

Unit 3a – Different types of technology

How I use ICT at home and at school

In our current generation, the advances of mankind have been significantly massive. With technology such as laptops, iPads and such, old fashioned technology has been deemed insignificant. Just an iPad would have the capability blowing away the greatest technology from, for example, 10 or so years ago.

And thus, technology is constantly being used; from ways to help advance and develop the world further on to being used for personal relief/enjoyment.

But what benefits can we gain from using these technologies and why do we constantly use and depend on them over and over? Well, there are many different advantages to using technology and well as different uses the basics being – personal usage, social usage and home usage and each of these uses have their different benefits.

Personal usage covers uses that benefit mostly the user him/herself, whether that may be at work, at home or even on the road.

Social usage covers uses which are not only beneficial to the user him/herself, but also involves society with different interactions with the user and other members of society, whether on a social networking site or an instant messaging service.

And lastly, home usage covers uses which are simply used at home whether that may be for comfort, general purposes or just for entertainment.

Technology used for social use

For technology I use for my own **social use**, I will be covering the following:

- Blackberry Curve 8520
- Windows Live Messenger (MSN)
- Facebook

Blackberry Curve 8520

The BlackBerry is a smart phone with a whole variety of functions; the ability to use an e-reader, store and play different types of media, call people, video call people, message and picture message people, connect to a Wi-Fi or a BlackBerry connection, connect to other BlackBerry phones with the BlackBerry messenger and a whole other variety of features.



The Blackberry Curve 8520 was the first Blackberry version to come with a track pad. This was a touch sensitive pad which lets you move on screen.

It has wireless internet capability, Bluetooth 2.0 and built in WiFi. It was released in 2009, weighs 106 grams, and has a full QWERTY keyboard and an internal memory of 256MB. As well as this, it has a slot for Micro SD cards allowing an expandable memory of up to 32GB.

It also comes with a 2 megapixel camera which can also video record. It has MMS, Email and IM capabilities, as well as an internet browser. It also comes with Java built in, allowing you to use certain software.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

The Blackberry, as all mobile phones, can send and receive text messages and calls from around the globe. With this feature, I can essentially keep in contact with friends wherever I am. If I get lost, I can simply call or text them to reconcile my location. If I need help, I can just call or text. With the ability to do this from anywhere and any place, it makes it extremely useful in all forms. Being the clumsy person I am I often do get lost or separated from my friends as I tend to wander around a lot. The Blackberry meets my need to contact and locate my friends again. It also meets my need to socialise, contact friends and my need for help in any situation.

The track pad allows for much smoother navigation in your phone. It allows you to use the simple touch of a finger to navigate your phone. It's much simpler in that it doesn't need to push buttons or a stick which could get jammed. Using my phone quite often, joysticks and buttons on phones can easily get damaged. The track pad is utilised to meet the need to preserve its condition. It uses the least amount of effort and thus, provides me with a longer lasting feature.

The ability to send and receive files allows me to transfer between other BBs all over the world, not just within range. This is made possible using BBM which you can send files and pictures to each other, without the need of Bluetooth. It meets the need to transfer files such as work or something else without having to meet each other, preventing hassle.

Browsing the internet from any location you want is also extremely useful. With this, I can open the limits to my Blackberry's capabilities. I can download apps without the need for a computer and go onto any of the thousands of websites out there. For someone who uses the internet a lot for a whole variety of stuff, I can simplify things by just checking things up using my phone's internet instead of taking the long process to turn my computer on and use that internet, which also limits portability.

I can take pictures and videos with the Blackberry's 2 mega pixel camera. I can record and capture things I see which is extremely useful as I don't have a camera. I can take a picture for my Facebook, thus not making me feel left out in having a black profile picture. I can take pictures for other things such as BBM so people can form an accurate image of what I look like instead of using their own imagination which would tend to be much more skewed to what is the reality. The imagination is generally worse than the reality as you really can't get much better than what is the reality so the ability to take pictures allows me to show off my alluring self, despite having the chance to come off as a vain, narcissistic and arrogant pest.

I can use the Blackberry to listen to music. This works with the MicroSD feature which can hold up to 32GB, making the problem of limited space and a slow-down of the Blackberry due to limited free space no longer applicable, thus solving a lot of problematic issues.

It's portable. While this may be obvious and no need for any mention, what makes this mobile phone so useful when portable is its computer -like function. As common with smart phones, it has a lot of capabilities similar to a computer. It can do basic word documents, send and receive emails, download small files and other stuff. In essence, the portability of the Blackberry lets you carry a mini computer with basic functions. This means that I can work on things, send emails and do other various things which you could only do on a computer anywhere I want, making it much more efficient to finish my work.

The QWERTY keyboard is something uncommon with smart phones as they often utilise the touch screen or pull it off very badly. The blackberry, however, pulls it off extremely smoothly. The keyboard is easy to use, it gets easy to type fast and the buttons are pressed quite easily and high accuracy isn't needed as buttons are a considerate size. Being the extremely fast, competent and touch typist that I am, the QWERTY keyboard makes using the phone so much easier as a QWERTY keyboard is something my fingers are very much used to.

WiFi and Bluetooth capabilities make it easier to transfer files and use the internet. While most blackberry contract offers come with internet, the use of WiFi along with the blackberry internet makes it so much faster. WiFi also is used to connect to various computers, blackberrys and other world -wide connections related to the internet. The Bluetooth capabilities are also quite useful. They allow me to transfer files with my friends. This makes me or my friends not feel left out. If my friend sees that I have a Pokemon game on my blackberry, being the big nerd I am, then he'll be desperate to get it as well simply out of pure jealousy and the need to conform, seeing as Pokemon grew quite popular among blackberries. This need to conform makes him desire the game on his blackberry and this is what Bluetooth does. It lets this hypothetical friend get his Pokemon and it works like this for me. If I see something my friends have, the human urge to conform kicks in and I want it, I *need* it. And this is the need Bluetooth provides, it lets me transfer from mobile to mobile. Extremely efficient and easy as I don't have to go back to the source to find it or download it as a slow speed.

As mentioned before, Blackberry has an e-mail service. This lets you receive and send emails. Better yet, you can even open and send attachments. This extremely

useful feature is one that is new as most phones can't handle emails and bigger things. This makes it easy to organise your cyber life and/or important events and find out straight away when something urgent, important or fun has happened in your life. And this is how it helps me. I can find out when my college interviews are by simply going onto my email. I can also send my work to myself via email from my blackberry if there is a problem with my computer.

Applications are what bring out the potential of the blackberry. There are thousands of things it can do with applications, from viewing the weather to seeing movie reviews with Flixster. Applications are one of the greatest advantages for the blackberry and let me do a lot of different things. I can talk to my friends from anywhere on MSN, check my Facebook wherever I go, post a tweet on my Twitter and various other things. My favourite application would be mobireader, an eReader that can be used to view PDF files. I can download PDF files and put them onto my blackberry, eliminating the purpose of books. I can carry lots of PDF files in my blackberry which is much easier than carrying the same amount of books. I can read them anywhere I want on my blackberry. The only problem is the size and the need to stare into the screen of a mobile. For people with bad eyesight, this may be a problem. However, for someone like me, it's perfect. My eyes are adjusted to electronic screens from the hours and hours of abstaining from social contact and instead feeding my eyes the hypnotic pixels projected from my desktop monitor. Indeed, it was glorious. After years of using technology, I find it easy to stare into an electronic gadget and thus, reading books off my blackberry is perfect.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

However, with advantages come disadvantages. First and foremost is the most obvious and helpless one. The blackberry, while being a useful little gadget, is also a massive distraction; distraction from work, study and anything that can be procrastinated upon. How vulnerable you are to its distraction depends on your will and motivation to do your work and when that will is for something as elongated and pointless as writing about 'technology' you use and how bad or good it is, then it is very easy to get distracted. The allure of brick-breaker is too much, I'd say. The only

improvement to avoid distraction is not with the blackberry but with your own mind. Focus on your work, Sadian. Focus.

It is also quite an expensive piece of technology. By itself, it might not seem too daunting compared to the pricey iPads, HTC's, Androids and other smart phones they're selling but your mouth will drop and your eyebrows will furrow once you see the astounding bill it can add up to. The blackberry needs a monthly payment for its e-mail service, internet and applications. These can add up to quite a hefty sum. But with children and their peer pressure and their need to conform to what's the norm, they'll just keep on pestering until they get one, making their parents' money disappear like a cake at fat camp.

The blackberry also makes you quite vulnerable to theft. The common image of a blackberry associates you with money making you a good target for mugging. If someone saw you carrying a blackberry rather than a phone worth less than a tenner, they'd be more enticed to steal from you. For someone like me who gets out his blackberry in the middle of the street and starts playing a game while walking — occasionally bumping into the ol' lamppost—it can make me an easy target for thieves.

