

# ERROR 404



**DIGITAL**  
*Archaeology*

*An exhibition of iconic websites that  
shaped the early web*



**“WEB 1.0 IS IN  
WORSE DANGER  
THAN NEWSPAPERS,  
AND THAT’S SAYING  
SOMETHING.” BRUCE  
STERLING**

**WIRED**



*The “Dancing Baby”, 1996: One of the first viral phenomena, Baby Cha Cha first appeared on our screens in 1996. Originating as a demo file for Autodesk’s 3D Studio Max software, it was quickly shared across the web, eventually appearing on TV shows like Ally McBeal and The Simpsons.*

Google

barbican



TATE MODERN

BRITISH LIBRARY



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

SOUTHBANK CENTRE



Digital Shoreditch



INTERNET WEEK NEW YORK

FAST COMPANY

TimeOut

BBC

Discovery CHANNEL

REUTERS

NewScientist

Forbes

WIRED

the guardian



DAILY Mirror

FOX NEWS channel

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

CNN

# INTRO- DUCTION

*The pace of technological change and the fleeting nature of websites mean that the early years of the web could be lost forever. **We have a lot of work to do.***

In the space of a few years, **Error 404** has gone from DIY show in Shoreditch to international success story. It has been a star attraction at Internet Week, both in London and New York, earning keynote presentations by the British Library and the Library of Congress, and sponsorship from Google. In 2013, it was visited by the team at CERN responsible for archiving the first website and is now part of the Barbican's hugely successful Digital Revolution exhibition.

There has been some amazing coverage in the press, including the BBC, CNN, Sky News, Wired, The Guardian, the Daily Mirror and hundreds more news organisations. We have shared a stage with Tim Berners-Lee at the Southbank's Web We Want Festival, been invited to Buckingham Palace, published a book and exhibited our digital archaeology software at the Tate Modern.

The response from the public has also exceeded expectations. Hundreds of thousands of people have attended our exhibitions, visited our website and viewed our content across the web.

Our core purpose remains the same, to save Web 1.0 while there's still time. Error 404 is a fantastic experience in its own right but it is also an incentive for practitioners, organisations and brands to dig out old code for us to restore and preserve. This means the collection evolves each time the exhibition is staged, customised to the location.

To continue our digital excavations, **we are looking for a sponsor who is willing to support our work.** We intend to take the exhibition on tour, collecting and archiving sites as we go. In return, we offer an authentic experience that strongly resonates with anyone who grew up with the Web.



**JIM BOULTON**  
- Curator

**“DIGITAL  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
IS A FANTASTIC  
OPPORTUNITY TO  
CONNECT WITH A  
HIGHLY INFLUENTIAL  
AUDIENCE WHO  
GREW UP WITH  
THE WEB”** **INDY  
SAHA, DIRECTOR OF  
CREATIVE STRATEGY,  
GOOGLE CREATIVE  
LAB**



—————>  
*Digital Archaeology*  
*Internet Week New York*



# THE EXHIBITS

*The first exhibit in **Error 404** is Tim Berners-Lee's original webpage, which we reunite with the first web browser, the Nexus browser.*

The first website and browser were created on a NeXTcube, only a few thousand of which were made. Very few people have seen the first website in its true environment. The exhibition is a rare opportunity to explore first-hand Tim Berners-Lee's original vision for the web.

The crucial point about the Nexus browser is that it is a browser-editor. Not only did it allow visitors to view the page, it allowed them to edit it. Only by seeing the first webpage and the first web browser in combination can we appreciate that the web was envisaged as a collaborative environment from the outset.

The Nexus browser also allowed two types of browsing. Users could determine their own journey, much like today. They could also take a document-centric journey, following links sequentially in a series determined by the author.

What is true of the first website is true of all sites. An 800x600 site built for Netscape Navigator seen on a 1920x1080 screen running Google Chrome is a false representation. Only when websites are displayed in the environment they were designed for can we appreciate the designer's intent.



# SELECTED EXHIBITS

**1993** *Coffee Cam*  
The first web cam appeared in 1993 in the Computer Department at Cambridge University. It pointed at the coffee machine.



**1995** *Word.com*  
Unlike many web publications of the time, Marisa Bowe's influential e-zine was a true made for web experience, incorporating games, audio and chat.



**1993** *Dr Fun*  
Running from 1993-2003, Dave Farley's series of one-panel gags was the first comic strip on the web.



**1995** *The Blue Dot*  
Razorfish used the server-push, GIF animation capabilities of Netscape Navigator 1.1 to create the first animated website ... "for our souls".



**1994** *PizzaNet*  
PizzaNet, Pizza Hut's website, allowed customers in Santa Cruz, California, to order online. It was the first ecommerce site.



**1997** *Kylie Ultra*  
Developed in Shockwave Director, Good Technology's website for Kylie Minogue was one of the first truly multimedia sites.



