

It's Just the 'internet' Now By [Tony Long](#)

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Effective with this sentence, Wired News will no longer capitalize the "I" in internet.

At the same time, Web becomes web and Net becomes net.

Why? The simple answer is because there is no earthly reason to capitalize any of these words. Actually, there never was.

True believers are fond of capitalizing words, whether they be marketers or political junkies or, in this case, techies. If It's Capitalized, It Must Be Important. In German, where all nouns are capitalized, it makes sense. It makes no sense in English. So until we become *Die Wired Nachrichten*, we'll just follow customary English-language usage. (Web will continue to be capitalized when part of the more official entity, World Wide Web.)

Still, the decision wasn't made lightly. Style changes are rarely capricious, since change plays havoc with the editor's sacred cow, consistency.

But in the case of internet, web and net, a change in our house style was necessary to put into perspective what the internet is: another medium for delivering and receiving information. That it transformed human communication is beyond dispute. But no more so than moveable type did in its day. Or the radio. Or television.

This should not be interpreted as some kind of symbolic demotion. Think of it more as a stylistic reality check.

Naturally, as part of a company name or organization -- the Internet Movie Database, for example -- the "I" remains capitalized. It also remains capped in headlines, where Wired News style decrees that all principal words are capitalized.

But now, by lowercasing internet, web and net, Wired News is simply giving the medium its proper due.

Tony Long is Wired News' copy chief. His previous atrocity against the cult of technology was inserting a hyphen in "e-mail."



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