From my own experience, the blackberry has a battery life that is vanquished quite quickly. Although it may not be due to the power of the battery but more -so the amount of power the programs on the blackberry take. The blackberry uses advanced programs to run which can take more power than what the battery usually handles. While the battery life may not be necessarily short, the blackberry uses a lot of power thus making the battery life really short. This can lead to the battery dying out which weakens its battery life making it run out even faster. The main problem here is the power the blackberry uses along with the numerous programs left to run in the background.

The blackberry's advanced and powerful programs also cause the problem of freezing/crashing. The blackberry has access to a lot of unstable programs which causes it to freeze. You can lose important data this way as you have to take out the battery to turn it off. This means that any unsaved work will be lost. If no work is lost, then it isn't too much of a problem if you weren't doing anything important but the

thing that makes this a much bigger problem is the time it takes to turn back on. It takes a few minutes to turn on and while this may not be too much of a problem at first, it turns into a problem once the blackberry freezes. If you have something important to do, expecting a phone call or something else, you'd have to wait for the phone to turn on thus possibly wasting time or missing an important phone call.

The amount of programs available can also slow down the blackberry. Compared to the likes of the iPhone, HTC or an android, the blackberry isn't a particularly powerful running smartphone. So, when it uses powerful programs, as well as using a lot of battery it also slows down considerably. This makes it hard to work efficiently.

Summary of advantages

- Allows you to send and receive texts and calls from all over the world
- Comes with a track pad
- Send and receive files
- Browse the internet
- View/take pictures and videos with a 2 MP camera
- Allows you to listen to music
- Portable
- Full QWERTY keyboard makes it easy and fast to type
- WiFi capabilities
- Bluetooth capabilities
- Blackberry e-mail service allows you to receive and send emails, even letting you open attachments
- Own world-wide chat service—Blackberry messenger
- Extremely strong and has high endurance to being dropped, highest of all its competitors
- Expandable memory, e.g. via Micro SD cards whereas a direct competitor like the iPhone has fixed memory
- Lots of apps such as MSN, Facebook, Skype
- Apps can be extremely useful, such as an eReader

Summary of disadvantages

- Distractive
- Expensive
- Easy target for theft
- Takes a lot of battery to use
- Can crash/freeze a lot
- Takes a while to turn off
- OS system can slow down often

Conclusion

Overall, the blackberry has a lot of advantages. Its main advantage is the vast range of things it can do including its ability to browse the internet, use complex applications or programs used usually on a computer and its ability to use the e-mail service. However, it fades in comparison to more luxury smart phones. Its power is nothing to brag about and it runs quite weak compared to something like the iPhone. While you do get what you paid for, the expense through bills and periodical payment of its services make it much less equivalent. Stick with another smart phone unless you desperately want it for social means e.g. blackberry messenger.

Windows Live Messenger (MSN)

The computer has access to many different programs and software and one of the most useful and frequently used would be instant messaging programs such as MSN. MSN or 'Windows Live Messenger' is a Microsoft created program and often works in correlation to Windows Live Hotmail as well as the other 'Windows Live' programs. MSN works by connecting to other MSN users via their email.

You can call or video call, share images, music or other files, share information, play games or just converse with text. Using MSN, I can make friends from all over the world and socialise with my current friends without needing to get off my lazy ass or do something silly like actively participating in 'real



life'. Who needs that when you have the vast internet, right? Wrong, perhaps you need a reality check and see how unattractive you look building up those rolls around your stomach and sitting in the dark tapping on the keyboard all day in your mother's basement with various pizza boxes lying everywhere. The sad fact is I'm presumably talking my future self. How pathetic. But pardon me, I do digress, it gets a little boring typing mechanically on lifeless, no personality topics on how a piece of technology 'meets my needs'. Something that doesn't really require any real thought or inquisitiveness but merely recycling what people find on the internet. Back to the topic at hand.

With just this little program, I can send calls, video calls, play games and do lots of other things with anyone over the world, as long as they had any access to MSN all completely free. It makes a very convenient and efficient program to use and saves a lot of time.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

The first and biggest advantage of MSN is its main feature —instant messaging. Instant messaging is different from texting, emails and similar types of communication. It gives exactly what its name implies: the ability to send messages *instantly*. There is no time wasted on sending a message using a signal or reception, it simply goes to the person at a seemingly instantaneous speed and with all you have to do is type a message and press enter. The efficiency of instant message is vastly astounding and saves a lot of time. I can talk to my friends as if I am talking to them in real life. I save time with having to send emails or text messages along with waiting for it to send and waiting for a slow reply by just conversing in instant messages. And it's not just limited to the country. I can instant message people all over the world. I can find out about other country cultures, meet people of different countries of habitation and expand my knowledge on the world. This is something that would usually cost a lot to do via phone but is something MSN can do for free.

I can also video call people completely free using nothing more than a webcam and microphone. I can see how my family are doing over in Bangladesh and how my nephews and nieces are growing up, something that I usually would have no chance of seeing. I can form a long-distance relationship if I wanted to with a girl much easier as we'd be able to keep in contact with video calls, allowing us to see each other despite being long distance, not that I'd do something like that. I can show off my various different hair styles to my friends and have them gloat at how attractive I look, without having to be with me to see the ultimate perfection that is me (I wish). In other words, I can talk to people as if they were actually there, thus even more modernising the world, all for free. Now that we've advanced so much in so little time, it's not long till the need to act in real life is completely overruled by the virtual world. What's next? Virtual reality? Technology that use all 5 of the senses? A kid can dream. But with MSN and what it is in current stages is quite something to marvel at itself. It saves me time and is efficient in showing things off and rekindling old relationships or maintaining one.

Having overprotective parents limits how much I'm allowed to call or text due to the fact that they can see how much I use and who I call. MSN not only takes away this limit but makes it completely free. It gives me privacy to do what I want and is completely free for what otherwise takes money to do.

MSN is also quite easy to install, barely even taking a full minute. It's simply a 'Yes, yes, next, finish' approach, no complexity involved. This lets even the most technically impaired people to join MSN, giving it a wide community of people to engage with. This gives me the ability to talk to some of my 'less computer-knowledgeable' through MSN.

Due to most of MSN conversations being through text, it is quite easy to hide emotions. So even if you are extremely upset, you can still converse as if everything was normal to your friends, hiding your true state. Something you won't be able to do in real life. This can keep people from being nosy and making you annoyed as well as sad. Instead, you can cheer yourself up by talking and changing the subject to other things that cheer you up instead of constantly bringing every topic to the fact that you look upset, thus making the fact that you're upset a much bigger deal than it should be, upsetting you even more. But MSN is devoid of any true emotions,

making it possible to show yourself off as extremely happy instead of sad. However, this can also be a big disadvantage. People can end up creating fake personas, which is covered in the disadvantages section

The block feature lets you control who can speak with you. While this might cause hostility in a person finding out you blocked them, it simply prevents this by giving off the impression to the blocked person that you are offline. The 'appear offline' feature is also similar but more useful. If you wish to stop most people from talking to you but don't want to sign out as you'd like to talk to that certain someone, you can simply appear offline and still talk with them. No more of a certain 'Samza Taje' pestering you day and night, the 'appear offline' feature simply lets you get away mercifully without the claws of annoyance and irritation rapidly crawling through your insides. I can save time having to talk to people you have no interest in and prevent any potentially bitter relationships caused by being ignored.

Group chat is an extremely useful feature . It lets you create groups of people to chat with, forming a mini-community of sorts. We can converse and create familial bonds with each other. I can find groups of people with similar taste on me, thus finding an outlet to talk about my interests and hobbies. I can also find groups of people with different tastes, thus expanding my own knowledge, culture and myself.

Among the various MSN features and activities, remote assistance is one of, if not the best, one of the most useful features out there. Remote assistance takes interactivity to a new level and lets you take control of another's PC. For when a person is too illiterate to follow instructions or general help, remote assistance is perfect. Its main purpose is to help other people with help on their computers. For someone like me who is just a big fan of helping others, it becomes extremely useful for me. I can help out people who can't follow the instructions I gave them. This feature allows me to go out of my own way and in my own generosity and kindness help them out with something they could've Googled in a few seconds. Remote assistance is thus a very useful tool as it lets me see or even control the problem with my eyes, thus helping them solve it much quicker and it works vice versa. If I'm having a problem with my computer in which I have trouble solving, I can simply get a friend to help me out via remote assistance.

