computer hardware, software, documentation, ephemera, photographs, and moving images. The Museum brings computer history to life through large-scale exhibits, an acclaimed speaker series, a dynamic website, docent-led tours, and an award-winning education program.

HOURS

Wed-Sun
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

EXHIBITS

Revolution
Where To? A History of Autonomous Vehicles
IBM 1401 Demo Lab
PDP-1 Demo Lab
Make Software: Change the World!

ADMISSION

$17.50 per ticket (packages are available)
Children [12 and under]: Free
Senior / Student / Active Military: $13.50

MEMBERSHIP

Become a part of our community and take advantage of member benefits. A Museum membership is a fun way for technology fans to show their passion for computer history. See the reception desk for more information or visit us online: computerhistory.org/membership.

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