My grandpa recently asked me, “So what’s new my boy?” I replied, “Eh, not much.” Such a lie. If I was truthful I would have said something like, “Basically, the tech niche is a monster devouring every other form of communication. That’s what’s new.”

With that thought in mind, read on to explore some relatively new trends in the communication field which you may or may not find interesting, depending on your niche.

- Everything is becoming a conversation. Pearce and Cronen were correct when they asserted that humans in conversation are the building blocks of society. The increasing popularity of blogs will cause fields such as journalism and marketing to become much more dialectic as receivers group themselves into conversing markets.
- What’s inside is outside. With the onset of consumer generated media, such as video blogs, the intimate will become the public and the singular will become the worldwide.
- Trust is key. As people continue to use social networking technology such as myspace and xanga, they will increasingly acquire information from individuals whom they trust, while disregarding those they don’t. Mass communication will fail to bring the same amount of influence which it previously enjoyed because people will fail to trust it more than sources they actually know.
- Decentralized communication will make corporate messages obsolete. Like it or not, armies of individual employees will use technology to become the voice of every company. The solo singer is dead. Long live the chorus.
- Sadly, the classroom experience will continue to fall to the wayside. UK’s Coventry University is broadcasting its lectures straight to the 3G handsets of its students. The lessons are filmed, whittled down into 15-minute edited segments and sent to the students' 3G phones "so they don't have to get out of bed in the mornings."
- Not all uses of communication technology are beneficial. Workers distracted by email and phone calls suffer a fall in IQ more than twice that found in marijuana smokers, new research has claimed. The study for computing firm Hewlett Packard warned of a rise in "infomania", with people becoming addicted to email and text messages. Scary.

It’s hard to spend much time around Messiah College without hearing the word “community” on a daily basis.

About a month ago, we celebrated the Inauguration of President Kim Phipps. The theme of the event was “Created and Called for Community.” In her Inaugural address, President Phipps acknowledged that community is at the core of our being. We need each other, and God has created us to be in relationship with one another. Humans are inherently communal, with desires to love, care, connect, comfort, and console one another.

How can we create community through communication? By praying for one another, listening to one another, challenging one another, and reaching out to those in need. Instead of engaging in small talk, go deeper. Find out what’s really going on in the lives of those you care about. Write an encouraging note to a friend who’s having a rough week. Honest and ethical communication should be reflected by your words and actions. The way a person communicates both verbally and nonverbally is an outpouring of their character. In order for us to create community, we must start with our communication.
Departmental Search for New Film Professor

The latest buzz around the Communication Department has to do with the recent search for a new professor in Film and Digital Media. Indeed, the lack of a full-time film professor has been felt by film majors and the department alike. The last few weeks marked the end of the search process, and the department plans to make their decision by Thanksgiving break. The final three candidates were asked to give presentations of their work, and all faculty and students were invited to attend. On November 1st, Jonathan Moore was the first to present. Jae-hyun Park gave his presentation on November 3rd. The last candidate, John Reid Perkins-Buzo, presented on November 8th. The new professor will begin teaching in J-term of 2006. And the film majors rejoiced!

On campus opportunities:

Work Study
The Department of Communication is looking for a work study student to replace Jennifer Shaver while she is away for the spring semester. Responsibilities include co-writing the department newsletter (The Communiqué), updating the department website, and various other jobs within the department. The position is 5 hours a week, and pays $6 an hour. The student should have strong writing skills as well as an interest in gaining practical experience in the field of communication. Please contact Dr. Ed Arke at ext. 7063, or e-mail him at earke@messiah.edu for more information.

Job Opportunities

Graphic Designer for MMA
MMA is looking for a part time graphic designer to work as part of the communications team in the Marketing Services division. Responsibilities include developing a variety of communication related materials (print and electronic), and adhering to corporate graphic standards. Applicants must be proficient in major computer graphics programs including Quark Express, Photoshop, and Illustrator, along with working knowledge of print pre-press techniques and requirements. In addition, applicants must possess good personal communication skills and the ability to contribute creative ideas for a variety of design projects. If you are interested in applying for this position, please contact Dr. Ed Arke at ext. 7063 or e-mail him at earke@messiah.edu

Development Officer for EMM
Eastern Mennonite Missions seeks full-time development officer to lead in raising EMM’s financial support. Applicants should: understand fund-raising, communicate and build relationships effectively, motivate and inspire others, have strong mission vision, and understand and work well within Lancaster Mennonite Conference. Position begins January 1, 2006. Contact Jeanette Hess at 717 898-2251 or jeanetteh@emm.org by November 30, 2005.

Resources:
You are probably as incredulous as I am, but there are still geniuses alive today. Someone had the amazing idea to create an online, user-edited encyclopedia. They call it Wikipedia, and it is one of the most effective uses of the new media I have seen. Its 810,000+ articles are created by users and constantly updated by a team of user-editors. The text in each article is linked to related articles so an endless chain of information is readily available. Go to www.wikipedia.com and learn something.