There are also other features and activities such as the various games involved. These games provide a more competitive nature towards the casual conversation between people on MSN. For example, a game of Minesweeper can turn quite intense. It provides a much more interesting side of MSN. This can entertain you with your friends and form a deeper bond by engaging in interactive acts with each other. For me, who goes on MSN a lot, this entertainment is quite useful as it provides a platform other than conversation to interact my friends with. It also provides a little fun and competitive nature with my friends.

The ability to share files is also extremely useful. If I really need a song and my friend has it, he can use MSN to send it to me. He can also send me other things such as photos, videos and games. If I'm having trouble with some work, he can send me an example in which would give me a clearer understanding. If I'm desperately searching for a song or album but can't find the site to pirate it through illegal means, something people do a lot, then my friend can simply send it through MSN. It makes transporting files much easier. However, this can also be a disadvantage as I will cover in the next section.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

MSN may seem like an extremely useful piece of software with little faults but for a computer novice, it can be really dangerous.

The internet is the cavern for criminals, creeps and all the corrupt humans you can think of. This is simply because it's an outlet where people won't judge you simply because you're anonymous. People won't know who you are, all the bad things you've done and you can come off as a completely different person. You can adopt an 'internet persona'. The shield of anonymity makes you feel much more at ease. That's why people who are looked down upon by society come onto the internet to hide under anonymity and this is where problems start.

While people are stuck as anonymous, people that aren't are extremely vulnerable. People can be tricked by a fake internet persona. Being anonymous, it is very easy to pretend to be someone else. While this isn't usually too dangerous as it doesn't

escalate to real life, it sometimes does and this is where it starts to get dangerous. If someone was pretending to be a 15 year old heart throb on the internet seducing young girls, they could then lure them somewhere in real life and take advantage of them. This puts young, vulnerable people at risk putting them at an extreme danger. These apparently 'teenage boys/girls' can lure out an actual teenager or younger into a place in real life. They can be tricked and then taken advantage of or abused.

Being a teenager who goes on MSN a lot, I am prone to strangers on the internet tricking me and pretending to be someone else. This can lead to being abused or assaulted in real life, having data or my identity stolen, having my details stolen and other things. MSN need to give a better awareness to kids of the dangers it holds.

Another danger that can happen through MSN are viruses .MSN is full of bots and fake e-mail accounts whose sole purpose is to add random people and send them a computerised email. This message is a virus and if people click the link, they'll catch the virus which will cause them to send the link to all their contacts thus spreading it around. This can be extremely dangerous for me as it can be hard to distinguish what exactly is a message from a friend or a computerised message containing a virus. These viruses can then nest into my computer and grow more dangerous as time passes. Depending on what kind of virus it is can make it more fatal. A key - logger can log all that I write and steal my personal details and possibly my identity. They can even steal my dad's credit card details when he uses my computer, also putting the blame on me and bringing me into more trouble. If it's something else, it can make me lose my files, break my computer and other things.

For MSN to work, you need access to the internet and a piece of technology such as a computer (in most common cases), a phone or some other gadget. This can mean a few different things. To maintain MSN, you need internet. Internet costs a lot of money and can increase in price the more bandwidth you use, if you don't have unlimited. This means that if you lose internet connection, MSN will disconnect which can cause problems. Needing a computer, phone or whatever can also bring up prices in electricity.

It is also extremely distractive. Its easy access and availability on all computers, even coming pre-installed on new ones, makes it quite easy to obtain. Then, you

have the numerous amounts of things you can do on it. You also have people who annoy you and distract you from work. This, however, can be solved using the block feature. But being tempted to talk to someone is hard to resist and this is what distracts people the most. Having all my friends on my MSN makes it hard to resist stopping work to have typical, silly banter with the lads.

Another problem with MSN is it becomes easy to rely on and become dependent on. Soon, you'll talk more on MSN than you will in real life. Not in all cases, but certainly in mine. A problem that comes with this is the lack of ability to convey tone, sometimes causing misunderstandings and trouble. For example, I'm having quite a bit of fun writing 3A, the idea of expanding and delving into the world of technology excites me. I was being extremely sarcastic in the last sentence but, even though it might've been easy to tell in this particular context, something like this could be misunderstood for *real joy at doing this work*. The horror.

It is also very easy to cyber bully through MSN. The ease to call people names and insult them through MSN makes it all the more tempting. While some people can just press the 'block' button, others just can't understand the word 'ignore'. People can annoy, insult, and harass through MSN. While it can be stopped easily, people can then make multiple emails to further harass people and it can get uncontrollable. It becomes worse as it's hard to tell someone you're being cyber bullied as they won't take you seriously, won't fully understand your situation or won't know what to do to help you. It's also so much easier to go anonymous on MSN thus making cyber bullying much easier to commit as you don't have to worry about being punished.

Summary of advantages

- Being an instant messaging program makes it fast and easy to send messages
- Messages and responses are instantaneous
- Allows you to video call people completely free
- Saves you money on having to text/call people
- Easy to install

- Easy to hide emotions even when filled with intense murderous intent towards the person you are conversing with by simply using a :) (smiley) face
- Stay vigilant of who adds and is allowed contact with you even allowing you to block people who annoy you
- The appear offline feature also works like the block feature but less direct
- You can talk in groups
- Features like remote assistance makes it much easier to communicate various things
- Engage in activities other than text such as the vast competitive games involved
- Share files together

Summary of disadvantages

- Being an honest, innocent, charming, alluring, attractive and naïve little kid unbeknownst to the evil dangers lurking around every corner makes me an easy target for paedophiles/stalkers through MSN
- Deceived by false personas
- I can contract filthy viruses which can corrupt my computer through MSN e.g. through file transfer
- Needs a computer/phone/other medium and internet connection
- Distractive
- Impossible to comprehend or convey tone
- Easy to cyber bully

Conclusion

Overall, for the technologically savvy, common-sense minded people; MSN can be an extremely useful piece of software with little -to-no disadvantages. The only disadvantage would be the need for access to an internet connection. However, for those who can't differ between a friend or a bot, a virus or a link to 'a good time', a teenage boy/girl or a 50 year old pedophile, MSN can be quite a risky place as it leads to all sorts of problems, people and everything around the world.

Facebook

Ever since
Mark
Zuckerberg,
the young
billionaire,
made
Facebook, it
instantly
became a
hit. It now
has around



500 million active users with more than 60 million status updates posted *daily*. It gives you a connection to the whole world, in a social aspect. You can find people with just their names making it nice and simple. You can keep all your friends up -to-date without having to speak to them directly with status updates, photos and albums and even relationship updates. And while this may seem a bit lacking of privacy, this can be completely controlled by Facebook's options to allow you to change who sees what and who doesn't see anything.

Facebook has become a web of socialising. The need to socialise outside of the virtual world is eliminated and whether that causes a negative or positive effect on our current generation is shown directly by how it has affected me personally and my social life.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

The main advantage Facebook gives to me is the time and effort it saves me. Being someone who stays inside a lot browsing the web, being rude to people online and displaying acts of teenage angst in general, it can cost me my social life as I'm simply too lazy and preoccupied with the internet to go outside and meet with friends or participate in common banter.

But using Facebook, I can use my obsession with the internet to actually have a social life, albeit a 'pseudo' one. But it still gives me the chance to contact people I know in real life, thus expanding on my social life. What Facebook does is give me the chance to actually possess a form of a socialisation which I usually would not get. It gives me access to see what everyone else is doing, what the latest gossip is and actually feel like a normal social person. It gives me a social life even though I don't actually participate in social events.

Another big advantage of Facebook is its ability to reconcile with old friends, reunite with long lost childhood friends, make new friends and keep in contact with current friends without having to go outside. Being Sadian, I never bothered to keep in contact with friends from Primary school and such as that would involve either owning a mobile or going outside, neither of which I did. But Facebook gives me the opportunity to find these old friends again and contact them despite having lost contact so long ago and all I need is a simple name. Needing just a name makes it easy to reunite with old people and while there may be lots of people to filter from with the exact name you're looking for, the mutual friend system makes it easier to find the person in your exact social network and a social circle tends to be quite large that if you have what is average to be about 200 friends, then you're bound to have at least 1 mutual friend with someone you used to go to primary school with.

Keeping in contact with current friends is also possible with Facebook. You don't even have to directly talk to them, just simply make status updates and it'll feel like they're directly involved with your life as they now know every small bit, like when you go to bed, when you eat and other pointless facts.

You can also make new friends which can be harder to do in real life, especially for someone like me who tends to have a lack of confidence in new situations. You can use the platform of Facebook's liking or becoming a fan feature to make friends with people with similar interests. You can even find out who in your current social circle likes similar things as you, thus providing the chance for a 'friendship' to blossom.

Facebook is also completely free to use, other than simply needing the internet. It can be accessed from a computer, a phone and many other things. It has become so

popular to use that it has been made into lots of apps compatible with various technology.

