

Contribution to radio programme changing time

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Imagine your local radio station is producing a series of programmes entitled “ Changing Times”, in which teenagers are asked to give their views on the changes they welcome in the world around them. You have been invited to contribute. Write out the text of the presentation you would make. There are many changes that I welcome in the world around me; but I would like to discuss four specific ones with you on air here today.

The first change that I welcome into today’s world is the internet. The introduction of this will be remembered by man forever. Now we have this ability, we wonder how we ever survived without it. With the introduction of sites like Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, we are now able to catch up with friends we met 3 years ago at Irish camp, or something as simple as checking out the photos from suchabody’s 18birthday partythat we attended last night. But the abilities of the internet extend way beyond the fickle holds of 21st centurysocial networking. Using the internet enables us to research anything we could possibly think of and more. Googleit” has now become such a commonly used phrase; we have students complaining if they are not allowed to use the internet for a project – since Google “ knows everything”.

Moving beyond social networking, the internet allows us to not only keep in touch with friends andfamilyin all four corners of the earth (from emailing your granny over in Blackrock, to ‘ skypeing’ your friend Tom who moved down under to Australia); but also to meet new people who share our interests. Foreign language students are able to make new friends online with students their age in other countries and communicate quickly and easily with them. The internet is also an excellent news source. With news broadcasters such as Sky, CNN and even closer to home with RTE news all

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setting up websites, we are able to catch up on anything from terrorist attacks to the latest showbiz gossip in an instant. Relating to the internet; the next change, or introduction, that I welcome into our world today is the phenomenon of portable handheld internet devices; such as laptops, iPhones and the latest “ must-have” – the iPad. Such devices enable us to not only reap all the benefits of our beloved internet, but we can do this whilst window shopping on Grafton Street; on the DART into work on a Monday morning; or anywhere we please for that matter. With the younger generation branching out and becoming oh-so-much-more independent than our parents and grandparents, the technology around us is clearly changing with the times.

The “ portable” debate brings me on to my third change, that I think has had a huge impact on the society of today, and that is mobile phones. Excluding the likes of the iPhone and the latest android phones, which seem to be able to do almost anything you could possibly want from a phone, the simple mobile phone has been of huge benefit to the ordinary Joe Blogs on the street. For the unorganised working man, his phone can now hold his daily calendar; to remind him that he has a meeting with the boss man in 40 minutes or that it is his 14th wedding anniversary tomorrow and he needs to buy his wife a present – that’s if he remembers the date of his wedding anniversary to enter it in the phone in the first place I suppose. For the cautious one, who is yet to attempt the ‘ Skype Experience’, the mobile phone is perfect for keeping in touch with everybody. With so many deals and special offers being offered by service providers, it is even relatively cheap nowadays to run a pay-as-you-go mobile phone. Another benefit of

our friend the Nokia, Samsung, or whatever make it is you happen to have at the moment, is reporting crime. Robberies, fires, attacks, can all be reported to the Gardai a lot quicker than running down the road trying to find the nearest phone box.

Speaking of crime, the final change which I welcome to our society today is the issue of the smoking bans, making it an offense to smoke in public places. Personally, I welcome this change with widely spread open arms. Looking firstly at the issue of smokers' personal health, preventing them smoking in public places, is going to impact severely on the time they have to smoke. I mean, how long are you really going to want to spend huddled up against the January rain trying to light your cigarette while all your friends have the craic inside? Cutting down this might help to encourage smokers to stop, or at least cut down on the amount they smoke daily. On top of that, preventing smoking in public places helps to cut out passive smoking. As a non-smoker, I found it highly unfair that we'd have to be opened to all the risks of passive smoking, just because that guy over there fancies a cigarette with his dessert. So overall, I think it is clear that there have been many changes in our society over the past number of years, and although not all of them may have been truly welcomed, I feel that the internet; portable handheld internet devices; mobile phones and the non-smoking laws have truly benefited our society and I honestly welcome them in the world around us.