

Darwin Cruz

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Communication Design Theory

In today's modern world, technology is mostly found everywhere. In the 1900's, technology was around but not to the same extent as today. Back then, technology was still a new thing and new ways to evolve. They were changing in terms of communications, for daily use, and even for war. But as time passed, technology was evolving and soon became part of society. It has become a 'normal' thing in society. Some design objects give off information, that some people call them media. As Marshall McLuhan defines it, "all media, means that the "content" of any medium is always another medium" (Marshall McLuhan 1). Marshall McLuhan believed that all mediums have information that helps people and societies. In fact, he says that, "For the "message" of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it introduces into human affairs" (McCluhan 2). And this can affect all types of mediums. Everything from phones to computers, to printers to T.V's. Even something as simple as an electric light, can give off information and be benefitful in human life. Marshall McLuhan uses an electric light as an example because of how simple and useful it can be in people's lives, even several years later after it's 1st appearance in 1879. According to Marshall McLuhan, he says about the electric light that, "The message of the electric light is like the message of electric power in industry, totally radical, pervasive, and decentralized. For electric light and power are separate from their uses, yet they eliminate time and space factors in human association exactly as do radio, telegraph, telephone, and TV, creating involvement in depth" (McCluhan 2). All of these types of media help and evolve humans" (McCluhan 2). He also says, "The electric light is

pure information. It is a medium without a message, as it were, unless it is used to spell out some verbal ad or name” (McCluhan 2). Everyone and every design object has technology involved in it one way or another. Electric lights are just one example of this. It is something so simple but is so useful in it's own way. And there are several design objects that are made to help extend humans and evolve us into a greater society. The electric light is just one example of that.

Although technology does have a lot of benefits, it can also cause some hazards for people. Not necessarily technology hazards, but in terms of problems for individuals and societies. People don't always seem to know what some designs are used for. There could be a lot of thinking and consideration into the object itself and people never notice it. Marshall McLuhan believes in this and believes each medium has content and a message. For example, he says that, “It could be argued that these activities are in some way the “content” of the electric light, since they could not exist without the electric light. This fact merely underlines the point that “the medium is the message” because it is the medium that shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action. The content or uses of such media are as diverse as they are ineffectual in shaping the form of human association and action (McCluhan 2). Multiple design things each have their own use for different things. And each of them give off different information that can be produced differently by people. However, multiple people can take these design objects for granted. Each multiple objects give off information that benefits human life. They can go their whole lives without thinking about these things. Marshall McLuhan doesn't like this and even insults people for not knowing the media. He even says that if people can't see it in something as simple as an electric light, then, “people fail to study media at all” (McCluhan 2).

Technology has also played a big part of graphic design over the years. It is constantly changing and has changed in terms of workplace and produced work. It's role in today's world is to "mold individual creative quirks into standardized tools and palettes" (Armstrong 11). Technology also makes it easier for a designer's workflow. Technology can help communicate with their clients, so they can get a better vision of what the client is looking for. Technology can also help designers access more information and research to help them out with their work.

Before technology was around, artists were able to create many different types of art that impressed society. Artists were always coming up with new ideas and creative artwork that made history. Many of these artworks impacted the art industry and even created several movements, causing new art pieces and artists to be born. In fact, as Marshall McLuhan says, "The artist picks up the message of cultural and technological challenge decades before its transforming impact occurs" (McCluhan 13). However, as technology was starting to come around, artists weren't able to do this as much anymore. Technology was evolving, which caused many people to start using technology as a form of artform. Artists didn't have the "advantage" anymore. They were steps ahead but were now at a "disadvantage". According to Marshall McLuhan, he says that, "For in the electric age there is no longer any sense in talking about the artist being ahead of his time" (McCluhan 13). Since artists now live in a modern day where technology runs the world, an artist's role is to make art that works along with today's technology. When coming up with new ideas, artists need to think about what their art is saying to all different types of people. Some materials or mediums can send a different message depending on how they view the medium within the artwork. And this goes the same for the type of materials they use. They could be sending a message about something, but accidentally send a different message. They need to search and examine multiple mediums and how they influence society. And depending

on the type of artwork, artists need to work along with technology in order to create their artwork the way they want it to come out. “so the artist is indispensable in the shaping and analysis and understanding of the life of forms, and structures created by electric technology” (McCluhan 13).