# Early 2000s video revisits the coolest websites of the internet’s early days



A video clip from the early 2000s showcasing what were considered the 'coolest' websites of the era has recently gone viral, sparking nostalgia and lively discussion about the evolution of the internet. The short excerpt originates from the BBC show The Kit, which aired from 1999 to 2000 and focused on reviewing gadgets and technology developments of the time.

In the clip, British TV presenters Gia Milinovich and Tom Lanham sit before a computer and debate websites that people reportedly used "almost every day" during the late 1990s and early 2000s. Tom Lanham explains: "The sites that people go to all the time and use almost every day." The pair talk through popular search engines of the period such as Yahoo, Ask Jeeves—now known as Ask.com—and AltaVista, which was discontinued in 2013 after being bought by Yahoo in 2003.

The hosts also introduce Google, which was then still a fairly new entrant to the search engine market, reportedly only "nine or ten months old" in the clip. Lanham praises Google for its speed and relevancy of search results, saying: "If you type in 'volcano', the first hundred of them will all be what you're looking for. So it's very relevant and very fast." Both presenters enthusiastically declare, "Google rules! Google rocks!"—a prediction echoed in the present day, as Google remains the world’s most visited website and dominates the search engine market with a global share of approximately 90%.

The Kit's presenters also identify the BBC website as the pre-eminent destination for news online at the time. Lanham remarks, "It's the most comprehensive, the most regularly updated, biggest news resource in the country." He also mentions CNN as an alternative for those preferring an American perspective or interested in international news, describing it as having "all your Dow Jones and Nikkei indexes and all that kind of thing." This reflected a time before news was readily accessed through apps or social media platforms, with many still reliant on websites and television broadcasts.

Other notable sites mentioned include technology news outlet ZDNET, and the digital encyclopedia Britannica.com, which Lanham notes as one of the few free encyclopedias available online. The presenters marvel at features such as downloadable games and screensavers, which were technological novelties then.

Alongside fond memories, the clip has drawn varied reactions since being shared on TikTok and Facebook. Some users have expressed amusement at the presenters’ high praise of the BBC and Google's dominance. Comments such as "The best place for the news is the BBC" accompanied by laughing emojis have appeared on TikTok, while others lament Ask Jeeves’ disappearance, or critique modern Google search results for being saturated with advertisements. One commentator wrote: "Remember the days when Google used to return relevant results to your search and not 20 adverts based on a conversation you had three days ago."

The BBC itself posted the clip on Facebook, adding: "Gia Milinovich and Tom Lanham from The Kit searched the Information Superhighway to show us the coolest websites from 25 years ago." Responses on the platform included reflections on the internet's innocence before the rise of artificial intelligence and algorithms, and observations about how news consumption has shifted from scheduled TV broadcasts to instant updates accessible online.

The development of Google as the predominant search engine has not been without controversy in recent years. Following its emergence as a global internet giant, Google has faced legal challenges related to claims of monopoly abuse. In 2020, the US Department of Justice filed a lawsuit accusing the company of using its dominance in search and advertising unfairly. More recently, in 2024, a judge ruled against Google for illegally building monopoly power to control online advertising. Google disputes these claims, asserting that users choose the service voluntarily.

Critics point to the increasing presence of paid advertisements in Google’s search results, which can occupy significant screen space and often resemble unpaid links, complicating the search experience. Additionally, content from Google-owned services such as Maps and YouTube frequently appears prominently, with Google gaining revenue when users click these links instead of organic third-party sites. Google maintains that changes to its search interface aim to reduce clutter and provide value, while opponents argue these modifications prioritise profit over user experience.

Reflecting on the clip from The Kit and the trajectory of the internet since, viewers observe a dramatic transformation from simple websites and early search engines to today’s complex, advertising-driven digital ecosystem. The video offers a snapshot of the internet’s formative years and highlights ongoing debates about information access and digital monopolies.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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