Acknowledgements

Like notions of the web as an exceptional medium, this dissertation could only have emerged within a specific set of personal, professional and institutional networks. I am grateful for having been “plugged in.”

Throughout my time as a PhD student, I have drawn on the generous support offered by colleagues at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and the Media Studies department at the University of Amsterdam. In particular, I want to thank Anat Ben David, Erik Borra, Michael Dieter, Carolin Gerlitz, Anne Helmond, Niels Kerssens, Sabine Niederer, Thomas Poell, Bernhard Rieder, Marc Tuters, Lonneke van der Velden and Esther Weltevrede for their comments on various papers and chapters, and more generally for making work so enjoyable.

Part of this research was carried out with the support of the University of San Francisco, where I was a visiting scholar in 2011, and specifically David Silver, who helped arrange my placement and made sure I felt welcome. I was also fortunate to receive advice on the project from Fred Turner at Stanford University, and to present work to members of the Transcriptions research initiative at the University of California, Santa Barbara. I am especially indebted to Alan Liu, who selflessly took the time to comment on an early version of chapter 5. The primary purpose of these research trips was to interview some of the most interesting people in the history of web publishing, and I am grateful to Andrew Anker, Brian Behlendorf, Justin Hall, Rob Malda, Nate Oostendorp, Howard Rheingold and Gary Wolf for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with me.

Most of all this dissertation was made possible by three exceptional people. Geert Lovink, supervising my MA thesis 5 years ago, set me on this course by presenting me with a stack of Mondo 2000 magazines and telling me to get to work. I also struck gold with my PhD supervisors, José van Dijck and Richard Rogers. I would not have finished this without José’s encouragement and sharp observations at various critical moments, and it is now entirely clear to me why all her PhD students finish on schedule. And I would never have begun if Richard had not taken me under his wing many years ago and taught me what it means to do solid research. I feel honored to be the first of his PhD students to defend, as I imagine it will be a very long and distinguished list.

My closest friends put up with me while I wrote this, which is saying a lot: thank you Albert, Annelien, Artemy, Joel, Kostja and Marijn. My warmest thanks go to the excellent support crew of Dad, Jeanette, Kees, Claire, Audrey, David, Scott, Kamie, Hugo and Philip. Finally, thank you Mom - I hope you were not as worried about this thing as you were that time I avoided studying for finals in high school.