

# Computers in our life media essay



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We cannot imagine our life without computers. The fact is that they are so important that we can not exist without them. Since 1948, they are everywhere around us. When the first real computer has been invented our life has changed so much that we can call it real digital revolution. First computers were differed from today's ones. The first well-known computer in the world was ENIAC, the Electronic Numerical Integrator And Calculator. ENIAC took up an entire room, generated quite a bit of heat, and did much less work than a standard PC or laptop of today. Still, for its time, it was a huge leap forward. Computers progressed from punch-card programming to actual written programs with commands built in.

Scientists today are working on computers with “ artificial intelligence” that can “ think” for themselves within defined limits. This development could have huge advantages. Think of a vacuum cleaner that can identify a dusty spot and go back to clean it up, or a dishwasher that identifies when the dishes are not quite clean, and runs for another five minutes.

Computers created the “ information age”, where huge amounts of data could be processed. This has led to many advantages in modern life, including easily balancing your bank statement or brokerage account, using dictionary and encyclopedia programs, even planning and designing a new kinds of houses or machines and everything like this, is possible on your computer. There is software available for almost any need, and if you have a notebook or laptop computer, those programs could go anywhere you go. From writing a letter to designing a birthday card, there is nothing you could not do with a computer.

The Internet also has brought even more drastic changes. Using your computer, you could “ go online”, and access the Worldwide Web (WWW). You could connect to other computers, huge databases, university or county libraries, banks, or your utility company. There is hardly a bill that could not to be paid online these days no more licking stamps.

If you have a friend or family member living a long distance away, you could contact them by skype or facebook for free, saving money in long-distance charges. Movies, songs, and games could be downloaded via the Internet to your computer, and many of them are free, as well. Do your banking online at 2am, or take an online class in math or basket weaving. The Internet has truly revolutionized how we connect with other people, as well as businesses. There is not one area of our lives that computers and the Internet have not affected.

Nowadays they are also used by scientist and they may also be as huge as the old ones but they are millions times faster. They could perform many complex operations simultaneously and scientist practically could not do without them. Thanks to them people has access to enormous amount of information. Gathering data has never been more simple than now. They are not only used in laboratories but also in factories to control production.

But not only in science and industry computers are being used. Thanks to them modern medicine could diagnose diseases faster and more thoroughly. Also in banking system computers have become irreplaceable. They control ATMs, all data is stored on special hard disks and paper is not used in accountancy any more. Furthermore, architects, designers and engineers

could not imagine their work without computers. These machines are really everywhere and we depend on them also in such fields as criminology. They help police to solve crimes and collect evidence.

Moreover, computers are wide-spread in education. Except their classic tasks such as administration and accountancy they are used in process of learning. Firstly, they store enormous amount of data which helps students to gain an information. Secondly, thanks to special teaching techniques and programs they improve our skills of concentration and assimilation of knowledge. They have become so popular that not knowing how to use them means to be illiterate. While there are things to watch out for, overall most people agree that the huge advantages that have come from computers and the Internet far outweigh any disadvantages. Of course except this superb features there is also dark side of computer technology because every invention brings us not only benefits but also threats.

Some scientist said that computers are dangerous to our health. The monitors used to be dangerous for our eyesight. Nowadays due to technological development they are very safe. But there are other threats to our health than damaging our sight. Working with computers and permanent looking on the monitor could cause epilepsy, especially with children. Very often parents want to have a rest and do not draw enough attention to how long their children use computer, but this negative effects also concerns TV screen.

Other main disadvantage of computers is that sometimes they brake down like everything else. And the biggest problem is when our hard disk brakes

down because of the data stored on it. Other hardware is easily replaceable. But there are many ways of avoiding consequences of losing our data, for example by saving it on compact disks. Except hardware failures there are also software ones. For example, for many years Windows Operating System was very unstable and that is why many other operating systems were written. Now the most common are Linux, Windows XP, MacOs (for Macintosh computers). Except of unstable operating systems another and maybe the main threat to our data are computer viruses. There are billions of them and every day new ones come into being. If you have the Internet connection you have to be particularly careful and download anti-virus programs. Fortunately, there are also many of them and most of them are freeware. You have to remember to download updates.

But viruses, unfortunately, are not so big disadvantage as violence and sex. The main threat to younger users of computers are internet pornography and bloody games. The presence of sexual content or level of violence should be properly marked and parents are obliged to draw their attention to this issue. There are many extremely bloody games such as “ grand theft auto”, “ quake” etc. For example, in GTA you are a member of mafia and to promote in crime hierarchy you should kidnap people, steal cars, rob banks etc. As a bonus you can also run over pedestrians. There are also many games in which you are a soldier and your mission is to kill as many enemies as possible. The other threat to our children is internet pornography. The availability of sexual content is enormous and you can do practically nothing to protect your child, especially when it is interested in this matter. And in

the end if you spend most of your free time using computer you should go to see a psychologist, because you become a computer addicted.

