Communication Renaissance: Environmental Scanning and Futuring in the Composition Classroom

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By David Bailey

Environmental Scanning and Futuring: The Complex, But Bright Tomorrow
Environmental Scanning is the simple act of aggregating news.

History in Science Fiction

Act is dependant on the limitations of information technology

Famous proponents, Issac Asmiov, Ray Kurzweil
The History of a Neglected High Art

THE DEEP PAST

- Scanners and futurist would track multiple magazines and newspapers over time, watching for evidence of coming progress or change.
- Futurology has been met with intense skepticism, yet built the foundation of modern Sci-Fi.
- Stock Market speculation, corporate risk assessment, and even ordinary Institutional Effectiveness all owe a great deal to scanning for their very existence.

NOT SO LONG AGO

- Radio and Television changed things a bit. Yet the appeal of paper sources never quite diminished due to archiving purposes.
- In reality, television is a very biased form of technology, and did not revolutionize communication as much as one may think.
- Scanning and futuring remained an obscure Science due to its inconvenience.
Web 2.0 will change everything

Cloud like systems on the web allow the storage of countless files and articles, all digitized and easy to move and share.

Combine this with customizable aggregation from infinite sources, and you create a place where the ordinary man can practice his own intuition.

The data is available, it is up to individuals to use that information to conduct research and make decisions for any variety of problems.

- This process has not taken place in full, yet.
- The technology has not quite perforated society, until it becomes commonplace, scanners will continue to look like wizards.
- It is up to academia, and Writing and Linguistics, to shape this art and guide a new generation to the inevitable communications renaissance.
The Method, Today

- RSS
- Twitter
- My Yahoo
- Google Reader
In scanning, a variety of topics can be assessed

* Economics
* Technology
* Changing Demographics
* Politics
* Medicine
Environmental Scanning has so much to offer Rhet. And Comp.

It will help us cater to many majors, and possibility define our identity within academia.