Using Facebook, I can organise events and parties and also be invited to them. I can find out what's going on and when. But it can be unreliable as people don't keep to their word if they're actually coming while being trigger happy in clicking the 'attend' button. This gives the illusion that they're coming when they're not.

Facebook is a platform to talk to people all over the world. Using this, it can be a platform for information spreading, spreading a message, a meaning and other things. An important and great example of this would be the 'We are Khaleed Said' Facebook page. This sent out the message to the whole world of the corrupt tyranny going on in Egypt and essentially triggered the Egyptian rebellion. Examples like this show how great Facebook can be in passing on messages and how useful its easy access and use from all over the world can be.

Using Facebook, I can also interact with friends, family and acquaintance's statuses, photos and other information. This can provide me a platform in which I can develop my relationship between these people by making relevant comments and such. It gives me the opportunity to have contact with people I usually wouldn't.

Facebook has often been criticised as a place where privacy is too easy to be broken. However, I can limit what exactly Facebook can show of mine to my friends using the privacy options and thus stopping people from seeing things I don't want them to see.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

However, Facebook can be quite deceiving. While it may make me think I have a social life. It simply gives the illusion. The social life it makes me think I have is simply created online and it doesn't mean I have a social life in real life. What it really is doing is stopping me from being as active and attempting to be social as I think I can just escape from it all by 'just being social' on Facebook. But really, I'm just escaping from real life to the internet and building up a fake social life.

What Facebook essentially does is make you think you have a social life and makes you depend and become addicted to Facebook using this illusion of a social life. It becomes addictive, distracting and hard to stop using. It distracts and causes me to procrastinate on my work and causes me to not be active and just be on the computer all day. It makes me think I'm being social when in reality, I'm sitting on my backside spying on people without their knowledge by going through their Facebook statuses, walls etc. Facebook essentially makes what seems to be a social network a 'stalker' network.

Facebook makes it so easy to stalk someone. With just their name, you can find out their picture and if they accept you, they can find out even more. They can find out possibly where you live, what you do and how you act. Some people even forget to put up privacy options so a lot of people can stalk and find out all this without having to go through confirmation as a 'Facebook friend'. This can be particularly dangerous for me as it can get me in trouble with my family as they can find out what I am when I'm not under the innocent impression I give off to them. Luckily, I keep Facebook private and not add family so that won't happen to me but some people don't and it's not just limited to family. It can also mean employers looking at your Facebook to see how responsible or reliable you appear.

Facebook is a means for stalking which also means it can be used for harassment. With its inconvenient feature of easily being able to find someone, it can also be used to easily send them messages which can sexually harass, abuse or bully them. With an extremely persistent problem, this can continue until the person blocks them from viewing their Facebook completely, which is hard as a lot of people don't know how to figure it out.

The biggest problem for someone like me that Facebook provides is procrastination. In the end, Facebook gives off a completely unproductive time-pass and generally achieves nothing. In spite of this, it is *highly addictive*. Even if there's nothing new, just going on Facebook, refreshing pointlessly again and again is addictive despite not providing anything. It not only wastes your time but is utterly pointless. Facebook is a web of socialising, and this web captures its victims just like a spider web captures flies. It makes people addicted and that's how Facebook has become so popular and why I have taken so long to successfully finish 3A.

Summary of advantages

- I can have a social life despite being a closeted internet geek
- I can keep in contact with old/new friends without having to meet them
- Reunite with childhood friends I lost contact with
- I can make new friends without the fear arisen from a lack of confidence
- Find people with similar interests
- Completely free to use
- Organise events with friends such as parties
- Talk to people from all over the world and other countries
- Interact with people's pictures, statuses and other stuff
- Control my privacy with the option to limit what certain people can see

Summary of disadvantages

- A social life forged online doesn't necessarily equate to an actual social life
 - Under the illusion of socialising when, in reality, you are simply sitting on your backside 'spying' on other people
 - Extremely distractive and addicting in some cases
 - Stalking is much easier to do
 - Can lead to harassment
 - Facebook provides a base for procrastination which stops me from finishing
- 3A

Conclusion

Overall, Facebook can be a good medium for connecting with old friends, new friends and current friends but it also makes you too dependent on this medium. It makes you rely on it too much, takes away your real social life and makes you addicted. You spend too much of your time on Facebook doing nothing when you could be doing something productive, doing something active while actually outside or anything at all. But instead, Facebook ultimately drags you in its social network and in the end, it's a time waste.

Technology used for personal use

For technology I use for my own personal use, I will be covering the following:

- Playstation 3
- DS
- iPod Touch



Playstation 3

Playstation 3 is a current generation gaming console made by Sony used to play games compatible with the Playstation franchise, dating back to the first Playstation, released in December, 1994. However, it can also be used as lots of other things, due to several of the features installed onto it, serving as a major improvement to old versions of the Playstation

and keeping up with current generation technology. For example, it holds a hard drive of its own; allowing you to input songs, download games, store game saves, videos or just any file in general.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

While being one of the biggest gaming consoles out there, one of its main drawbacks was its price. The Playstation 3 cost an astounding amount at its release which put a lot of people off. However, with the release of the PS3 slim and the extremely reduced price, this made the large amount of features and hardware available at a much cheaper price which made people like me able to afford it while previously I wasn't. This also made it much more affordable for other people and thus more people bought it. The slim model is also smaller, cheaper, lighter and more efficient in terms of usage of power. This helps me in terms of how much electricity I use. As I play PS3 a lot, it is important that I minimise exactly how much electricity I take.

Being lighter also makes it easier for me to carry around without dropping, which happens quite often being the klutz that I am.

The PS3 has an extremely wide selection of games from all genres but it can be argued that these games are also on the Xbox which doesn't give an incentive to get PS3 over Xbox. But what does give incentive is the fact that PS3 has a lot of console-exclusive games. What this means is that a lot of games on the PS3 are purely exclusive to just the PS3 and not achievable on the Xbox. Sony make the best games purely exclusive, giving people incentive to buy the PS3 over the Xbox and giving people like me better and much desired games on my system, the PS3.

I can browse WiFi and use PSN completely free on Playstation. This is what gives the Playstation the biggest advantage over Xbox and what brings in a lot of its customers. It also helps me out a lot as I use PSN a lot but cannot afford to keep up the periodical payment as I already pay a periodical payment for my internet. Another periodical payment would go over my given budget and I would have to cut one or the other, with the obvious cut being the PSN as internet is too valuable to me.

However, PSN doesn't cost and in fact uses my internet through a wireless router to connect online. This is extremely efficient for me as it saves me money from having to pay for online gaming and instead allows me to connect to something I've already got and pay for, thus meaning I don't have to pay any extra to go online on my PS3. This lets me browse the web just like I would on my computer, go on PSN, go on programs like MSN, converse with the online PSN community, make PSN friends etc. All this helps in many ways. For example, when my computer encountered a problem which involved a message saying 'BOOTMGR is missing', I could use my PS3 to find out what exactly I had to do, which involved burning my own Windows Recovery Disk and using it on my computer. But I don't mean to brag (I actually do), so I digress. The PS3's WiFi helped solve my computer when it was down as our household can only manage to maintain one computer which makes it extremely fatal if that one goes down. The PS3 saved it which is extremely useful for me. Going on PSN and meeting people and making new PSN friends adds a more competitive twist to gaming, which in my opinion is the most entertaining aspect. The idea of demolishing and obliterating friends to show your skill and prowess is something that

is extremely fun for me, the best leisure activity. It allows me to withhold my pride in my ability. And lastly, MSN on PS3 simply lets me keep contact with my friends even while I play PS3. Programs like Flash and Java are also on the PS3 allowing me to do stuff such as viewing videos on YouTube, giving me another source of entertainment from what is perceived to be simply a gaming console. The PSN server also lets you download games, meaning you don't have to go to the shop or desperately search for the game you want. You simply enter credit card details and purchase the download of the game.

The PS3 also has the potential to play lots of various media as it is compatible with a large range of file types. It can view pictures from .jpg, .png, .gif etc to movie files from .avi, .mp4, .wav, etc to songs in .mp3 and other formats. This allows someone like me who likes to store his files on his PS3 a lot of ease as I can simply view them on my PS3 rather than having to transfer them. I can also listen to music and as I have quite an interest in music, I can simply play it on my PS3 while doing other stuff, maximising my relax and leisure time. What the PS3 also does it provide a substitute for a BluRay player, one of the most advanced video players of them all, with quality that is amazing and is the best currently available. It can also reflect this BluRay in its gameplay and is the only system to do this. This not only provides and astonishes me with high-quality gaming, but it also saves me money from having to purchase a BluRay player.

