Futurism and Change

As a child of digital technology, I have known for the better part of my adult life and throughout my entire professional career in Information Technology that hi-tech science is the umbra of change whose shadow is casted by the illuminated ideals of progress and efficiency. With perpetual growth and the ongoing popularity of synchronous and asynchronous communication tools, the ability to collaborate over vast distances, in a fraction of the time it would take to address an envelope and lick a stamp, is a stark reality that stems from the deep-rooted recesses of science fiction. Over the course of the past few decades, the field of technological science has made exponential leaps forward in the way our global society interacts with one another. According to Gordon Moore, the theorist behind Moore's Law, the complexity of computing is a product of the expansion of digital transistors on a silicon chip, that he asserts, doubles every two years (Moore's Law, 2005).

This progressive evolution has proven to be highly beneficial in moving man from mainframe computers, the size of an entire building floor, to pocket sized digital devices with more processing power than an army of mainframe systems. Because of this arc in technological development, the current path of online collaboration within the digital world is fast approaching what futurists such as Ray Kurzweil has dubbed the "Singularity" concept. Kurzweil illustrated this theory best by stating that the singularity is "a future period during which the pace of technological change will be so rapid, it's impact so deep, that human life will be irreversibly transformed." (Orca & Sirus, 2009).

My personal perspective on Kurzweil's futuristic contention is that he is right on the money. Over the past 30 years, I have witnessed many changes that have permanently altered the way humans engage with one another within the physical and digital space. The types of futuristic imagery captured on film in Sci-Fi movies such as "Bladerunner", "iRobot", "Gattaca", and "The Minority Report" is swiftly moving from fictional forms of box-office entertainment to prophetic examples of humanity's imminent future. At present, we are at a phase in man's existence where PC-based virtual environments are an excellent means of blurring the boundaries of time and distance. Based on history and the conceptual idea behind Moore's Law, I suspect that our future

within the context of “communications-based collaboration” will move toward a more visceral experience that continues to push the envelope of perception and reality.

Based on inference and a fair amount of conjecture, I believe that the study of technology and biology will eventually open the doorway to hi-tech neural implant devices that will allow us the ability to directly interact (synchronously and asynchronously) with one another in a more natural and holistic way. This will be a future where these devices will allow us the ability to tap into realistic virtual environments without the need for monitor or web cam. Rather than working with technology as a wielder of the tool, instead we will soon become a physical extension of that tool. To me, that will be the apex of singularity..

Reference

Moore's Law (2005). Intel. Retrieved from ftp://download.intel.com/museum/Moores_Law/Printed_Materials/Moores_Law_2pg.pdf

Orca, S. & Sirus, R. U. (2009). Ray Kurzweil: The h+ Interview. Retreived from http://hplusmagazine.com/2009/12/30/ray-kurzweil-h-interview/