MyKnet.org:
The Cultural History & Social Life of an Indigenous Web-Based Environment

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Research / Methodology

- Digital / media anthropology project
  → Internet in (remote) indigenous communities
  → geographical, historical & sociocultural contexts
  → socio-technical infrastructures & relationships
  → digital practices related to everyday internet appropriation
  → socio-technical change

- Ethnographic fieldwork
  → 6 months between 2006–2008: Northwestern Ontario
    (participant observation, group discussions & 96 interviews)
  → 2006–2014: web-based environments
    (following research partners’ online activities → participant observation,
     conversations & online surveys → 2007 [N=1,246] & 2011 [N=117])

- Internet Archive's Wayback Machine
  → archaeological tool for research into history of MyKnet.org
Northwestern Ontario

- Size of France
- Overall indigenous population ~45,000 → Ojibwa, Oji-Cree & Cree
First Nations in Northwestern Ontario

- Remote communities
  → fly-in (summer)
  → winter road

- Almost no telecom infrastructure till middle of 1990s
KO-KNET – Infrastructure & Services

• Keewaytinook Okimakanak (KO) Tribal Council
  → association of 6 First Nations

• 1994
  → Kuh-ke-nah Network (KO-KNET)
KO-KNET – Infrastructure & Services

- KO-KNET
  → bulletin board system (1994)
  → connect indigenous people in region's remote (indigenous) communities through (broadband) internet → community-driven projects (2000s)
  → give people choice & possibility to stay in home communities
KO-KNET – Infrastructure & Services

- **Infrastructure**
  - landline & satellite broadband internet,
  - mobile phone network

- **Services**
  - KO eHealth / Telemedicine,
  - Keewaytinook Internet High School,
  - video conferencing,
  - MyKnet.org

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Welcome to Keewaytinook Mobile

Keewaytinook Mobile (KMM) is the new First Nation owned telecom group delivering GSM cellular and data services to remote and rural communities across northern Ontario. The KMM consortium is working in partnership with Keewaytinook Okimakanak’s Kuhkenah Network (K-NET) and the other partners included on the PARTNER page to develop this service.

Your community’s Pay-As-You-Go mobile phone service provides new security and safety or you when working and travelling in the north and to other communities.

It gives you the ability to communicate with friends and family in a convenient and cost effective way—no monthly bills, no contracts, no other fees for optional services such as Voicemail, Text Messaging and Call Display. There is only the low per minute charge for local and long distance charges that needs to be prepaid to use your SIM phone.

For your convenience, we will include everything you need to know about your Pay-As-You-Go service in one place. We will continue to update this web-site as new developments, services and updates occur.

To get started, review the information on this web site and bookmark it for future reference. Then follow the steps outlined below.

**Steps for getting started:**

1. **Selecting Your Phone**
   - Visit your local wireless administration office to see what phones are available.
   - Click here for more options.

2. **Using Your Phone**
   - *Logistics*
   - *Long Distance calls*
   - *DMTS or Rogers plan*
   - *Click here for more info*

3. **Manage Your Account**
   - *Register your phone—just pick a member*
   - *Click here for more info*

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21 June 2019
MyKnet.org

- Set up in 1998
  → exclusively for First Nations people (youth)
  → create digital presences
  → cost- & commercial-free environment

- 2000 → different age groups across NO & neighbouring regions

- 2013 → ~25,000 active homepages (user accounts)

- 2014 → decline of users
  → new MyKnet.org’s hosting platform
  → need to set up new pages
  → rise of commercial social networking platforms (Facebook since 2011)

- 2019 → ~2,900 homepages
MyKnet.org

- MyKnet.org between 2004–2008 (>30,000)
  → (1) build & maintain social relationships across distance
    (in infrastructurally disadvantaged region)
  → communicating via communication boxes
  → linking family & friends' pages
  → “Web-based directory” / “archive” of indigenous people in Northwestern Ontario (real name policy)
  → (2) different forms of cultural representation & identity construction / negotiation
  → representing homepage producers, families & communities
  → creating, displaying & sharing pictures, music, texts, website layouts & artwork
  → community-developed & community-controlled (KO-KNET)
  → importance of locality & indigeneity

(e.g. Bell et al. 2012; Budka 2015, 2019; Budka et al. 2009)
Finally Got This UP
Last Updated October 15, 2002

Real Name: Alicia Sayers
Nicknames: all, baby elf, neech, leash
From: Gordon River First Nation
Occupation: student
Hobbies: boxin, football, hockey, baseball, hangin with friends
Quote:

THIS IS US... ALOT OF PEOPLE ..Lemme See Here if i can member them MACKENZIE,TAYLOR,JOHN,NATALIE,SASHA,ZACK,ME,NAOMI... GONE PAINTBALLIN ON OCT.12 FOR MY SISTER'S BIRTHDAY

Well imma still work on it i jus got it workin so ... ill make it better next time wit html n all that shyt..but for nowz..its gonna be like this.:D j/k

Alicia Sayers's Favourite Websites
- my sisters homepage
- my other sister's page
- my other other sister's page

Don't be Afraid hit me up on my other e-mail tkeyaa_11@hotmail.com , or rez_star49er@hotmail.com Later

aliciasayers@myknet.ca

This page has had 183 visits

Aisha Sayers
Email Address: baby_nutch@hotmail.com
It seems that many fall back on a year to 'sum up or editate and reflect on their success or failures. As is now and always was, for 2016, I am lost forward to a healthy, stress free year. I accomplished all of what I wanted during 2015 and now, I have to keep this going. I’m enjoying 2016 right now but I want more, my ideal for 2016 is my culture, to continue volunteering, to find out about me and get where I want.

As I said in 2015, “Life is now and always moving. I have been able to grow and achieve a lot more than I expected in 2015 and I will live the same in 2016. I am working towards going to college and stepping into the world of opportunity (volunteer) and look forward to connecting with new people. Being in tune with my culture is key. I have been the Scandinavia way of life and it always will be.

“I’ve not heard good guess, it’s how good you want to be.”
— Paul Arden

“Act the way you’d like to be and soon you’ll be the way you act.”
— Leonard Cohen

My Favourite Websites

This page has had 154000 visits

21 June 2019

RESAW15
Conclusion

• MyKnet.org as indigenous web archive
  → local population (& digital representation / identity / biography)
  → digital artifacts / objects
  → changing digital (mundane) practices

• MyKnet.org as case for
  → (cultural) diversity (of digital culture)
  → non-Euroamerican web / digital culture
  → reality of socio-technical change
  → need for cultural continuity
References