# COMPONENT PARTS

## HARDWARE & SOFTWARE

Each website is showcased on a computer of its time, with appropriate monitor, mouse, keyboard, operating system, browser and plug-ins.



## MOUSEMATS

Each computer sits on a 1.2m x 0.8m mouse mat displaying credits, technical specification and background information. The mats sit neatly on 0.85m-wide trestle tables, which come in lengths of 1.25m and 2.5m.



## SPONSORS AREA

A dedicated space customised to the sponsor's requirements. We are keen to collaborate with brands and institutions on authentic experiences that grab the attention of visitors.

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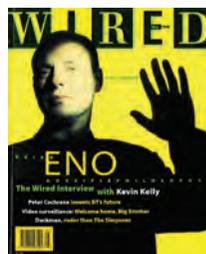


## ONLINE SCORECARD

A voting system extends the experience beyond the physical space and provides a tool for interested parties to promote their involvement with the exhibition. Visitors can select their favourite website, either at the exhibition or afterwards.

## ARTEFACTS

Contextual material, including magazines, CDs or consumer electronic products from the year, accompanies each exhibit.



## VIDEO INTERVIEWS

Interviews feature website creators discussing the challenges of designing for Web 1.0. These videos extend the exhibition to the web, where they have gained more than one hundred thousand views.



# TIMELINE



2010

Inspired by Game On, an exhibition about the history of early computer games at the Barbican, Jim Boulton conceives and curates Page Not Found, an exhibition of 15 Web 1.0 websites. The response is incredible. The British Library gives the keynote presentation and Jim is asked to show the exhibition the following year in New York.

*"Error 404 shone amid hundreds of events that week, receiving more coverage than any other event"*

**PENELOPE SHAW**  
- FESTIVAL DIRECTOR,  
INTERNET WEEK

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2011

Digital Archeology storms Internet Week New York, attracting 12,000 visitors, sponsorship from Google and a keynote presentation by the Library of Congress. Major press coverage follows from the likes of CNN, NPR, NBC, Ad Week, the Australian Broadcasting Company and the Canadian Broadcasting Company.

*"History is a difficult thing to hold on to in the digital age. Digital Archaeology has artfully excavated some highlights of the last two decades of website design to give us some perspective..."*

**JOHN PAVLUS**  
- FASTCOMPANY



2012

Our digital preservation efforts are recognised by the Digital Preservation Coalition, the Library of Congress and UK Trade & Investment, culminating in an invitation to Buckingham Palace.

*"It's exciting to see so many examples of the early web on display. As a cultural heritage institution, the Library of Congress believes we have to preserve web content so that this part of our cultural history is not lost to future generations"*

**ABBIE GROTKE**  
- LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



2013

Appearing as part of Digital Shoreditch's Great Digital Exhibition, Error 404 celebrates websites made by the first generation of agencies from the area now known as Tech City. The show also features artwork by iconographer Susan Kare, the designer behind the original Mac interface. Kare generously designs the Digital Archaeology logo. Visitors include the CERN team responsible for restoring the first ever website.

*"This is important work for the present generation, many of whom can no longer conceive of a world that was not networked, interactive and immediate in terms of access to information"*

**DAN NOYES - CERN**



2014

We are commissioned to create artwork for The Space, an online gallery for digital arts founded by The Arts Council for England and the BBC. The resulting software (/root), created with Craig Blagg, is shown in the Turbine Hall alongside work by Ai Weiwei, David Hockney and Marina Marina Abramovic. This is followed by an appearance on the same stage as Tim Berners-Lee at the Southbank Centre's Web We Want Festival.

*"An artistic excavation of digital creativity"*

**THE SPACE WEBSITE**

*"This new show is a genre-bending playground of digital creativity; a sensory-overloading amusement arcade of sound and vision"*

**ANTONIA WILSON**  
- CREATIVE REVIEW



2015

Digital Archaeology – expanded to include computer art, video games and computer-generated special effects – features as the first section of Digital Revolution at the Barbican, the most comprehensive presentation of digital creativity ever exhibited in the UK. The exhibition becomes the most successful in the centre's 30-year history and is now touring internationally.



