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# Preface

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Computing has come a long way since our earliest beginnings. Many of us have seen complete revisions of computing technology in our lifetimes. I am not that old, and I have seen punch cards and Cray supercomputers, numbered Basic on an Apple IIe, and highly structured C. Nearly all of us can remember when the World Wide Web began its popularity and when there were only a few pictures available in a nearly all textual medium. Look at where we are now. Streaming video, MP3s, games, and chat are a part of many thousands of lives, from the youngest children just learning to mouse and type, to senior citizens staying in touch and staying active and involved regardless of their locations. The Internet and the World Wide Web have become a part of many households' daily lives in one way or another. They are often taken for granted, and highly missed when they are unavailable. There are Internet cafés springing up in towns all over the United States, and even major cruise lines have them available for not only the passengers, but the crew as well.

We are now standing on the edge of yet another paradigm shift, Grid computing. Grid computing, it is suggested, may even be bigger than the Internet and World Wide Web, and for most of us, the adventure is just beginning. For many of us, especially those of us who grew up with mainframes and stand-alone systems getting bigger and bigger, the new model is a big change. But it is also an exciting change — where will we be in the next five years?