The hard-drive in my PS3 is quite large but I store a lot of movies to watch on PS3 so it can get filled up quite quickly. It's 60gb, allowing me to put an average of about just around 80 movies. While this may be a lot, it can get quite full up, especially with the other stuff inside it. For an avid movie watcher like me, who also is very possessive of his movie files even after he has watched them, it means I need a larger size to store all my movies. While this may not be a problem as I can store the extras on my computer, it also loses efficiency as it'd take time to always transfer between computer and PS3. But then, the PS3's extremely useful ability to buy another external hard-drive for it solves this problem completely. The PS3 is compatible with various external hard drives meaning I have the potential to get as much space as I want. This solves the issue of 'lack of efficiency' as I don't have to waste time transferring between computer, PS3 or anything. I just connect the hard

drive like a USB stick and play it from that. And while I can buy an external hard drive, it's not purely limited to that. The PS3 also comes in changeable sizes over 250GB making my 60GB PS3 slim look miniscule.

Its game range is also suitable for all types of audience. While some games may be seen as violent, such as GTA, it also has lots of games available for children. It's a platform for all ages, including parents. It can provide games of an educational platform, games of a music platform i.e. karaoke, Guitar Hero, Rockband or even just simple games to provide entertainment and pass the time. So, it can also be productive for me, who plays it all the time. I can expand my knowledge, my creativity, my understanding and other such as I simply don't constantly play first-person shooting games that the typical PS3 gamer is stereotyped to play. I can experience adventure, emotion, and other such story-telling devices that come with games which can be said to have the potential of being a greater story teller than books.

It can also be plugged into any television with its normal cable and its HDMI cable. It can be compatible in HD TVs to give high quality gaming or even just a simple TV. This lets me, who has a small 10 year old TV in my own room, to play in my own privacy but also play on the larger, more modern downstairs TV when guests are over so they don't have to strain their eyes on my pathetic late 90s or so TV. I can keep myself entertained but also keep family members entertained by taking them to the bigger TV due to the PS3's wide compatibility range. And it's not hard or long to plug in and play, either. This means that the process isn't elongated or inefficient; it simply takes a minute to take simply two plugs out and back in. That's all the PS3 consists of, two plugs! And no, I am not a sales person or working for the Sony advertisement branch.

Controllers are also easily rechargeable and also wireless. When it needs charging, you can also carry on playing but just connect the wires back. This wirelessness is extremely helpful to me as I am extremely jumpy. Being the jumpy, excited childlike teenager that I am, it could be fatal to have my controller wired to the gaming system which could end up flying up to space. This wireless aspect stops this. The fan in the PS3 slim is also quite silent, meaning I can play in the night without the loud humming and parents hearing me.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

While it did have a massive price drop from the original PS3 to PS3 slim, this still kept its position of being the most expensive console out of the big three (Xbox 360 and Nintendo Wii). This means that it's still expensive and takes quite a bit of money for people who aren't necessarily well off. This means that even though it dropped, my parents still face massive resistance in buying it due to money issues.

With the PS3 being expensive, the use of money doesn't end here. With a PS3, you also need to buy games. These games can in general be quite expensive. Sony take advantage of this by making it almost hard to resist buying them with advertisement, persuasion and glorification of the product. As I am someone who is easily mystified by these attempts, it makes me quite vulnerable in wanting to buy more games thus either frustrating my dad more or emptying his wallet more.

While a lot of the main video types can be played, there are a few that can't such as MKV. While this may not be a problem for most people, it is for me. I use MKV a lot for movies as it can maintain great quality but reduce the size by a lot. But the PS3 not being compatible means I have to go through the long process of converting it, thus bringing its size up more and possibly adding some playback errors. It's not entirely reliable.

A lot of PS3 games are violent. While this may not be too much of a problem as they usually have age restrictions, these age restrictions are usually disregarded. Parents don't know much about the game and simply buy it for their child. Or people at shops don't care enough that the person is underage rather than caring how many sales and satisfied customers they get. This violence can often influence young children and make them desensitised, thus giving them potential to cause harm to our society. These are the children that will control the future and being so desensitised to violence might be good, but might also corrupt the generation.

PSN is a place used to not only go online and talk with friends but to purchase stuff from Sony. It seems trustworthy as Sony is in charge and so, you feel safe about putting in your details and even your credit card details. This proved badly not too long ago as PSN was hacked and thousands of credit card details stolen and credit

card fraud taking place. This shows that even one of the most trustworthy companies can't be trusted with their security.

Summary of advantages

- PS3 slim had a massive price drop, allowing the PS3 to be more available for a wider audience while Sony still made a profit due to how much cheaper the slim was to produce
- Wide and exclusive range of games available (exclusive being only on this console and not on others)
- Can connect to a WiFi connection, allowing you to browse the web completely free
- Can play games online, free of charge, unlike its main competitor, the Xbox
- Has social benefits along with personal ones e.g. through PSN
- Has a good online gaming community to play with
- Buy and download from your PS3 using an online Playstation network
- Can play certain types of media, view pictures and store files
- Can also be substituted for a BluRay player
- Allows you to buy a wide range of hard drive sizes ranging up to 200gb, allowing you to find one that suits your needs
- Large and changeable hard-drive sizes
- Has games suitable for all types of audiences
- Can plug into any television
- Simple to plug in and play, only needing two wires

- Controllers are easily rechargeable and still as fully playable when recharging
- Quite silent compared to other consoles due to a much more efficient cooling fan

Summary of disadvantages

- Although having a massive price drop, still the most expensive out of all its competitors
- Games can also be quite expensive
- In terms of playing media, certain types of files like MKV aren't compatible
- Games can be quite violent and easy to access for kids not following the age requirement
- Just shown by the recent PSN hackings, all your important detail you store online or on PSN can be stolen by hackers
- Despite certain rumours, can NOT be used as an oven

Conclusion

In summary, the PS3 far outweighs the benefits it gives me than the disadvantages. Despite being a gaming console in name, they can virtually also be used as an inferior computer, used to do the basic things a computer can do. But it does come with a few safety issues, which can be avoided with responsibility.

Nintendo DS

The
Nintendo DS
is a new
product by
Nintendo
that has



several different models. Nintendo DS is simply the original model, often referred to unofficially as the 'Nintendo DS phat'. As well as all the other models, it is used to play Nintendo DS games and has two screens—the bottom one providing interactivity via a touchscreen. The DS naturally comes with a stylus. Compared to more later models, it has a blocky appearance and is quite large compared to the sleek figure of the DS lite. The most significant feature that defines the Nintendo DS is its touch screen functions and this is what makes it so successful, innovative and popular with people of all ages.

The DS lite came out a while after the original DS and improved it in various different ways. While the gameplay was the same, it was a much more efficient product. It had a slim design, could easily fit into pockets and came in different colours unlike the original. It also had a longer battery life and a brighter screen.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

The DS is a well-evolved product that has been adapted and changed throughout its history to suit more to its main customers. As it grew more popular, the group Nintendo catered to grew and so, they had to adapt the DS to make it more efficient and to suit different people.

The DS lite was the first adaption of the original DS. It became smaller, thus more suitable to its main age range of kids and teenagers. This was very useful for me as it meant I could fit the DS lite in my pockets much easier as I carried it around with me everywhere I go. The DS phat tended to limit my movement and be squashed in my jeans. The DS lite also has an improved battery life and a brighter screen. For someone like me, an increased battery life is vital as I often take it everywhere I go, meaning I won't have the chance to charge it. If I'm on a long car journey, I wouldn't want my battery to run out before the journey finishes. And lastly, a brighter screen is

extremely important as it protects my eyes from being strained to focus on the screen.

The DSi went further to make it the system more fun and aim it more at teenagers with the cameras and the operating system. This was designed to become not just a gaming system but also more like a phone, a camera etc. Things that teenagers use, all put in one. The DSi was also quite useful to me though the changes did not benefit me as much as the DS lite. While I could take pictures, have fun with the apps and stuff, it was short-lived and it soon just became a pointless addition.

The DSi XL was then made to cater to the wider age group coming into the DS. It suited people with large hands. While I may not have had the chance myself to see how it affected me, it definitely helped widen its target audience and help the wider age group in using the DS.

The biggest and most obvious advantage for the DS is simply its portability. The portable gaming systems started with the Gameboy and it soon advanced to the DS, with other companies also making portable gaming systems. For someone like me who was obsessed with games, the idea of playing games wherever I was appealed greatly to me. I could now play and pass time in boring car journeys, take it with me to places where I had nothing to do and just take it with me to even play with friends.

