

Disruption Throughout History

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Travis Bradberry once said “Influential people are never satisfied with the status quo. They’re the ones who constantly ask, ‘what if?’ and ‘why not?’ They’re not afraid to challenge conventional wisdom and they don’t disrupt things for the sake of being disruptive; they do it to make things better”. (1) Technology has been a positive disruption in history in three categories which are communication, businesses and education.

Firstly, communication is how the world does not crumble down into a million pieces and it has been disrupted by technology. There are three main types of communication and one of them is audio. Before people were able to have long distance conversations they had to write letters to each other but “ The invention of the telephone changed all that.” said Daljinder. “The telephones also changed the way social relationships and social interaction take place. Communication over the telephone broadened the range of people one could interact with. Long distance relationships were possible. The invention of the telephone lead to development of city centre, office buildings and concepts of urban worker society”. (2) Another piece of technology that was a disruptor to communication was the radio. Now people could hear about the news and plays and music from all over the world. “Neither illiteracy nor even a busy schedule impeded radio’s success-one could now perform a task and listen to the radio a the same time. This unprecedented reach made the radio an instrument of social cohesion as it brought together members of different classes and

backgrounds to experience the world as a nation”. (3) Another form of communication that was disrupted was written communication when the printing press was invented. “The printing press had dramatic effect on European civilization. Its immediate effect was that its spread information quickly and accurately. This helped create a wider literate reading public”. (4) The third type of communication that was intruded on by technology was visual. The tv was a great disruption because it was the first time a lot of people were able to see what different cultures were like from the comfort of their own home. So you can see that technology disrupted communication in many ways over the years.

Secondly technology has been a huge disruption to business through history with advancements in transportation, the impacts of online shopping and tracking consumer data. “The impact of the railway technology on the 19th century was so extensive that the only proper comparison might be to the of the Internet today. Like the web, railways forged previously unimagined connections and opened up new opportunities for commerce, while at the same time destroying long-established industries and the communities built around them.”(5). There were new jobs and goods could be transported all over a country. Airplanes are the ultimate form of fast transportation and they let people travel farther and let businesses grow. “Aviation provides the only worldwide transportation network, which makes it essential for global business and tourism. It plays a vital role in facilitating economic growth, particularly in development countries.” (6) Online shopping is the future in business, no question asked. Websites like Craigslist, Amazon, and Superstore’s Click and Collect allow you

to have 10 times more access to millions of products vs just walking into one single store. Consumer data tracking is a huge marketing strategy that small and big companies use to reach the audience that they want to sell their product to. Kate Cox stated “ The ability for companies to follow you from one platform to another - from your phone to your laptop to a physical store - is called cross device tracking, and for a businesses that want to market and sell stuff to you it is basically the holy grail” (7). Many people around the world believe that this is very creepy that company’s and governments can track everything that you view online. But on the other side there are people such as Daron’s dad in the book ‘Little Brother’ that say “What’s the big deal? Would you rather have privacy or terrorists?”(8). These are examples of how technology has disrupted business over the years and changed privacy.

Lastly technology has had a massive impact or disruption in education in terms of the pre-computer era, personal electronic devices and the Internet. An example of this would be the PLP program. But before all of of the latest technology there were new things like overhead projectors, photocopiers, calculators and video tapes. These were major disruptions within the pre computer era. After schools started to receive computers that is when technology really started to change the way that we learn. Coming back to the Performing Learning Program, this was when personal devices were introduced into the main stream of education. Then kids’ learning really started to take off and they can create amazing things. Jeannine Lowe said “the embracing of computers in education has facilitated access to learning tools, distance learning, virtual reality and communication” (9). But the most disruptive part of education is the

place where any question you might have, can be answered. The internet is the biggest current encyclopedia in the world and it also has the answer to most problems. Clearly technology has been a big disruptor to education.

In conclusion, it is clear that technology has acted as a disruption throughout history by impacting how people communicate, how business is conducted and how people are educated. It seems like the disruptions are happening quicker in modern times so it will be interesting to see what technology disruptions are around the corner.

Sources

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