This is real new illness connected usually with using of social network like Facebook, My space , Skype, etc. But if we want to understand how people became addicted to social networks and computers at all, we will try to find how this Products become so popular.

The fast computer development help us for one new idea realization, so in the end of 2003 it has been popularized, a new opportunity for communication and information sharing the social networks. In the beginning were Classmates. com, SixDegrees. com, and Friendster introducing the notion of friend connection. These sites made the way for the most popular sites these days such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and Youtube. Each of it boasts hundreds of millions of active members around the world. It is hard to find a school or college student who does not use Facebook, MySpace or Youtube. The tipping point of the online social networks mass addiction have been reached and it will continue growing, but social networking is not just for children. In Facebook more of its users are out of school, college and university and those 25 years and older represent the fastest growing group of people. Only between June and November 2008 Facebook grew to 120 million users this means that Facebook is the largest online social networking site in addition it also has one of the most used advertising tools. In second place is MySpace owned Fox Interactive Media it is a popular site among teenagers and adults and is known as a media and entertainment destination. Most of the celebrities have profiles there to keep connection with their fans. MySpace is similar to Facebook and offer hyper targeting

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capabilities. The social networks are the new era of the human connections and we may say, that today we are making the first steps to the new cyber society. Other step could be computerizing of education in schools, because children always like playing games and learning their lessons on computers. The machines present the world through pictures, music, sound and text. It is amazing and exciting. The young learners enjoy playing on computers. They would like to be a part of ICT education and wish to know more from all over our planet.

In 1999, Sugata Mitra, and his colleagues dig a hole in a wall bordering an urban slum in New Delhi, install an Internet-connected PC and leave it there (with a hidden camera filming the area). They are going to observe kids from the slum who play around with the computer. They are going to know the process of learning or how do the children use it, how do they go online and then teaching each other. In August 2008 Mitra, who is Professor of Educational Technology presented how kids figured out how to use PC in their own and then taught other kids. His study found the following:

I had an office in those days which bordered a slum, an urban slum, so there was a dividing wall between our office and the urban slum. They cut a hole inside that wall — which is how it has got the name hole-in-the-wall — and put a pretty powerful PC into that hole, sort of embedded into the wall so that its monitor was sticking out at the other end, a touchpad similarly embedded into the wall, put it on high-speed Internet, put the Internet Explorer there, put it on Altavista. com — in those days — and just left it there.

The professor describes the process of learning between the children. He believes that the young learners can learn fast. They are interested in all over around them. They can learn English, too. According to Mitra, So eight minutes and an embedded computer seemed to be all that we needed there . English is easy because the kids use CDs and remember words when they play on the computers. Mitra s study found the following:

This is the first kid who came there; he later on turned out to be a 13-year-old school dropout. He came there and he started to fiddle around with the touchpad. Very quickly he noticed that when he moves his finger on the touchpad something moves on the screen — and later on he told me, I have never seen a television where you can do something. So he figured that out. It took him over two minutes to figure out that he was doing things to the television. And then, as he was doing that, he made an accidental click by hitting the touchpad — you’ll see him do that. He did that, and the Internet Explorer changed page. Eight minutes later, he looked from his hand to the screen, and he was browsing: he was going back and forth. When that happened, he started calling all the neighborhood children, like children would come and see what’s happening over here. And by the evening of that day, 70 children were all browsing. So we thought that this is what was happening: that children in groups can self-instruct themselves to use a computer and the Internet.

The professor makes the experiment in Pakistan, the area of the Himalaya Range, too. Everywhere the children try to learn more and to teach themselves. They wish to know the English Alphabet and Mitra found The



first thing that these children did was to find a website to teach themselves the English alphabet .

In the end of your lecture, the professor makes conclusions. He thinks that computers can be useful educational tools when the kids discover the world around them. They can help children to learn languages and to improve the communication through the special Windows functions like browsing, painting, chatting, etc. According to Mitra, What could they learn to do? Basic Windows functions, browsing, painting, chatting and email, games and educational material, music downloads, playing video . His conclusions are important and they would be useful in the work of many teachers. Mitra s study found the following:

So what was the conclusion over the six years of work? It was that primary education can happen on its own, or parts of it can happen on its own. It does not have to be imposed from the top downwards. It could perhaps be a self-organizing system, so that was — and the second bit that I wanted to tell you, that children can self-organize and attain an educational objective.

The idea of a hole in a wall is innovative because many children would like to have great opportunities for excellent education, work and life. The computers can be named windows of knowledge because the knowledge is a power. The important thing is not so much that every child should be taught, as that every child should be given the wish to learn.

And in conclusion we want to say that the situation all over the world is very serious. Computers and computer based machines are practically irreplaceable and we can not make without them any more. They are

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everywhere, at our homes, schools, at work, in our cars. It is very possible that the next stage of human evolution will be some kind of superb mix of half human and half machines. On the other hand I don not think it will be the closest future. But the truth is that computers will rule the world sooner or later , because they do not make a human mistakes and also do not have feelings , which command human relation and work.