



Use The Net To Fish for Cyber-loiterers

By Kurt von Schleicher

We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the Gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. —Paul, 1 Thessalonians 2:8

Got any generic web info for us or any good words you feel must be exported via puter?

Does anyone know the current count dealing with the approximate number of websites out there in cyberspace (..or how to find it since no company or human is in charge of the www)? Do anyone know how many new sites are created each new day?

I clearly remember watching *ABC News* on July 27th in '05 when they explained that there were now over 400 million pornography websites and how 33% of American teens had view such porn at one time or another (Way sad! Perverted is as perverted does.. thinks, and says). [Internet Watch Foundation](#) said in '03 that there were 90 new child porn sites created each week (Scary times we live in, huh. See [Mk. 9:42](#); [Lk. 17:2](#)). [Pingdom](#) says the first website and web server actually appeared in December of 1990 (at [info.cern.ch](#) and was created by Tim Berners-Lee the inventor of the www). Thanks Mr. Berners-Lee!

Yahoo indexed [19.2 billion](#) web pages in August 2005. By that same date *Netcraft* said there were 70,392,567 sites worldwide and when rounded to a whole number, there are 273 pages per site. Technorati claims that the total number of Blogs alone is currently in [excess of 100 million](#) (2-8-'08).

I ask 'cause I'm curious.

From some basic observations in doing my own cyber-loitering lately, it would seem like people really want to be heard today (Hey, who wants to be ignored, right?), They hunger for information and to learn. Some people feel a need for

attention; others feel bored ..or lonely. Some are wanting to generate more income during these financially volatile and perplexing times as we all watch the Stock Market aggressively rollercoaster like never before. Yes, many are looking for new prospects, sales leads and customers to keep their doors open.

It seems like many strongly desire to get their message out there.. of saving the environment, or their message of some kind of faith, or of a company's new widget, product, and unique vision or promise of what they each can do for you. They want to send the message out far and wide ..fast—they want to influence people into action or hopefully positively help the hurting in different ways.

Some might feel the need to simply "*create*" and others want to "*go on record*" with what they really believe in. Yup, "*go on the record*" with the hard cold facts just like *Greta Van Susteran* at *Fox News* tries to do. Some parents I know want to go long-term *on the record* ..for maybe their offspring's or grand kid's sake ...in case the next generation might want to go check it out later and be helped.

Many relatives simply want to stay in touch with their family members and close friends who now live far away. There are so many relocating for employment these days, and that is hard to adapt to with all the goodbyes and rending of close relationships.

In spite of all the dangers out there on the web, I do praise God for it being there, and for all the other tools that are now available to Christians for building up His Church and relationships with.

It appears that there are literally tens of millions of decent and worthless voices now—coming from both the darkness of the night and from the bright light of day (two unseen worlds are colliding in a fierce battle for the minds and souls of individuals worldwide)—yes, even out there on the Internet these days. They are clamoring, striving, and calling out to you to come join them asap! But our real desire is that they would all join Him ASAP, before it is literally too late!

With all the Blogs, popular Digg articles, business and social networks and micro-messaging services like Twitter, instant messaging services, email, wikis, forums ...and dozens of other new technologies that I certainly haven't yet heard much about... we all (Christian, Buddhist, Mormon, Jewish, Muslim folk etc) now have an unprecedented ability to communicate and to be heard. So, are we just going to sit around on our blessed assurance and say nothing? Why let the cults beat us to their minds?

Personally, I want to know the Lord and understand His absolute unchanging truth so much better . I don't pray for, fast, study the Bible, or witness to people as much as my flesh wants me to make people think that I do. I have a ways to go, but Christ is helping me die to the lesser things. I also want to better understand the needs of others coming from all different backgrounds.

But with all those million of voices crying out daily (many of which really have nothin' to say ..that will help anyone), think about it, they are scrapping, scratching, and clamoring for your full attention ..even if it's just for a minute or two.

They are looking for your friendship, for love, for readership (and I too have given in as of late on Blogger... even though I thought I would never make the plunge. I joined in with that vast *Blogisphere* universe of thought-mixing ...sorry if I've ever overwhelmed you, but I'm still trying to get the hang of this thing without being too longwinded).