One of the great things about the DS is its capability of the wide range of games it provides. It goes from action, adventure, RPG, to educational and self-improvement games such as Brain Training. It was one of the first to offer such a wide range, especially in the educational department which paired really well with its touch screen abilities. For someone like me who likes to keep his brain in shape, I like to regularly use the brain training app and being the arrogant, boastful person I am, it gives me the chance to show off my capabilities and strengths to other people. It also makes me feel good at myself and also helps improve my own skills. I'm also a massive RPG fan and the Nintendo franchise provides the best RPGs in the gaming world. RPGs mean role-playing games and usually involve you taking on a character and going through the world strengthening yourself up. These games give me the feel that I am actually in the fantasy world with the game and give me a magical escape from the pressures of real life. It's a great way to relieve stress and also a

great story-telling medium, which can invoke emotions in you with its dynamic, thoughtful stories and attachments.

The touchscreen feature is the most recognised feature when you talk about the DS. The touchscreen is the DS' main point and the majority of its games utilises it to its maximum potential. This gives it an advantage over other systems as it's the only popular gaming system out there so far with touch screen. The touchscreen allows me to interact with the game and feel more in control. It allows me to be more a part of the game than usually possible. It also gives the potential for the DS to do things like Brain Training which other consoles can't do. This makes the DS, with its touchscreen, the most successful and unrivalled system in terms of educational aspects.

The DS has some other purposes other than gaming, as well. It can be used as an alarm, as a flip-note, as a memo and various other things. This is due to its applications which are extremely useful and often another source of entertainment. These applications give me a chance to kill time without having to spend money on buying lots of games.

Another big feature of the DS is its ability to connect to WiFi and LAN. WiFi means you can connect to people all over the world and play them. This gives me the chance to not limit my gaming abilities to just my local friends. It also allows me to play competitively especially if I don't have any friends that own a DS. It can help add that competitive aspect. The LAN is an even bigger feature, especially in the marketing of the DS. The DS is portrayed as family friendly, but fun and competitive gaming console and this is all possible with LAN, which lets you connect to DS consoles in the local area. This lets me play my family and friends and assert my position of dominance over them in the one thing I know how, games. This makes me feel really good about myself as I'm one of the best at games among my circle of friends and family. This also gives me a competitive nature but with more familiar people instead of strangers. This thus also gives it a social aspect and a chance to build relationships and friendships.

The camera of the DSi brings a whole view of things it can do. It increases the family/friend fun as you can take pictures with friends, edit them in funny ways and

have fun with all the applications. For example, the photobooth app lets you hilariously distort people's faces thus providing laughter with the friends. I can connect with my friends in funny ways and have a laugh with them using its numerous fun applications.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

The DS doesn't have any specific disadvantages but it is quite expensive. Games cost quite a bit, up to £30 each brand new. This can amount to quite a lot. It can be also seen as unfair as Nintendo DS games are rather bad in quality and graphics compared to console or PSP games which are in the same price range. This makes it much easier for people to convert to the PSP handheld system instead of the DS. This can make me, a loyal DS fan, on the edge as my friends become lured by the PSP but I'm faithful to the DS. In the end, it tempted me to just get both which ended up making it really expensive for me.

It's also extremely addictive, time wasting and distractive. In the end, gaming doesn't add much productively unless it's on an educational platform. For someone like me, who's addicted to games involving adventure, educational games are rarely played as I'm usually too into these other games. The easy portability of the DS makes it easier to get addicted and easier for it to be distractive. For example, computers are addictive but are less distractive as you can seclude yourself from them if you don't want to be distracted from doing something. While you can seclude yourself from a DS, the ability to just take it out and play it anywhere can become tempting and make you stop what you're doing and play the DS instead. It's addictiveness can also get me into trouble. For example, at a young age my feeble mind became addicted to the DS and secretly played it through the night. When I was inevitably found out as I wasn't too much of a stealthy kid, it got me into big trouble as I stayed up late in my bed playing games. Not only am I skipping sleep but also to do something pointless.

Summary of advantages

- Newer models are physically adapted to be more comfortable and efficient

- Portable
- Allows you to play all types of games
- Educational in some purposes
- Entertaining to all age groups
- Touch screen adds interactivity to games, something not done before wide scale
- Has many different purposes not related to just gaming
- Allows you connect to the internet via WiFi
- Used for social activities as well as personal entertainment i.e. playing with friends and family with WiFi
- Provides a lot of family fun
- Lots of fun applications on the DSi
- Camera brings a whole new aspect to the things you can do

Summary of disadvantages

- Games can get quite expensive
- Addictive to play, especially due to its portability
- Time-wasting and extremely distractive

Conclusion

Overall, the DS provides something other game consoles can't provide, touch screen interactivity and this is what gets the majority of its customers. It also provides gaming of all kinds including educational and doesn't have much when it comes to specific disadvantages. The DS is an extremely fun leisure tool and is highly recommended. The only downfall would be the graphics and the power of the DS including the size of its games which are much smaller in data to the ones in a PSP. However, it makes up for graphics in its compelling story and gameplay and other features.

Technology used for general home use

For technology I use for my own home use, I will be covering the following:

- Television
- Sky Digital
- Packard Bell iMedia Desktop Computer

Television

A television is a normal household device for people all around the world. It is used to view television broadcasts around the world. It processes and produces sounds and visuals from these broadcasts. It provides entertainment in various forms, e.g. educational, cultural, comical etc. Nearly every household has at least one of these and a television has very much been, since its creation and production to the mass public, something which every normal person either owns or watches regularly. It keeps you up to date with news, current events, celebrity gossip, new movies and much more. This is why Televisions are extremely popular.

There are two types of television: analogue and digital.

Analogue television systems are now out-dated and soon to become obsolete. Analogue television, as the name states, use analogue signals to transmit and receive a TV broadcast. An analogue signal is essentially a broadcast signal which is continuous in terms of amplitude or frequency. These are very inefficient and require an aerial to pick up the signal and can often result in the picture being unclear. These were the main form of television until digital television was discovered. Now, analogue signals are set to be totally rid of by 2012, regarding all analogue televisions redundant.

Digital television is now the way forward. Nearly all homes have a digital television set and with analogue soon to be completely obsolete, digital TV will now be the only type out there. Digital TV uses digital signals to broadcast television. In contrast to

analogue signals, the use of digital signals is discrete in terms of amplitude and frequency. These signals are much more stable and bring a much clearer picture. There is no need for a separate aerial on the TV as digital uses a satellite to connect to the corresponding company that supplies your digital box (needed to receive transmissions for digital TV).

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

Television can keep someone like me in touch with what's happening in reality. As I don't read newspapers, I use the TV to keep me in touch with current events, latest happenings and going-ons and important facts and knowledge. I basically use television to expand my general knowledge and culture my mind with different opinions, ideas and thoughts of the world. By seeing what's happening all over the world, how people act and how people are represented in various shows, I can process this to become more knowledgeable on my own common sense on human behaviour. This isn't done in a literal sense in changing my behaviour but more-so for experience. It helps me to be a bit less awkward in social situations then to just be clueless as to how to maintain a conversation or what to say without being utterly awkward. This is what TV helps someone like me to do.

Television can also be a classic method of entertainment. I can find anything and everything to suit my needs and/or tastes. With television, I can watch game shows, reality TV, comedy series, soap dramas and many more until I can find something I like.

I can also keep up to date with the latest music on the various music channels there are. This lets me be cultured and have a developed taste on what I like and what I don't like. I can know what's new and use this knowledge to successfully form a conversation surrounding music with people. I can also simply figure out what type of music exactly I enjoy most to become more of an individual person.

TVs are found in almost every single household. This means that nearly everyone watches TV often, keep up with certain programs, become fans and acquire tastes. This also gives me the chance to find a similar interest or topic to talk about between

people as the matter of television programs is something that comes up often. If I find someone who keeps up with a program I do, we can find a similar platform of conversation to talk about. This meets my need to tackle my awkwardness and just talk about something I enjoy.

Watching TV also lets me develop an interest in something and make it a hobby of mine. Discovering anime also made me delve further into it and become a fan, which made me also start reading manga. Being a fan of something and having an interest gives me a greater platform of meeting new people with the same interest and the ability to talk about this interest. I can find out about something that intrigues me through TV, making me find out more about it. TV gives the medium and I delve further into it. It provides me with the potential to broaden my horizons and find more things that I'm interested in.

With television also comes the various advanced technology such as HD, HDMI, BluRay and even 3D. This can allow me to experience astounding effects and be blown away by how advanced all of it is. With a television, I can experience amazing quality, amazing effects and have the chance to know exactly how good something is.

