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## Now Wear This: Why Will We Work & Share Differently in the Future

As time moves forward, the flow of changes in the way we live, work, and socialize increases. If we look at the evolution of how people have lived, worked, and interacted, it's evident that in the Stone Age it took hundreds of years to develop simple tools and make any kind of advancement. During the Bronze Age, technology allowed faster progress in the development of tools, wares, fabrication, and getting around. As we leap forward to the Industrial Revolution, there were great strides in manufacturing, transportation, electricity, education. And today we have technology that allows us to communicate face to face even when we are thousands of miles apart. International communication has become virtually free, electronic storage of data accessible from anywhere is very affordable, and wireless technology is allowing developing parts of the world to access information or services that were never available to them previously. So the question is what has been lagging behind in this evolution of the way we live, work, and socialize; this is what we will discuss.

Most of us remember the Y2K fiasco. But what caused it? In the early days of digital, storage space was very expensive and computing power so limited that one of the methods used to divvy up space was to store years as only two characters. For example, 1960 was 60. At the time these systems were developed, administrators had some foresight that the information would be valuable for many years to come; the way to extend the range was to set a start date for the system. Let's use 1960 as our start date. What happens is that 60 is interpreted as 1960, 00 is interpreted as 2000, and 50 as 2050. However, systems that did not include this start date found that 00 would be interpreted as 1900. Why is this important to us now? Because there are a tremendous number of legacy systems in use today that were developed over thirty years ago. Legacy issues have plagued Microsoft in its attempt to wean customers from Windows XP, primarily because many legacy interfaces worked well up until this release and then had difficulties beyond that point. As affordable connectivity transforms the digital landscape, Microsoft has finally established that it will no longer support XP in tandem with mobile. Corporations are forced to update their systems, and this evolution empowers companies to make quantum leaps forward in the way services are provided and consumed.

How has the changing landscape affected us? It's done a few notable things. First, financial transactions became easier, personal interactions became more immediate, information more

readily available, working from remote locations more feasible, logistics more fluid. But there are side effects. Out of this revolution, work skills became excessively specialized, loyalty to companies shrunk, the gap between compensation levels widened, entertainment offerings narrowed and, as we are bombarded by data overload, troubling questions have arisen over who or what is a trusted source of information.

The real question is... What will the future look like? There are a couple of things that have to occur, and they *will* occur because, to a considerable extent, the user base drives these changes. Here are my predictions:

- 1) Wearables will be a part of our lives, once they are seamless with our other devices.
- 2) Enterprise class solutions will become more versatile. They will abandon the concept of defining and designing a system that mimics a traditional framework. If they don't abandon this method, innovation will drop and companies will have problems attracting and maintaining talent.
- 3) Businesses will adopt systems that allow the easy transfer of knowledge throughout the organization. The current attempt at these kinds of solutions usually involves Facebook-esque posts intended to share information. In the future, this will be supplemented by transactional systems that allow others to see what's occurring and thus transfer to another employee what they have done. This isn't possible with the current social matrix. As an example of how the system should work: if an employee is promoted, he or she should be able to disseminate work products, communications, notes, contacts, and project histories in a very simple way. This cannot occur with current "shares."
- 4) Workers will desire more flexibility in work hours and types of assignments, and they'll get them.
- 5) Systems will assist users in interacting. While it might be nice to have humanoid robots running around catering to us, what will actually happen is that systems embedded into our lives enable us to make sense of myriad situations. The "robots" will be like self-driving transport vehicles.
- 6) Mixed reality will become a part of everyday life. Mixed reality allows us to interject information into real world environments without being intrusive in the real world experiences of others. Mixed reality devices, such as HoloLens and Google Glass, will empower engineers, designers, service technicians, assembly line workers, food services workers, delivery drivers, training agencies, and many more.
- 7) The Cloud will become a more robust place to store information. New services will enable the categorization and recall of information in a way that becomes manageable. The concept of simple lists and two-dimensional matrices will be replaced by a simplified multidimensional approach to organization. Research shows that a person can only remember hundreds of things. Some might say I know thousands of words; the reason is that words are contextualized. However, people cannot list all the words they

know, and they definitely could not put them in alphabetical order from memory. Contextualization of such systems allows individuals to access over 68 billion things—a lot more than hundreds or even thousands.

- 8) Small and medium-sized businesses will find it harder to compete against larger companies because of the disparity in technical advantages. This will create a new breed of technical services oriented to SMBs that will provide enterprise class power at an affordable price and with enough flexibility that setup won't be cost prohibitive.
- 9) Online sales and services will continue to expand. Systems will be implemented to allow customers to more efficiently track transactions while enabling providers to further entrench customer loyalty.
- 10) Because of a more fundamental transaction base, businesses and service providers will have the same power to advertise to one another.
- 11) Big Data will become just the new norm. The power of contextualization and the flexibility of new software will let every user swim along with the ever rising tide of information. Bridging legacy systems and trying to make sense of it all will become a non-issue.
- 12) ERP, CRM, and HRM will be more fully integrated within transactional systems, thereby creating even more potential for the greater good of an organization.

We could continue to list more areas of change that are emerging from the research at Qikspace. What's most important is that we are at a point in history where our ways of living and working are changing and are going to make our lives better, increase our options, enhance our careers, and enable more of us to benefit from the prosperity these changes generate.

## About Us

Qikspace ([www.qikspace.com](http://www.qikspace.com)) specializes in social collaboration software with a personal relationship management (PRM) component. Qikspace was started as a research project in 2011 the emphasis was the analysis of contextual relevance in relation to human interactions. The result of this research became the platform that is being developed and enhanced today. Our unique philosophical and technical approach has allowed us to create a solution to the complex world of online human interactions and the consequent collaborations.

## About the Author

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