Everyone Uses Technology

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Digital media is a fascinating new technology. Today, using the internet and all of its components is a necessity of life. We all must check our email accounts, or be left wanting for more information. If we don’t keep up with the things that are happening on the internet, it is possible that we might be viewed as an outcast or someone who is behind the times. Everyone has a different opinion on this new technology. In this paper, I will be asking people a set of questions. The way they answer each question should spread some light on where we are headed as a society, and where the internet is headed based on the demands of the public.

The first person talked to about the internet was a seventy-two year old Grandma. She was asked “How often do you use email? Do you have more than one email account?” her reply was somewhat surprising. She said that, although she only has one email account, she uses it a couple of times a day. However, for her it is not out of necessity that she uses it; instead it gives her something to do during the day. It is a gateway to an exciting world outside of her small, mostly uneventful house. The second question asked of her, “What is your opinion on smartphones? Do you have one now? If not, what is the reason?” Her answer is one that was to be expected. She said that she didn’t have a smartphone, because she already had an email account and if she wanted to play a game she would just start a game of solitaire on the computer. She feels that there wouldn’t be a reason for her to ever buy a smartphone, as none of her friends had one. She also said that it looked too complicated for her to figure out.

The next person interviewed was my twenty-six year old Sister. She was asked the same set of questions. “How often do you use email? Do you have more than one email account?” She stated that she feels like she almost constantly has to check her email. She has multiple email accounts, two for work, one for her social media sites one for coupon and spam email, and one AOL account so she can help our grandma when she is having trouble with her email. “What is your opinion on smartphones? Do you have one now? If not, what is the reason?” She uses her iPhone every day. In fact, it is her primary form of communicating with her peers. It is also the main way that she accesses her many email accounts. She thinks that smartphones are great and is excited about where this new technology will take us.

Next, my fifteen year old Brother was interviewed. “How often do you use email? Do you have more than one email account?” His answer was kind of surprising. He said, he does have one email account, but he doesn’t use it very often and only uses it to sign up for online games. When asked him about smartphones, he of course was totally excited about the idea of owning one. He could play his games wherever he wanted as well as text his friends and stay connected. I remember just a few years ago, before the iPhone, how cool I thought it would be to text on my first cell phone. That was what I found exciting. Now with the advent of the smartphone all of these young teens are already networking with other people throughout the world, through their games. “In spite of its many dehumanizing tendencies, digital media is still biased towards the social. In the ongoing coevolution between people and technologies, tools that connect us thrive-and tools that don’t connect us soon learn to.” (Rushkoff, Douglas; Program or be programmed: ten commands for a digital age, p.90)

The next person interviewed was my fifty-five year old Dad. When I asked him about his email accounts, he said that he only had two. One that he used for work purposes, and one that he used at home. However, he rarely checked the one at home, because he is tied to email at work. Why would he want to keep checking email at home? “The human nervous system exists in the present tense. We live in a continuous *now*, and time is always passing for us.” (Rushkoff, Douglas; Program or be programmed: ten commands for a digital age, p.22) It is as though he is trying to get away from this. When asked, “What is your opinion on smartphones? Do you have one now? If not, what is the reason?” he said that smartphones are amazing pieces of technology. He seemed to be amazed that they could have such a plethora of uses, especially with the popularity of creating apps. He is also surprised by the memory capacity, remembering when having a walkman was extremely cool.

The last person talked to was my three year old niece. Although the questions were asked in a different way, there were still some interesting answers to be had. When asked if she knew what an email account was? She paused, and then gave a surprisingly good answer for a three year old. She said that it is for talking to people. This at its core is exactly true. I remember when I first got an email account; I was trying to figure out why I wouldn’t just call the person or send them a letter, instead of emailing them. At three years old she has probably never written a physical letter, so email is all that she knows. When asked about her Mommy’s phone, she said that her Mom lets her draw on it sometimes. Undoubtedly through an app. Although she uses smartphones on a very limited basis now, I am curious how ingrained this technology will be when she is a teenager.

Just as there are many different political views, there are also many different views on technology. Even though everyone uses this new technology, no one uses it in the same way. Where a seventy two year old grandma might only have one email account, there is always some twenty-six year old that has multiple accounts.

Works Cited

Rushkoff, Douglas. *Program Or Be Programmed: Ten Digital Commands for a Digital Age*. Print.

Interviewed

Earlene, 72 years old, 2:35pm, 4/15/13

Christa, 26 years old, 4:15pm, 4/18/13

Joseph, 15 years old, 1:00pm, 4/15/13

Bruce, 55 years old, 7:00pm, 4/16/13

Sophia, 3 years old, 4:00pm, 4/17/13