But there are some decent tools that Jesus wants us Christians using in fishing for souls as we keep the main thing the main thing—closely knowing and following Him, the Chief Fisher of men. I really can't tell you what tools He would have you use, but He can.

Nets are for casting and for fishing, not decorating and for dust. Bait is for luring and attracting not for munching on as an afternoon snack. Hooks are for lowering and for setting, not for weapons in fighting other fishermen! Sinners are for loving and for winning, not for you to reform or control. You are for Christ in His enterprise and not for yourself or dead religion! —kVs

...the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.
—Acts 26:17,18

Mass crusades, to which I have committed my life, will never finish the job, but the one to one will. —Billy Graham

I think we all can learn much from the soul-winning strategy that Paul wisely employed for the various cultures that he ministered in. Check it out today! In 1 Corinthians 9:22 he wrote, "***I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.***" And look at how critical 'becoming' is in the task of 'saving some.' It's so important! We must enter their culture to reach them short of sinning!

To win the Jewish audiences, Paul *became* as a Jew—he related to his countrymen on their own level. To win the Gentiles, he *became* like the Gentiles ..yes, short of compromising spiritually of course. To win those under the law, he *became* like one under the law. To win some, he *became* all things to all people. In fact, the Apostle Paul *became* a slave to everyone by humbly serving those individuals that God brought across his path to help—it was to win as many as possible to the Lord, not to himself. Jesus was like this too. He washed His followers feet ([Jn. 13:12](#)).

Our evangelistic effectiveness as Christians is directly related to the ability that we have to *become*. How flexible and obedient are you? What will you choose to become? I say, *become* quiet daily with Christ alone as you listen closely to His heartbeat, His marching orders ..as you read His Scriptures. I say do call out to Him in prayer regularly—call out the specific names of those you meet on the web even ..and elsewhere. But remember that much of the world still doesn't read, or have Facebook, or have the internet, so we must go to them with the Gospel and love of Christ. We must send or go or both.

The ability I'm talking about is the ability to become a compassionate listener; to understand and to relate to the people.. showing respect for their differences and in their unique social networking conditions. God highly values all individuals, so we should too. There are many things we can learn from them as we listen.

You know that Paul couldn't email or micro Blog in his day, but he rocked their Middle Eastern world with what he had to use ..back in the day! He could touch people and take time for them. He became a master at this valuable resourceful technique I've been talking about—hearing their hearts cry if you will, and seeing their greatest need. What an example! He refused to intrusively blast his way into people's lives hurting and browbeating them with the Scriptures. He refused to totally ignore their perceptions, customs and their inner conscience. He didn't play Holy Spirit for them. But he was bold, courteous and polite.. never snobby or rebellious to those in authority.

He acknowledged and honored what was honorable. He loved each one of them and appreciated the uniqueness of each one, while still proclaiming his Message of salvation through Jesus Christ alone. He never willingly insulted anyone's beliefs or tried to offend them, but he showed great respect to all people and some were offended by the truth.

Paul tempered his own brilliance that came from a well-trained mind and a great education that God gave him ..to better deal with weaker audiences. He faced open and closed sinners daily, on their turf for their own benefit, not his and he never allowed anyone to pull him downward spiritually. Wherever he went, there seemed to be a riot or a revival—a full-blown spiritual awakening of sorts.

The issue at stake according to Paul is *not what I need to know in my head so much or having the perfect formula down* (though knowledge and wisdom can really help any of us), *but Who I daily draw close to and obey ..and what I need to become in Jesus*. So in the long run as the Lord uses my witnessing efforts, I by faith, can bring loved ones along with me as I enter Heaven ..rather than arriving there alone. That's what it's all about!

Paul's style and efforts to be *right-to-the-point-straightforward* and to adapt his life and methods to the target audience ..underscore that every decision for

Christ must be made with urgency, repentance and within the framework of that person's culture if it is to be genuine.

Methods change, the Message never does! There are so many preachers with so called "new revelations" out there now. But I say, if it's new it ain't true and if it's true, it ain't new.

You can do as Paul did, but do it web savvy. Be flexible, innovative, and creative. Do you desire to win cyber-loiterers? Who are you called to reach? Missionaries are often called to reach a certain people group, but their overarching desire should be to win any and everyone. Dad, are you all curled up on the sofa with some potato chips forever, living for us four and no more? Jesus said "**Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...**" ([Matt. 28:19](#)). Maybe you feel tired after work, but please pray about where God would have you get involved.

