

As I get more and more acclimated to my Sidekick 3, which I absolutely love, its got me thinking more about our digital world and why we do what we do.

There is no question that Convergence is dead. We are no longer converging from an analog to digital world. We are fully digital now. Anything analog is a mere remnant, soon to be obsolete.

I also think that the internet has also finally become old news. Not in a sense that we no longer will use it. The internet is fully integrated in our lives and will continue to become more and more so. When i say the internet is old news, it means there is nothing suprising or new about it anymore.

Sure, we may connect faster as broadband speeds trickle up. But thats no more exciting or new than a car coming out that can go zero to sixty faster than a predecessor car. Sure we will see new applications and features. But thats no more exciting than appliances adding new bells or whistles or becoming more energy efficient. Is seeing a popcorn popping button on a microwave exciting ? How about cooking that roast 30pct faster ?

The thrill is gone. Things Change. They become boring. They become parts of our lives we dont think twice about. We just naturally integrate the incremental feature and services

Its come down to the fact that bits are bits. Anything digital can be sent anywhere, received by anyone. Its just a question of how long it takes to get there, how much of it you send, how you manage them and at what cost and price. Its boring.

Any of us have the option of being continuously connected with a wired or wireless umbilical cord with bits cursing through it to devices large or small; handheld, beltbound , desktop or theatrical, you name it. Its really no big deal.

Which leads to where i think we have come in our digital lives.

We now continously choose between a connected or disconnected state, and that is how we define our ongoing activities to ourselves and those around us.

Personally I disconnect when I go to bed. Phone is off by the bed. My wife and I can talk, watch TV, read stories to my daughter. The rest of the day Im connected and i choose whether to allow interruptions or not. Its private time because Im disconnected.

During the day, the perceived quality of my committment to any person, place or thing is typically defined by the continuity of checking whatever digital access device Im carrying. Which in my case is my Sidekick 3. If I pull it out to keep an eye on my email, its my way of saying, something more important is allowed to intrude upon our interaction. Deal with it.

Its something we all experience from both sides. If we are talking to someone, if the phone or PDA comes out, we all slump our shoulders just a little knowing there is something more important going on for the other person(s). We all want to think that we are important enough for the other person to digitally disconnect

Its not a big deal to give our cellphone number or PDA email address, It has become a big deal to have a continuous "thread" with a person. The duration in hours, days, months and years of that thread more often than not reflects our relationship with that person. A delayed or lack of response is a delete key not just to a message , but to a business or personal relationship.

And sometimes, individually, our digital lives become so strong or intense, we all want to think that there is something more important for us to do for ourselves than what some digital bits have in store for us.

Being so continously connected, we all get what I call Digital Cabin Fever. The feeling of being too completely connected and available to intrusion, that we have an overwhelming need to disconnect. THe more i have going on, the stronger the Digital Fever. It hits me strong about once a month. it may be the movies. Its always at a Mavs game. I just turn off the SideKick.

Not silent, not buzz mode. Off. 90 minutes of disconnection is enough for me to get over it.

Digital Cabin Fever isnt a problem. Its not a newly named disease. Its just a reality. It means I think highly enough of what I can do with any of my digital devices to maintain digital connectivity for what amounts to almost every waking moment.

Personally, I am truly connected digitally every waking moment till I choose to disconnect.

Im watching a digital network, HDNet, HDNet Movies, TNT HD, HBO HD, etc, on my HDTV.

Im talking, texting or emailing on my sidekick.

Im on my new HP PC in front of my digital LCD Monitor.

Im backing up my digital life to Filesanywhere.com or a flash drive to be able to access my life from anywhere.

Im looking for business information or fun videos online.

Im surfing just to see whats out there.

its a digital life and Im more than fine with it. Im excited about it. But the best part of it is, Im used to it. Its now normal, and I know when I need a break and i take it.

IMHO, the need to disconnect will create the need to get away and keep the doors for out of home entertainment, from movies to sports wide, wide open. Digital Cabin Fever, wont create problems, it will create opportunities.

How about this for a commercial..."You finally got her to turn off her Cellphone, iPod and PDA, and now you need a restaurant that shows how much you appreciate the sacrifice. Take her to JShmos' Italian SupperClub.. JSchmos when she turns off, we help you turn her on ! (sorry, had to do it)