



Engineering for the Developing World Seminar Series.



"Technology for Developing Regions"

Eric Brewer

University of California, Berkeley

2.00 - 3.00 pm, Tuesday 27th May, 2008,
Room 2053, Materials Research Laboratory.

Abstract:

Moore's Law and the wave of technologies it enabled have led to tremendous improvements in productivity and the quality of life in the First World. Yet, technology has had almost no effect on the four billion people that make less than a dollar per day. The decreasing costs of computing and wireless networking make this the right time to spread the benefits of technology: the biggest missing piece is a lack of focus on the problems that matter. My goal is to convince EE & CS researchers that technology for developing regions is an important and viable research topic.

Key research results so far include contributions to rural connectivity, IT-quality power, education, and health care. Our telemedicine project in southern India was enabled by core WiFi research (to enable high bandwidth over long distances), an iterative design process that includes social science and field work, and a three-year partnership with the Aravind Eye Hospital System. Started as a pilot in 2006, this project now covers 13 villages, 3600 patients/month, and is financially sustainable. To date, over 3000 patients have one from being functionally blind to having effective vision and the ability to generate income.

Brief Biography:

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 (high) technology for developing regions, with projects in India, Ghana, and Uganda (so far), and including communications, health, education, and e-government.

In 1996, he co-founded Inktomi Corporation 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, and working with President Clinton, he helped to create USA.gov, the official portal of the Federal government, which launched in September 2000.



Host: Professor Roy Smith (roy@ece.ucsb.edu)

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