Teenager, your peers aren't afraid to befriend you. Go and get on their level, minus all creepy poser-pretense, indifference and haughtiness! They will more likely listen to you than to anyone else. Techo-geeks desperately need what you have, Christian. Geek activities alone don't satisfy.

Some, that I've talked with have literally made a career out of connecting people through social networks and though recruiting.. by doing Webinars. They know deep down inside that they were made for "*real community*," but many haven't yet found it.

Some seek to stand out from the crowd to get more attention and subscribers, but they haven't yet connected vertically. There's no more important connection than that one! Yes, hours and days are invested to get more friends... someone's attention, and then become an expert in keeping it. They have a hunger and a thirst inside and some also know what the advertisers will pay them.

Christian, I don't know what your motive or goal in life is, but I do know that God would like to use your anointed mind, voice and heart as well, among the jabbering multitude who undoubtedly have all different types of goals and motives.. to make a difference in this world for His never ending Kingdom. He wants to make you into *a person of destiny* literally (I know that might sound kind of funny, but it's true). He is able to make you into a person who is totally worth listening to, with credibility, integrity and wisdom. And unlike me, some of you have a real gift in this Internet arena.

Please preserve to polish your skill—preserve with the truth ..going the distance in daily doing and in spreading the Word! Maintain a good attitude and yet be a realist. Fulfill what you were created for—make full proof of your ministry, Christian! It's like casting beautiful seeds in the wind that will fly away and produce a valuable crop on this planet. Don't waste your time or hang tight with lustful cyber-creeps who keep hitting on you. Point them in the right direction and

then move on if they won't repent and believe. Delete all that is unnecessary! Make your entire wall, photo tab, notes, sites and emails consistent with the clean Christian message that you profess—over time that will lend credibility!

Do whatever it takes to make all your posts, your profile, your story submissions, or whatever the "currency" ..so to speak of your site.. as God-honoring, pure and helpful as possible. Let Jesus be Lord of all your web accounts. Please ditch all the ones that will defile.

You can certainly add value to people's lives when you submit certain links that point to edifying pages or to Christian music videos (I just love oneplace.com). You can add more value when you include Bible verse links and a really good description of that edifying article that you wrote and how it helped you.

Don't be all wimpy and embarrassed to quote Bible verses when the timing is right! Your own words and opinions won't change lives and neither will mine. Today, some Christians might get all distracted and hyper-focused on signs, wonders, dreams, quaking, gold dust etc ..and I'm not against real miracles.. but remember, there is zero spiritual growth for anyone apart from the Word of God! Lock you eyes on the Word of God and brag on Him more than anything!

You can add more value still when you thoroughly explain the meaning of the Scriptures that you share (encourage them to see the whole context too) and how to properly apply those verses. You can add value with your own testimony or by explaining the benefits of studying the Bible regularly. It's not just straightforward information and great literature with exciting stories, it's the food new and old converts need most to sustain them.

Believe it or not, people come to churches and to Christian sites expecting to be built up by the Word, to be challenged, to be inspired by truth and equipped by Christ-centered information that builds up their faith. Most of them are not looking for cheap plastic product, ball caps, plastic Jesus mud flaps, cross jewelry or T-shirts with doves on it.

Christians and others actually come to Christian Blogs and sites wanting to gain more knowledge and wisdom in how to live and worship Christ better. They are looking for real answers in how to fish for and win their lost loved ones that they've been worried about for some time. They're also looking for better ways to build up their lukewarm and worldly kids, or to comfort hurting co-workers. Everyone has someone or something that they worship today, but God is the only One they need. He has designed all of us for viable ministry first upwards, and then outwards.

Listen parents, I know that you love your kids grown up or still small, and I want to strongly encourage you. But how much do you really love them ...and their

friends? Do you pray hard for them and help get them to church on time, or do you aim for peace in the home at any price? Is it like you've given up leading them and never want to confront them about the lame sites they visit, the violent video games they choose.. the secular music and chat buddies that tear down the work of Christ in their lives? Don't cave; be strong in the Lord!

