

Growing up Digital

Gone are the days of 3 channels on your TV set. The AM radio stations and even the FM radio stations for that matter. Mainstream Television has seen a steady decline since the turn of the century with radio having an even steeper decline. In Chris Anderson's latest book "The Long Tail: Why the future of business is selling less for more", he reports on the following:

- Network Television share have fallen by a third since 1985
- Radio listenership is at a 27 year low
- Newspaper circulation peaked in 1987 and has been in a free fall ever since

So what happened? What changed? And where are people going to get their information.

Simple....the Internet

The Internet has become a one stop place for the latest news and entertainment. Our students today do not know life before Google. Google and the Internet have always existed to them. In a recent 7th grade class of mine while we were studying the history of computers one student said, "If computers have been around that long, what did you do on them before the Internet?"

Our students are growing up in digital times. We grew up in the Industrial Age, where learning a single skill set to do a job is what you needed and went to school for. But in the new Information Age jobs are changing and skills for those jobs are changing as well. According to the United States Labor Department the top ten in demand jobs in 2010 were not even created in 2004.

A quick search of jobs as one of the fastest growing companies in the world Goggle.com revealed these job openings:

- Mobile Wireless Applications Developer
- Webmaters Trends Analyst
- Vertical Manager
- Technical Sourcer

These were just some of my favorites. Google is just one example of a company who has job opening in over 40 countries and in more than 20 cities in the United States. It is estimated that today's learner will have between 10 and 14 jobs by the time they are 38 years old. That is a far cry from my father working at the same job for 30 plus years.

On December 13 at the Pudong Middle School Parent Coffee, I will be giving a presentation entitled *Growing up Digital*. I will discuss with those in attendance the changes facing our learners today. I hope you will join me as we discuss how parents and teachers a like can help students stay safe and be successful in this new digital world.

Anderson, Chris (2006). *The Long Tail*. Hyperion.