

The World Today: Forming a Global Village

In the past twenty years, advances in technology have drastically changed today's media. With the emergence of mobile phones, the internet and digital publishing, the media has become more accessible, convenient and far-reaching. Accessing and delivering information has become faster and easier. Also, certain words used to name these new technologies as well as some of their functions have been added to the English dictionary. And, recognized by the majority of the global population, these words have become universal.

The birth of the digital age has made spreading information easier and faster. As Steven Levy, a writer for the section, the *Technologist*, in *Newsweek*, quaintly puts it: "Plenty has been said about comedian Michael Richard's racial outburst in a Los Angeles comedy club but not as much on the speed and thoroughness with which the news spread." This became possible because of "two related technologies: cheap, portable video recording and broadband internet."¹

Broadband internet access is a form of internet connection that allows a high rate of data transmission. DSL and cable modem are two popular consumer broadband technologies that has a higher transmission and upload speed than their older counterpart, the dial-up modem. Such a feature, coupled with user-friendly means of uploading data to websites, make it easy for users to display texts, pictures and videos online.

¹ Levy, Steven. "The Internet: Everyone's a Star!" *Newsweek* 18 December 2006: 10.

In fact, a large number of websites have options that allow free expression as well as online meetings. Users can join e-groups, forums, networking sites and create blogs that allow them to share their thoughts and communicate with each other with a click of the mouse. E-groups allow users to send an e-mail to a group of people whose replies would be seen by everyone in the mailing list. Forums are sites that allow people to create entries that are displayed in a reverse chronological order. Every time a person replies to a question or a comment, it is displayed as an entry in a forum. Networking sites allow people to meet each other online and form networks by inviting people to access their profiles and add them to their network. A blog is a user-generated website that allows people to write entries that are displayed in a reverse chronological order. In these websites, people can write about anything – from announcing an event to writing a personal journal. Most blogs usually contain text but some people have begun to upload pictures (photoblog), videos (vblog) and audio files (podcasting). “Every day 100,000 new blogs are created and 1.3 million posts are made, it found during its quarterly survey.”²

With such websites and the existence of search engines, the internet promotes “radical transparency.” This is a “state attained when previously hard-to-find information becomes available and searchable, from public records to *MySpace*.”³

Instant messaging (IM) is another way of dispersing information. Users from all corners of the world can chat with each other using programs like *Yahoo! Messenger*, *MSN Messenger*

² “Blogosphere sees healthy growth.” BBC News. 8 November 2006. 24 March 2007 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/6129496.stm>>.

³ Levy, Steven. “The Internet: Everyone’s a Star!” Newsweek 18 December 2006: 10.

and *Skype*. These programs also allow people to have voice conversations and video conferences. They also have features that allow people to share photos and send files during a conversation. As a matter of fact, most companies have implemented the use of instant messaging in the workplace. This allows them to communicate with colleagues and customers from other parts of the globe.

The propagation of wireless connection also contributes to the speed of spreading news. With a laptop, people on the go can access the internet almost anywhere. Some people can even go online with the use of their mobiles and other hand-held devices.

Advances in technology do not only contribute to the communication of people from different parts of the world, they also promote the use of words that are recognized globally. Words like internet, podcast, blog...etc. are understood by non-English speaking people. Also, MSN, Yahoo! and Skype are recognized all over the world.

With all these developments, information can be easily shared online. People can express themselves, meet others, settle professional matters and earn a degree online. Because of these activities, interactions with different nationalities have become inevitable. And, the cultural barriers between nations are slowly playing out, leading to the formation of a global village where people have a common language.

WORKS CITED

“Blogosphere sees healthy growth.” BBC News. 8 November 2006. 24 March 2007
<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/6129496.stm>>.

Levy, Steven. “The Internet: Everyone’s a Star!” Newsweek 18 December 2006: 10.