



Islander March 2013 Technology Update

What are we likely to see in 2013?

In the fast moving world of electronics and communications, 2013 promises to continue with the relentless growth and evolution of new devices, new systems, applications and ideas.

Cell phones

The smartphone market is always a leading barometer and in recent years it has come to represent a tsunami of new products and services. It provides a good indication of the state of the industry.

The success and growth of certain manufacturers has seen Samsung emerge as the dominant force. Having taken the top spot from Apple in the smartphone market, it is now set to compete head to head with the fallen star Nokia in the feature phone, low-cost, third world markets.

We will see the on-going jostling for position of the dominant companies. As can be seen by the fall in their share price, Apple are beginning to suffer from having been too dominant for too long. Loyal users and shareholders have got a little fed up of being asked to buy a new but similar product too regularly and by their big brother attitude by making their services inflexible and not portable. They are no longer the new kids on the block.

Research in Motion (RIM) have re-launched their company as Blackberry. I think 99% of the world knew them as Blackberry anyway, so that's no big deal but they have learned a lot and put all that into their new Blackberry Z10 phone which is pretty cool. There has never been a more important release for Blackberry, as the future of the company really rests on whether or not this handset is a commercial success.

Plugging the data drain

The second focus will be the emerging 4G and 4G LTE technologies. From our experience in Antigua this winter with the launch of the new 4G LTE from Digicel, the take-up will only be limited by supply.

It is not lightning fast, but it is faster than your home or office cable ADSL connection. It's simple, easy, flexible, fast, with huge data limits and it's as cheap as chips! We don't think the eventual price in Europe will be quite as low as the launch price by Digicel in Antigua this winter but it will be considerably cheaper than satellite services. To give you some idea the cost of data per Mbyte via

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satellite over a VSAT is around US\$20 and in Antigua via 4G LTE it is US\$0.002. That is 10,000 times cheaper!

There are plenty of other new satellite service developments. The first will start appearing in 2013, but none will be complete by the end of 2013. For the aficionado this includes Ka, Ku VSAT. However we may have some flexible yacht Fleet Broadband contracts that should be available in 2013, which will be ideal for the big sailing yachts.

So, based on the fact that the current 3G/HSPA+ and emerging 4G and LTE technologies are much faster, with higher data limits and at such low prices, we predict that a vessel that moves will now rely on a whole series of different connections. Vessels are already starting to look for multiple connections with a system that allows the faster, flexible and cheaper services to cut in as soon as they are in range. In 2013 this can be managed automatically.

Managed Services

The old business model of the communications industry is of a single provider, such as a single satellite service provider, owning and controlling all of the assets needed to deliver the service. But in the digital world, that model is quickly being eclipsed by approaches where groups of partners collaborate to provide components of the overall service.

Since the quality of the overall service depends on how well these component services, such as VSAT, 3G, 4G, Inmarsat and wi-fi all fit together, creating and sustaining successful partnerships is fast becoming an essential skill for the new overall service provider for 2013.

The component services come from an ever wider circle of providers and may include services from different providers such as numerous 3G and 4G providers, to cover a coastline, such as the Med and multiple VSAT providers to provide global cover, with connectivity, data management and billing from other providers.

What exactly are managed services?

Unlike outsourcing, which often involves simply transferring responsibilities to a third party, managed services are generally a 'black box' approach, where you don't get concerned about the detail of how something is delivered, you just focus on what is being provided. Perhaps the simplest example is an electricity service – all you care about is that you have electricity in your home at the price agreed. You're really not interested in the current, the voltage, the frequency or how the electricity is generated and transmitted. Communications services are another good example, you don't need to know how it works, all you just want to know that you can do what you want to do, when and where you want to use it, and at the price agreed.

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Trends to watch out for in 2013

So with the stage being set for faster and more reliable connection speeds and a new generation of mobile products and services, what will the potent combination of social and mobile bring in 2013?

Your mobile wallet – but don't lose it!

Increasing amounts of our life will be controlled with our mobiles in 2013. One by one, bank cards, loyalty cards, travel cards and boarding passes are being sucked out of our physical wallets and becoming integrated into smartphone software.

This will be very convenient, but losing your mobile would be disastrous.

Social media high-profile prosecutions

Lord Justice Leveson has called for new laws to end what he calls "mob rule" and "trial by Twitter". Expect to see more unsuccessful attempts by politicians and lawyers to tame the internet, but also a gradual realisation that what is said on social media is not beyond the law.

Mobile and social news

A trend to watch in 2013 is the growth of social video services like ThisNewsNow - a mobile-first service with a focus on short viral videos and a new informal style.

Digital addiction clinics?

I am sure there will be new opportunities in 2013 for internet-free rural retreats, or sessions to relearn the art of conversation, reading and quiet reflection.

Mobile controlled accessories

This year the phone will start to control what we see and what we wear. Google Glass and Vuzix are essentially mobile computers in your glasses that take augmented reality to the next stage.

Face recognition linked to Facebook or LinkedIn can provide an instant biography at a party or at an exhibition, saving much embarrassment or providing useful lines for a potential business opportunity!

And for the more flamboyant, there are dresses implanted with electronic displays that project your latest social media updates onto the fabric.

Glass – a key material for the future

In my December column, I suggested you take a look at the Corning Glass videos on YouTube, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Cf7IL_eZ38, where you will see

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how glass will be used everywhere in the future to project information, provide communication, inform and entertain us.

With this in mind we have invited Dr Waguih S. Ishak a Director of Corning Glass, to present the keynote address at the first of our **Future Technology for Yachts** seminars titled **Connecting To Your Future**, at the Automobile Club de Monaco on April 17th. He will present “**A Vision for the Connected World – Glass is a key material for the Future**”.

Wishing you all a well connected 2013!

Roger Horner of e3 Systems

For further information on any of the above, please contact us.

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