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# “AN EXHIBITION THAT CELEBRATES THE BOOM OF CREATIVITY THAT FOLLOWED THE INVENTION OF THE INTERNET”

## CREATIVE REVIEW



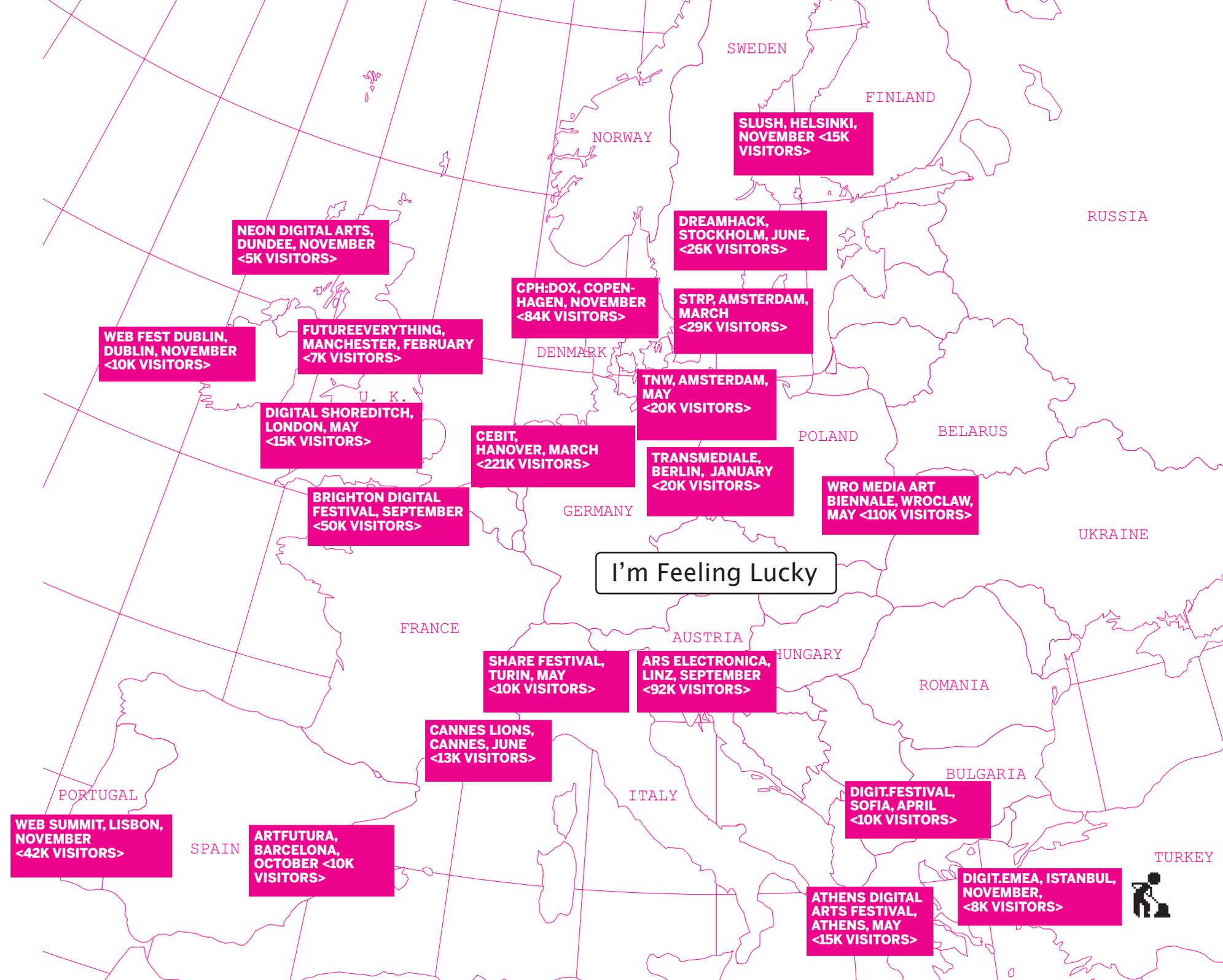
→  
ASCII Marilyn Monroe  
Creator Unknown



# WHERE NEXT?

*The digital festival scene is thriving across the UK and Europe. Every year hundreds of thousands of people attend events, from Dundee to Brighton, Helsinki to Athens.*

**Error 404** is a great opportunity for this audience to immerse themselves in the early years of the web. Technologists, designers, artists, academics, marketers, makers, professionals and enthusiasts are all eager to have a say in what comes next. We believe that only by understanding the past can you shape the future. With your help, they can all be part of the conversation.



# GET INVOLVED

*Error404 has proven appeal to visitors, festival organisers and the press.*



## PURPOSE

Tragically, most of the early web has been lost. By supporting Error 404 you are doing your bit to help preserve evidence of this culturally significant period. The exhibition is a valuable experience in its own right but it is also a great opportunity for practitioners, organisations and brands to dig out old code for us to restore and archive.

## AUDIENCE

The exhibition appeals to highly influential early adopters, who grew up with the internet. They are technology enthusiasts, interested in design and the full spectrum of creativity. They feel a deep connection to Web 1.0 and want to learn more about the building blocks of today's online world.

## PLATFORMS

The core of the project is the exhibition, which can be tailored to any size and location. Each exhibit comprises hardware, software and contextual material but there are plenty of opportunities for customisation. There is also a website, YouTube channel and Twitter feed, which have attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors.

