Whether Internet has created a new economic paradigm or not is a fundamental question when analyzing any issue related to Internet. It can be hardly discarded a priori that considering a new paradigm is not a relevant question. How can be explained peer-to-peer processes, the growth of Wikipedia in comparison with the British Encyclopaedia or the growing importance of Linux in contrast with Windows. Even the success of Google can be hardly explained within the classic economic paradigm.

Many characteristics of these economic entities are known. However to the extent of my knowledge there is not a complete and coherent model, general but not simplistic, from where a proper explanation of these issues that have aroused after the appearance of Internet can be derived.

Until recently production was explained as the result of a given combination of capital and labor. But, can this two productive factors explain the productive process of peer-to-peer’s, Wikipedia, Linux or Google? Certainly they can be used to explain the productive behavior of a car-factory, a textile-production or a small regular shop of any possible kind, but definitively the explanatory power of that paradigm is much lower when facing the productive processes present in many of the new economic productive entities that have appeared in recent decades.

It is the hypothesis in this paper that the productive factors capital and labor are not enough in explaining the commented new internet-related productive processes. How highways are produced can be explained in terms of the two single productive factors capital and labor, but is this explanation useful in explaining how a rural path is created? A rural path appears due to the repetitive use of a given route. The repetitive use of a route progressively eliminates vegetation establishing a marked route on the ground. If the path is not used enough, it just disappears. Obviously labor might have a role, a nearby village might reward a group of people to have obstacles removed. Capital might also be relevant, a cliff might be avoided by the use of a bridge. But the radical difference is that its production cannot be explained just through capital and labor. The production of a path could not possibly be explained without taking into account its mere use (consumption) as a productive factor.

This paper analyses the explanatory power of including consumption as a productive factor in the productive process. Consumption as a factor of production will be used in explaining peer-to-peer processes, the different behaviors of Windows vs. Linux and the Britannica Encyclopaedia vs. Wikipedia, and also to explain the success of Google. In order to assess empirically the validity of this available data from Wikipedia (statistics section) will be used and pattern recognition methods used in order to assess whether consumption has the claimed explanatory power.