The television is also extremely important for games as it provides the medium to connect my Playstation with, thus allowing me to engage in high-end gaming. Without a television, I wouldn't be able to play my Playstation at all or experience Playstation Network. It relieves stress and provides good leisure entertainment.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

But televisions can end up costing you a lot, not just in purchase but also in your bill. Televisions are extremely addictive and can end up being turned on, thus using a lot of electricity, throughout most of the day. This can build up a high electricity bill which, after a while, can add up to quite a hefty sum. Televisions also require a TV license required from the BBC, an annual payment required if you own one or more television(s). Add this to the price you paid at the start to purchase the television and the amount of times it's kept on and it'll drain a lot of money. This is quite bad for me as I'm quite addicted to television and often leave it on for quite a bit. It becomes more complicated as I usually just leave it on even when I'm not watching it. This makes

the household electricity bill go up quite high, getting me in trouble and causing financial difficulties in our family.

Watching television often can also lead to bad eyesight. This can result from sitting too close to the TV or just watching too much TV in general. For someone who spends his time directly in front of a computer monitor *and* a TV at the same time, this can have quite a large effect on my eyesight. Although I haven't seen the effects yet, it could possibly mean that it'll affect my eyes in the future, thus possibly making me need glasses and, if I want to go through with it, laser eye surgery. But I don't really mind glasses too much, so maybe not.

Watching TV generally involves being inactive and the more you do it, the more relaxed and habitual it becomes. This generally then makes you very lazy and inactive, causing you to just sit down and watch TV all day. For a child, I need to be more active but I'm not. I've been hypnotised by my television to the point where I'm barely active, if ever. This means that my body has become very lazy. Laziness generally leads to health problems as the body needs to be active. For someone young at my age, I don't want to build up fat, cholesterol, bad posture, back aches or whatever health problems are associated with inactivity, sitting slouched down watching TV or on the computer all day. That's why television is extremely bad to watch too much. It'll make you addicted and distract you. Television is one of the biggest sources of distraction. 'Time to finish my ICT coursework', you may think. But then, bam! Friends is on, and who could resist that? Not me, but thank god it's 5am and everyone is asleep meaning I can't turn on the television. Thank god indeed, but I'm sure you get the point. Television distracts you, causes you to become lazy and inactive and engages you with all the shows it provides.

While you can learn stuff from TV, you can also become negatively influenced. Sex, drugs, violence, these are all shown daily on TV. For someone young like me, easily influenced and quite impressionable, these sexual themes, drug-addled characters and general violence can desensitise me to all this. While I may have been against these, now I'm indifferent. Then it gets to the point where I see these themes everywhere that they start becoming my own urges and that's how television negatively influences you. It can give you its own moral values which can be

extremely corrupted. For those who are easily impressionable like me, television is bad.

It can also give a fake or 'skewed' version of real life, aka Teen Drama. These can often exaggerate how teenagers live, sex, violence and drugs. This can make a lot of teenagers think they're the weird ones for not doing any of this and think everyone else is. This makes them influenced into doing these things.

Summary of advantages

- Have access to a wide variety of different kinds of entertainment from reality TV to comedy TV series
- Gives me an idea of what's happening around the world
- Keeps me up on latest news events
- A lot of programs can teach me new things
- Keep up to date with latest music
- Have stuff to talk about with friends and people especially because almost everyone owns a TV
- Develop an interest in something
- New technology such as HD television, HDMI cables or BluRay DVD players can allow me to experience the best quality of television available
- I can connect my PS3 to the television for some high -end gaming

Summary of disadvantages

- High cost, high electricity use and a need for a TV license
- Addictive and distractive
- Bad for eyesight
- Can cause laziness after simply sitting down all day watching TV
- Can corrupt my mind with bad material and giving me a corrupt set of moral values from shows with sex, violence and other inappropriate material
- Shows rated above my age group can still be easily viewed
- Gives a skewed vision on reality such as unrealistic teen drama
- My analogue TV will become redundant after the digital switchover

Conclusion

Overall, television is an extremely bad and addictive piece of technology. While it can enlighten you, engage you and interest you, it just gives negative effects, influence your mind with negative thoughts and in general, give bad long-term health. But If you're in control, then television can be quite the useful thing.

Sky+ Digital

Sky+ Digital is essentially a service meant to advance your television viewing, providing you with features and channels previously unavailable. These can often ease your TV viewing but also exemplify the disadvantages that come with viewing television in the first place. Sky+ lets you record shows and watch them at another time, rewind and forward and purchase new channels. Along with this, it lets you get more interactive and organise your TV viewing .



How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

What Sky does is give you a much larger variety of channels and shows to pick from. This can broaden your whole viewing pleasure. You can specify the type of channels you want, knowledge pack, comedy pack, action pack etc. This can develop your interests and make you better informed about all you like. For example, the knowledge pack can give you all there is to know about wildlife, countries etc. Action pack can keep you up to date with the latest action movies or series and comedy can just make you laugh again and again.

Sky also allows you record and re-watch over and over any shows that you set to record. The record feature allows you to watch a different channel while also recording a whole other channel. This practically lets you see two things that clash in

the program schedule. This is extremely useful for someone who watches a lot of TV or keeps up with a certain programme but can't be there at its running time. For someone like me who keeps up with weekly dramas which make the plot hard to understand if missed, it helps out a lot.

The digital feature of the box rather than the old fashioned analogue allows for a much clearer view. Analogue TVs usually require moving of a signal to get a clearer view while a Digital box merely has to be fully connected. This saves a lot of annoyance in having to find the 'correct spot'.

Sky also comes with other forms of entertainment. It gives you interactivity via the red button with certain channels. This gives me the chance to win items and competitions and take part in something challenging. This can often lead to winning something small.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

However, the box is quite expensive to buy and it's even more expensive to maintain a periodical fee to pay for channels. This makes it quite hard to maintain, especially including TV and electricity costs.

The satellite dish receiving channels outside is vulnerable to weather and other interruptions. This can cause your service to be temporarily stopped. This is usually hard to fix as it's often out of your control. The weather is something natural and the satellite aerial is usually on the roof.

One of the previous advantages named can also be a disadvantage. Analogue signals, when moved slightly, lose picture but still have sound available and a fuzzy picture. However, if a digital signal is interrupted slightly, the whole television broadcast goes. This usually means you entirely miss the whole thing while in an analogue signal; you just miss a tiny bit.

And lastly, a Sky Digibox also brings a lot of the disadvantages that a television has, but exemplified. It just makes television more addictive as there's a wider range to choose from.

Summary of advantages

- Gives a much larger variety of channels and shows to pick from
- Allows you to record shows
- Digital feature allows for a much clearer picture in contrast to analogue
- Rewind programs to see something you missed even in a live program
- Other forms of entertainment such as the interactivity and games
- Sky works with any and every phone line
- Better picture than normal Sky and other digital boxes

Summary of disadvantages

- Takes a large amount of money overall to purchase the box, pay a periodical fee and pay for channels
- Satellite is vulnerable to weather and other interruptions outside
- Analogue television gets fuzzy when it is interrupted but still gives off a certain picture or audio whereas digital television is completely cut off and any interruption
- A lot of the same disadvantages having a television brings

Conclusion

Overall, Sky Digital provides a great service. It doesn't have much of a disadvantage and to make the most of watching television, some sort of digital box is expected and Sky is the best of the best. However, Sky+ can be quite expensive to maintain and it does make you even more addicted to watching TV as it gives you a wider range to watch from.

Technology used at school

For technology I use for school, I will be covering the following:

- School computer and censoring system
- Interactive Whiteboard

- Swipe Card Machine

School computer and censoring system

Our school computers run on Windows XP. The thing that sticks out is the censoring system. This censoring system literally censors almost anything. Sites pertaining even to the slightest degree to pornography, piracy, games, chat rooms, forums, criminal actions, proxies and loads of others. With how strict it is, this practically limits every useful site, even those useful in studying. And that's what's special about our school computers and how they run. They also have a variety of programs to use, however, which are extremely useful.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

The main advantage would be the access to any of the computers in all the computer suites with your own password protected account. Every student has a unique login corresponding to their year of joining the school and their full name. They also make a unique password of their choice the first time they use their accounts. This makes most school accounts secure and with this, I can make sure that my important ICT work and other work I use the computers for are all secure and no one can steal my work and credit it as their own. This is extremely important as it can hit me back if someone did as plagiarism.

The computers also are connected to a couple large multiple terabyte hard drives. One of these drives all store personal data and it has been divided to give a quota of 100MB per each computer. This gives enough to store all our work without needing to store unnecessary unrelated objects, thus preventing us from procrastinating in school as we'd usually not have space to download games and such with all our work in here. People are discouraged to put unknown files into their computer account and are warned of this explicitly. This stops people from downloading games or other software and such.