Do your school kids lead you and dictate to you what music they will hear online or what trash they will download? Do they call you uber-strict, telling you when they'll log off and go to bed? Parents must wisely unify and win in the home first, in order to give kids the best chance to win in life later!

Are they grown up gamers now and want to party at your expense, in your home on their terms? Have you given in and just want to be their drinking buddy now, never to correct or rebuke them or ask any pointed questions so you're careful to get along with them all your days? Maybe you're afraid of them ditching you and your home all wrong ..for closeness with your permissive ex-spouse. Fear not. Listen, they will more than likely learn to respect you if you take a stand for what's right! You want to spend eternity together with them, after you win them to righteousness, don't you?

Maybe they want it all now, just like their materialistic friends do, but don't be a wuss in giving them all they demand in the name of maintaining domestic harmony ..or in name of "Christian kindness." God has called you to be their parent first, not their buddy. Why only advise and help them regarding temporal trendy stuff that rusts, tears and rots, when they might not ever attain the gray hairs on their head like they have put on yours? You never know how much time you or your kids have. None of us are promised tomorrow. Think long term—eternity long! Live and preach the Word in a non-preachy, non-pushy or religious way. Live it before them.

Maybe you're still young. Man, enjoy it and tell me.. are you currently a secret agent saint on the web or are you a more overt and talkative kind of believer around your immediate family and friends only—you know, slip a tract in the crack at the skate-park or gym and then hide all your faith-talk while surfing on your own hours at home?

Don't be afraid to live with 100% commitment or go public for Jesus while typing. Witness smart (intelligently Spirit-controlled) and courageously online for Him! You never know who will need to hear what you have to say. Some Christians talk the talk ..but don't walk the walk. To them I would say, *Please stop giving the Gospel a black eye—be totally quite until you change!* Are you out for popularity, self-interest or for trying to avoid all persecution and trials? Don't be.

Prayerfully be one thing everywhere you go depending on the Lord! It's just way better that way. If you'll prayerfully do your best, and commit the rest, you will be ready to go for it anywhere He leads. The Spirit will empower and help you on

and offline. Of course you might lose a few friends (if so, they were never your real friends anyways), or catch some flak here and there from mockers while you witness where you are, but keep telling the Good News to those who are open. Share the law of God with the proud and grace with the humble. Share the Gospel at school, share it on your break time at work, share it wisely on the beach and share it with good web links on Twitter.

You need never replace face-to-face witnessing with the online version of that but why neglect either? You know online fellowship should never replace your fellowship with red-hot believers in a local church. Church fellowship is to be a priority, but computer seed planting, watering, and reaping is not off limits for you as the devil would like to make you and your friends believe. At work there will be times to hold your lip as you work hard and smart (please know your employee handbook well and honor your boss by being the best worker they have), but other than that, **it's really kind of late in the day now, and we must utilize every tool at our disposal to get the Gospel message out.**

Bloggers, Twitter-ers, social net-workers etc; I double dog dare you to spend some time with your face in the Bible and your knees in the high low carpet. Breakaway from your desktop or laptop puter, steal away from the groups pulling on you. Go get alone with your best Friend daily, with your first-love, and pray for those you befriended on that Fios-friendly Mac or PC. Never stoop to worship your puter, games, Xbox no, no; but get your physical person and your family to a healthy Bible teaching church each week and then use your gifts there as well.

At home, I dare you to boldly inspire individuals, to fish for people, to equip them by lovingly pouring into their lives through sowing good seeds of Bible-loyal thought. **God can make you a fisher of all kinds of people worldwide ..one-on-one, and one-on-more-than-one.. in your own neighborhood, in school, at home.. while Texting, while Superpoking and promptly responding to unbelievers in Facebook. Be there for them. Some will want your prayers regarding all that is bugging them.**

Why not? Evangelistic fishing is edifying, takes more guts and is more thrilling and than all the fighting done in all Halo, Xbox games, and in WoW (World of Warcraft) put together. So draw in the fishing line if you will! Close the deal so to speak ..with your relatives and friends in those chat rooms when you can. Believe for them to get hooked on the spot ..by Christ. Man, they don't call it the "net" for nothin'!

[First Get Caught Yourself...](#)