

March 2009 -- Future Shock!



"Meet George Jetson... Jane, his wife.... daughter Judy." The antithesis of The Flintstones in the boomer-era cartoon world, the Jetsons gave us a glimpse into a technological future that, at the time, seemed incomprehensible. (For the record, I have forgiven Hanna Barbera for making Jane such a mindless redhead. Admit it, Wilma Flintstone was no rocket scientist



either!)

The animated soap opera featured futuristic scenes with moving sidewalks (think today's airports), George talking with his boss, Cosmo Spacely, on the big screen (think videoconferencing) and the computerized character in his car who suggested alternative space routes when there was congestion on the galaxy superhighway (think GPS systems). I'm still waiting for that glass dome which ejects people from our vehicles. Other than that, we have arrived!

Ever since Al Gore invented the internet (*I couldn't resist*), the workplace has become increasingly dependent on technology to communicate, educate, and captivate its employee base. E-learning (the pursuit of knowledge via the internet) has become a common form of training for organizations seeking a cost effective alternative to traditional classroom style training and development.

It seems like just a year ago that I believed scented markers and 3M self-stick easel paper were the greatest inventions known to trainers. Today my world is consumed with how **Web 2.0 Technology** enhances training and provides organizations with a plethora of choices for communicating with employees and clients.

Blogs, Wikis, Social Bookmarking, Writeboard, Podcasting, YouTube, and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter, have become popular ways of sharing information. These "Jetson-esque" technologies are enough to elicit heart palpitations in us Boomers, but it is the reality of today. As for me, Facebook and LinkedIn, which are great networking tools, are my newest addiction since reality TV!

Most Web 2.0 tools are free (or low cost) so their appeal during these tough economic times is growing.

Futurist Alvin Toffler wrote "the illiterate of the future are not those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and re-learn."



I need your help! I have selected the topic of Web 2.0 technology for one of my graduate class research projects this semester. I am interested in learning more about how organizations in the local business community are using this technology. I will be examining how it is used to: a) market & promote their business b) provide information and education to their client base, and c) provide internal training and continuing education.

Within the next few days you will be receiving a brief survey regarding your use (or lack) of this technology in your organization. I would greatly appreciate it if you would participate. Also, if you are interested in receiving the survey results, please indicate so on the form. They will be available mid-May.

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