

Sometimes it's just easier to use a pencil

April 29 2009, By Craig Crossman

I wonder sometimes how I got along without many of today's technological marvels. The personal computer is the one that stands out most to me but before I get into that, I decided to list some of the technology items that I now take for granted, yet make my life all the more sweeter.

The [cell phone](#) certainly is up near the top of the list. Used to be when I left the house, I was pretty much incommunicado to my family, friends and business associates until I got to the office where I could be reached once again. Today, I can't imagine being so inaccessible yet that's the way it was back then.

I can't watch TV anymore without a DVR. Not being able to pause and rewind live TV when the phone rings or whatever distraction comes along is simply intolerable. Being able to record TV programs automatically or at the touch of a button has become as important as the TV viewing experience itself.

And how did I tolerate film in my camera? I actually had to drive to the local store to get my rolls of film developed and then had to drive back another day to claim them. Today, I use my computer to download the digital images I take with my camera and instantly print them. Or if I have a large numbers of prints, I can simply send them via the Internet and have them waiting for me at my local drug store.

The list goes on and on but let me now focus in on the [personal computer](#). All the ways my computer makes my life easier is way too expansive

for me to write in a single column and quite frankly, I wouldn't want to bore you with it. Suffice to say that my writing, banking, accounting, shopping, music listening and searching for anything all have been vastly improved over how I used to do them before I owned a computer and had access to the Internet. But with all of the countless ways technology makes our lives better, there are some things that are just better done the old fashioned way.

I'll never forget my introduction to this revelation years ago when I was managing a computer retail store. Back then, the trendy computers being sold were the Apple II, the TRS-80 and the IBM PC. An older gentleman walked into the store and began browsing through all the available floppy disc software titles hanging on the wall. Finally after some time had passed, he walked over to me and told me he was thinking about buying a [computer](#) because he wanted to use it to keep score while he and his friends played Gin Rummy at his cabana. I looked at him for a moment and then I suggested that he should just use a pencil and score pad.

Today I continue to see that same thinking. I just saw a bathroom water faucet equipped with facial recognition technology. The idea is that when you set the water temperature to how you like it, the faucet remembers the temperature setting and associates it to your face so that the next time you turn on the water, it's automatically set to that temperature. It will actually do this for every member of your family. Me, I like the water warmer when I shave than when I brush my teeth so I'll just adjust the hot and cold spigot as I use it thank you very much.

I'm not saying I don't like clever innovations because I really do enjoy seeing clever applications of technology into our everyday lives. But sometimes it just gets a bit too ridiculous. You have to draw the line somewhere and all you really need to do that is a pencil.

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