## PRESS

The exhibition has featured on the BBC, CNN, the Discovery Channel, Fox News and NPR, and has also been covered by the Guardian, the Daily Mirror, New Scientist, Reuters, the Wall Street Journal and Wired among others. It currently produces more than 300,000 search results.

**“PREPARE TO FEEL VERY OLD”**  
**THE DAILY MAIL** **“A FEAST OF CREATIVE TECH HISTORY”**  
**THE REGISTER** **“IT BLEW MY DOME OFF”**  
**CORY ARCANGEL**



**“DIGITAL  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
OFFERS BRANDS  
AN AUTHENTIC ROUTE  
TO CONSUMERS, THIS  
IS THE HISTORY OF  
EVERYTHING THEY  
LOVE ABOUT THEIR  
DIGITAL LIVES.” LARS  
HEMMING JORGENSEN,  
CHIEF COMMERCIAL  
OFFICER, VICE**

**VICE**



*Digital Revolution*  
Photograph by Micha Theiner



# WHAT YOU GET

*Sponsorship packages are available to suit a variety of budgets.*

## **FEATURING PROMINENTLY**

*as an official partner at each event on signage, lanyards, printed material and opening presentations*

## **RECEIVING VIP GUEST PASSES**

*to exhibition and associated events*

## **SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES**

*throughout exhibition*

## **INCLUSION OF LOGO**

*and links on all marketing collateral and PR activity, pre and post event*

## **BRANDED CONTENT**

*such as apps, a voting mechanism, NFC audio guide, software, video and branded wifi*

## **ACCESS TO LIST OF ATTENDEES**

*wherever possible*

## **BRAND PRESENCE**

*and links on the Digital Archaeology website, blog, YouTube pre-roll and Twitter*

## **PR PARTNER**

*as a partner on all marketing collateral and PR activity pre and post event*

## **YOUR OWN EXHIBITION SPACE**

*tailored to the sponsor needs*



**“JIM BOULTON’S  
WORK IN DIGITAL  
ARCHAEOLOGY IS AN  
IMPORTANT ENDEAVOUR  
TO MAINTAIN A  
RECORD FOR FUTURE  
GENERATIONS.” DAN  
NOYES, CERN**



*Digital Revolution*  
Photograph by Micha Theiner



# THE CURATOR

In 1998, after completing a masters degree in Hypermedia, Jim Boulton co-founded digital agency Large. Groundbreaking websites built for clients including Agent Provocateur, Bang & Olufsen and Guinness Storehouse received global acclaim. Seth Godin selected Large as one of 500 companies in the world that could make their clients remarkable.

Four years later, Jim visited Game On at the Barbican, the first major exhibition to explore the history of computer games. Jim noticed that the dramatic progression of gaming over a 40-year period was being mirrored by the web at a much faster rate. Websites considered cutting edge in 1998 were antiquated by 2002.

Evidence of this culturally significant period was being lost before his eyes. Jim saw the need for a Game On for websites, not just as an exhibition of the formative years of the Information Age but as a catalyst for preservation.

By 2010, Large had been acquired by Story Worldwide, where Jim was one of two partners who ran the London office. Meanwhile countless other websites, browsers and operating systems had been lost. It was now or never. Jim decided to act, curating Page Not Found, an exhibition of Web 1.0 websites displayed on the hardware and software of the time. Digital archaeology has been his focus ever since.

Jim's efforts to salvage the early years of the web from the trash bin of history have been lauded by institutions such as the British Library, the Library of Congress and CERN, the birthplace of the web. His book, *100 Ideas that Changed the Web*, was an Amazon bestseller. He has shared a stage with Tim Berners-Lee at the Southbank's Web We Want Festival and his experimental software, /root, has been displayed in the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern.



**“AS EVENT PARTNER AT INTERNET WEEK NEW YORK, JIM PULLED OFF AN AMBITIOUS EXHIBITION THAT BECAME A CORNERSTONE OF FESTIVAL CONTENT”**  
**NICOLAS ROOPE, INTERNET WEEK**



Jim is the Author of *100 Ideas that Changed the Web*, an Amazon best seller.



**“IT IS AMAZING TO SEE BYGONE SITES YOU CAN INTERACT WITH, AS IF YOU’D GONE BACK IN TIME.” BOB GARFIELD, ON THE MEDIA**



*Hampster Dance is one of the earliest single-serving sites, featuring rows of dancing hamster GIFs set to a sped-up sample of the song “Whistle Stop” by Roger Miller. The site became popular in the late 90s through e-mail, blogs and bait & switch pranks.*

↑0↑  
EBBOB



*Logo generously donated by graphic design legend Susan Kare, designer of the original Apple Macintosh icons recently acquired by the Museum of Modern Art*

**DIGITAL  
Archaeology**

*hello@digital-archaeology.org  
@jim\_boulton*