The school computers provide access to usually expensive to acquire programs, such as Adobe Photoshop CS5. This lets us use programs we usually wouldn't have

and be able to teach ourselves how to use these programs. This can be an extremely beneficial skill in the future as the world is heavily modernising and any skill with computer software would be a valuable skill. For me, having access to Photoshop on the school computers have allowed me to advance my photoshopping skills to quite an appropriate degree of success. For example, I can now create banners and logos, something which may be extremely helpful for a small company or business or small task I'm involved in as not a lot of people know how to do so. This gives me the chance to show off my computer skills and to impress people, satisfying me and the customers.

While the school can't afford an expensive anti-virus for all the school computers, they don't have any extremely good anti-virus software as of date. However, they are heavily protected by firewall which is sufficient enough, seeing as how the entryways viruses would usually come in with are blocked. The only way someone could bring in a virus would be from the outside world and on purpose.

The main feature of the school computers would be to simply access the internet. The internet is a vast place with lots of information, sources, knowledge and a place where you can literally find almost anything. However, the school computers have heavily censored the internet. While they usually censored stuff they can justify as being not allowed in school, such as pornography, these censors are usually extremely strict that they censor innocent stuff as well such as resources or research sites. Even Google Translate, which is extremely useful when doing French. However, this also prevents people from obtaining viruses and such from the internet where there's a lot of danger of this happening. If a virus does get transferred to a computer, it can be very fatal as all the computers are linked. So while it may be a bit too extreme and limiting, it helps a lot in keeping the computers safe.

Internet censoring stops people from being distracted from games when they should honestly be working. I'm a person who is easily distracted by any little thing so the inability to play games helps me as much as possible in allowing me to do my work. It also stops people from going on 'dirty' sites, something which is strictly forbidden in school. This keeps our school clean and quiet.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

However, as mentioned, the censoring system is *heavily* flawed. Often, research sites are blocked and it becomes hard to find good sources. Opinions from other people are blocked as they are often classified as 'chat'. Google Translate is also blocked for being classified as a 'proxy'. This makes it much harder to do our French work in the computer suite as the majority of translating sites are labelled as 'proxies'. Sites are also mistakenly labelled as pornography, criminal links, games and other such nonsense. This stops me from being able to do my research work to my maximum ability, having to use something unreliable such as Wikipedia.

The computers also crash quite often. This is because they are low standards and are quite old, especially compared to current technology. We also have to take in the fact that all the computers are linked and thus using the same bandwidth, meaning the more computers in use the more slow they'll get. This is extremely inefficient as it often takes 10 or more minutes to simply log on at the start of a lesson as everyone is logging on at the same time. This wastes our quality lesson time and also makes working on the computers quite slow and difficult.

Computers are extremely restricted. While this is done to prevent trouble, it prevents a lot of normal day computer use from happening. It also makes it harder to deal with errors due to the restricted computer's limited settings. Any small error that could easily be fixed would need the ICT administration office, wasting more and more time.

The school is also too virus -amateur. What I mean by this is that they don't know how to handle viruses. To my knowledge, they don't have any anti -virus software installed. Due to this, they have blocked all uses of USBs and CDs and such. This has limited our use of the computers as we have to go through longer processes to transfer coursework to and from your house and such. This wastes time and makes it easier for us to lose our files.

Summary of advantages

- Free access to a computer suite with a password protected account
- A large hard-drive more than 1TB big which is used to store the whole school's hard drive, allowing each student 100MB of their own space

- Access to lots of different programs that will usually be really expensive
- Is heavily protected by firewall
- Access internet
- Internet censoring system does prevent a lot of viruses
- Internet censoring system also prevents people from being distracted from games
- Internet censoring system also stops people from accessing 'bad' or 'dirty' sites or pictures

Summary of disadvantages

- Censoring system is highly flawed, important sites like Google Translate are blocked
- Research becomes hard to do with a lot of good sources being blocked
- Computers crash really often
- Computers are often really slow due to large number of computers all being connected thus taking a lot of bandwidth per computer
- Restricted computer settings barely allow you to use the computer to its max potential
- A lot of errors can happen that can be hard to fix due to the restricted computer settings
- School is too virus-amateur and thus disallow the use of USB sticks, CDs etc.

Conclusion

Overall, while the school computer system does all it can to stay safe, risk-free and without threat, it goes too far into limiting our actual ICT use. However, it is successful in keeping the school system safe and without any major errors.

Interactive Whiteboard

The interactive whiteboard is essentially a virtual whiteboard that works with a computer to provide a virtual image. This virtual image is sent by a projector onto the whiteboard. You can write with a fake pen to write or guide the cursor or do other things on the interactive whiteboard which is directly connected to a computer. Any pressure on the interactive



whiteboard sends it back to the computer and the image on the computer is put on the interactive whiteboard through the projector and that is how an interactive whiteboard works. It emits an image from a computer to a screen and then allows you to write on the screen which acts in correspondence with the computer. What's special about the interactive whiteboard is in the name, its interactivity. It ditches old methods of learning to introduce new ways and more involvement.

How it affects my needs

Advantages (How it meets my needs)

Different students have different ways of learning. Previously, students would most likely learn strictly through auditory or through videos. However, a lot of students need interactivity to fully comprehend and take something in. That's what the interactive whiteboard does. It replaces linear teaching methods with various learning styles that cater to everyone in the class. It still helps auditory learners but now also visual and kinetic learners. The interactive aspect the whole class go through also make them more conscious of what they're learning. It involves them more directly into the teaching and helps send the information straight into their heads.

It replaces boring classroom lectures, taking notes etc. to computerised activities. Students in the whole class are now encouraged to participate and students don't

idly sit by and take notes, bringing forth subjective learning as some people take notes more while others take nothing in from taking notes or listening to lectures. Interactive learning involves students more, however, and helps them out no matter what their learning style. Kinetic learners learn with by taking action and interacting with the board, visual learners watch diagrams in action on the whiteboard while auditory learners can still listen and interact with everything that's going on. It caters more to everyone. For someone like me, who literally cannot learn anything through watching silently through a video, reading through a book, writing notes or listening to a lecture, actually participating in the lesson helps actually put the facts into my head.

It can also do everything that a projector can usually do. It can put on a video for the whole class, display one thing to a whole class or go through slideshows and such.

It's much more advanced than the typical whiteboard and board pen combination. It doesn't need ink and there's no problem of losing a pen, it simply deals with pressure being applied onto the board which directly corresponds with the data on the computer. It stops the dull lectures of ink on a board and adds a more vibrant display on an interactive whiteboard which helps students remember.

It's also much easier to cater to a whole classroom. Everyone can see what's going on, everyone can partake in the activities such as quizzes, filling in the blanks etc. The whole class is forced to get involved, rather than in taking notes where whoever wants to gets involved.

Disadvantages (How it does not meet my needs)

However, there can be a few problems. Technology isn't as reliable as physical means. Calibration errors use up valuable time and can be a nuisance. These can distract the class and lose the focus on the lesson.

The technology itself also can't be 100% reliable. If the technology simply gets a single fault or stops working, it ruins the whole lesson plan and puts the class to a halt, unless a backup lesson plan not involving technology was planned.

It's also extremely expensive to set up. Schools without the funds would be put at a great disadvantage with inferior learning methods whereas other schools would all be technologically advanced and more modernised.

It's also complicated to learn how to use at first, especially for old-fashioned teachers who were raised and taught with the belief of things coming from a textbook or writing on a board. It can also create problems for the technologically impaired.

The system can also be quite a nuisance and long process to install. The wires have to all be installed, placing a projector, a whiteboard, speakers and wires all joined together to join with a laptop. This can be a long hard process which possibly may need some rebuilding and be potentially even more expensive.

Summary of advantages

- Its interactivity provides new ways to learn
- Involves students more directly into learning
- Replaces boring classroom lectures to computerised activities
- Can also do everything a projector is used for
- Much more advanced than the usual whiteboard and board pen
- No problems of dry ink or squeaking noise
- Much easier to cater to a whole classroom
- Everyone can participate in things such as quizzes, revision and other interactive-based learning methods
- Cater to people who learn in different ways and not just auditory learners i.e. kinetic learners, visual learners

Summary of disadvantages

- Calibration errors waste time and are a nuisance
- Technology may simply stop working which ruins the whole lesson plan and puts the class to a halt
- One fault can easily stop the lesson
- Extremely expensive
- Complicated to learn how to use at first

- Need to install the system into the classrooms
- Need a projector as well as a whiteboard and a computer.
- Need to purchase programs and software that deal and provide interactive learning

Conclusion

Overall, the interactive whiteboard system is a much more modernised and efficient way of learning that caters to a wider range of students and their different learning styles. However, its biggest worry is the price to modernise all schools and the errors that can occur, which would halt a whole lesson if there was even one fault in the technology.