

1. The example used by Rory Sutherland in his TED talk of potatoes in Germany is a great demonstration of the difference between “reality” and perception. Sutherland explains the story of the King who introduced potatoes into Germany due to the fact that they are a cheap and easy-to-grow source of food, suitable to sustain a nation. Particularly when coupled with the wheat products already being utilised. However upon introduction to the potato the perception of the German people was that the vegetable was undesirable and not fit for consumption. In witnessing this, the King changed his tactics in order to portray the potato as a desirable object and thus achieve his overall strategy of providing a secondary sustainable food source. By Planting potatoes in the royal food crop and placing them under armed guard he changed the perception of the general population. They began to view potatoes as being “valuable enough to steal” due to the choice of the royal family to consume them and thus became popular throughout the country despite the “actual” value and reality of the initial situation.
2. Tiger Woods is also a good demonstration of the difference between “reality” and perception amongst the celebrity world. In terms of the public eye he was viewed as being an excellent role-model and respected sportsman and the general consensus of the wider population was that of he was a man of good character. However the “reality” is that he is just a man and although talented he is still susceptible to human faults. Following this being brought to the attention of the public after his alleged multiple affairs and domestic incidents with his wife there was a shift in the perception of people, from that of awe to discord at the “true” type of person he is and the now general consensus that although a great sportsman he is a “bad” man.
3.
  - a) The statement “all value is perceived value” means something is only worth as much as we as a population think it is. That is to say the value we place on objects such as gold for example is only due to the shared ideology that it is a desirable object that is exclusive to those with the means to attain it. This is because previous generations have found various uses for it, the attractive look of it and due to the difficulty in attaining it (the general rarity). Due to these factors it has been deemed valuable by society as a whole. However if one was to give a seven-year old boy a piece of metal although it may hold the interest of the boy for a small amount of time due to the shininess of the metal it would by no means hold the same value to him as what the same piece would to a thirty-year old woman.
  - b) The statement “persuasion is better than compulsion” means that it is better to convince somebody that your view is superior rather than attempt to coerce them into believing. That is if somebody is party to an attempt to persuade them about something and then reach their own conclusion favourable to the second party, they will believe increasingly whole-heartedly that it is the right view. Often the person can even eventually believe they thought up the view individually as opposed to having the idea implanted, especially if the persuasion is subtle enough. Compulsion on the other hand can initially work however more often than not it can result in the compelled party regretting or resenting the idea and form a change of opinion back to their original viewpoint or even more opposed to the idea being put forth to them.
  - c) The statement “changing the interface changes the behaviour” means there is a direct relationship between the way we are able to do a task and the regularity in which we do that

task. That is changing the way we go about that task will directly influence how often we do it. For example if it takes a person two hours to mow a property using a push-lawnmower that person may mow the lawns once a fortnight or month. However if that same person goes out and purchases a ride-on lawnmower and discovers it only takes thirty minutes to mow that same lawn their behavioural pattern may change into mowing the lawn once a week due to the interface of the task being different. Usually this would mean a task becomes easier and thus more frequent such as the example however the change in interface could also be negative and result in a task being performed less.

4. What Sutherland means by saying the mobile phone is the “greatest communication device ever invented” is that due to the four qualities listed (location specific, contextual, timely and immediate) it is a perfect utility for providing a virtually direct link to other people. This is because it is a hugely portable device meaning most people carry it with them almost everywhere. It is applicable in a huge range of contexts as the speakers on each end can be in hugely different situations however still be comfortable in communicating. Connection between the two people is incredibly quick provided both are able to speak at the given time and situation-dependant people are able to use them any time to reach someone else.
5. In terms of the real value of social networking sites they are merely a web-based tool utilised by people to communicate with others and share anything from interests, memories and opinions. However the perceived value by people is that they are almost a necessity of life now with a huge number of people spending hours each day sitting on their computers in the comfort of their homes while still communicating, laughing and reminiscing with friends and family all over the world. It is due to this and the ease of use of the interface that they are so popular. In the past people had to go out and physically see the person face to face, write a letter or call on the telephone in order to have a similar experience. Now people have far less interaction face to face and conduct a great deal of their relationships “online” due to this ease-of-access.
6. G.K. Chesterton’s statement “poetry is when you make new things familiar and familiar things new” demonstrates the relationship between the creators and distributors of modern technology and the perception of the consumers they are attempting to entice. That is creators are constantly attempting to “upgrade” their products or give them “face-lifts” in order to change consumers perception into more positive outlooks in relation to sales. That is in order to offer consumers another reason to purchase their products i.e. by offering patches and expansion packs to software. However they must also attempt to make new product recognition as wide-spread as possible, i.e. bringing out a new product such as a new form of Ipad that everyone becomes familiar with and wants to purchase. His other statement “we are perishing for want of wonder, not want of wonders” insinuates that we are constantly looking for new technology to be in awe of i.e. widespread infatuation shifting from 2D televisions to 3D televisions, rather than taking the time to appreciate the technology we have already created and attained such as creating a moving picture on a screen in ones’ home already.