

Technology changes study habits

Generations use different technologies to research information

BY SHANNON WALTER
Staff Reporter

Every morning, basically everyone — most college students, adults, teenagers, professors — wakes up, takes a shower, gets dressed, brushes their teeth and eats breakfast before heading to school or work. It's been the same routine for years. Only now, the morning ritual includes checking e-mail or Facebook, reading the top news websites through RSS feeds, looking up next week's weather and anything else a plugged-in individual could desire. Technology is relied upon for almost everything these days. Phones are not just phones anymore. They are alarm clocks, address books, cameras, and computers.

It hasn't always been this way. Phones used to have long cords requiring the user to stay within two feet of their base, and computers didn't even exist until the 1980s.

Georgia Walter, retired librarian from the Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine and Truman alumna, said she remembers these days well.

"When I was a little girl, I used books for everything."

Georgia Walter
Retired librarian from the
Kirksville College of Osteopathic
Medicine

books for everything," Walter said. "If I had a question, the first place I looked was through my family's set of World Books. In college, I had to go through the card catalogs to find what I wanted, and you couldn't browse. There was a desk at the front [of Pickler], and they got your books for you. You couldn't walk around. Of course, now you can go on the computer and find everything you need."

Walter first began working as a librarian at KCOM in 1969, about a decade before the Internet and the first computers began to appear. KCOM had an arrangement with the University of Missouri School of Medicine to share medical references.

"We could write in a question and they would look it up and send back an answer," she said. "We had a modem and a little dandy keyboard — they

don't even make those anymore. The only problem was that it took so long to get the answers from them that it was quicker for us to look it up in the books ourselves."

Walter lives in Kirksville with her husband, Bucky, in a three-bedroom home. They don't have cell phones, they've never heard of social networking websites and they have a giant remote for their television so that they don't press the wrong buttons. They have a Dell desktop computer that sits in Bucky's office, which Georgia said

she assumes is outdated. He uses it to help pay bills and keep their finances up-to-date. She said she simply uses it to e-mail family across the country.

"Every few days, I write an e-mail to my daughter and granddaughters in California, and I like to be able to keep in touch with them that way," she said.

Walter first learned how to use computers in order to write books. She has written four books about Truman and a short book about the First Presbyterian Church.

"I had to use a typewriter for most of the books," she said. "For the last one, I had a computer and it was so nice to be able to move paragraphs around and make changes."

Jay Self, associate professor of Communication, said he remembers using computers for the first time when he was young.

"I can actually remember, when I was in grade school, having to use a card catalog in the library before computers," Self said. "I think I was still in grade school, maybe junior high, when I was writing a report on computers and I had to go to my neighbor's house to use theirs. My friend's mom said, 'It's so cool that you're writing about computers on a computer.' Now, we'd hear that and laugh."

By the time Self was a graduate student, computers were much more widely used, but most students didn't have personal computers yet. When he got his Ph.D., the Internet was fully developed and easy to use to find almost anything.

Self said he recognizes many

ways that technology, especially computers, have enhanced learning and society for the good. But he also said there are drawbacks to everything.

"It's really kind of cool to see the amount of information that's out there," Self said. "Really, you can get your hands on things that you never would have before. ... I think it's really cool that any information is available with a few clicks of a mouse or a well-searched term. On the flip side, I think the problem is that it has made us lazy."

As a professor, he said he worries about how his students use the Internet for papers and his classes. Wikipedia, for example, is banned from his classes, and he said he warns his students on the first day of class by showcasing his possible reaction should they attempt to use the online encyclopedia as a credible source.

"I warn all my students that if they use Wikipedia as a source for a speech, they will hear me scream," Self said. "That's their cue to duck because I'm going to throw something."

Although he has problems with Wikipedia, he said that, by and large, technology is an asset for everyone. And although he still is waiting for technology to produce jet packs and flying cars, in terms of research, computers will continue to be an asset.

Senior Hank Eddins said the world is increasingly moving straight to the Internet, but that it's not necessarily a bad thing.

"I think that computers are

great in that they can maximize a lot of efficiency. ... It has seriously helped me organize myself and study and get essays written and ideas onto paper," he said. "They are very conducive to the current college experience."

Eddins began at Truman as an art major and discovered that a computer wasn't always necessary for his assignments. He is an interdisciplinary major now and said that having a computer has been very crucial to the success of creating his own major.

When researching for papers, Eddins said the first place he looks for information is JSTOR, a journal database provided through the Pickler Memorial Library website, rather than Google or Wikipedia.

"I'm sure many students share this first step with me," Eddins said. "It releases the burden of having to get up and find my books, which is an awful thing to say. But we are progressing towards this point in which so much of this information is going to be available both online and in book form, which can be viewed as the downfall of physical reading, but I think that it's wonderful to be able to start there."

Eddins said that the loss of his computer or Internet wouldn't faze him unless it meant the loss of all of his music.

"Typically I could care less about my computer, except all of my music is on there," he said. "Music plays such a large part in my daily routine, and I think that would be really detrimental. But past that, I would definitely survive without a computer."

RELAY | Cancer survivor walks almost entire Relay for Life event

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to Agent Orange while serving as a doctor in the Vietnam War. He said he clearly remembers his emotions the day he was given the news.

"[Elisabeth Kubler] wrote this beautiful book about how, when you have a fatal disease, you go through these very stages — anger, denial — I went through the whole thing in about five minutes," he said.

Five minutes, and Lovy said he remembered what he had been telling his patients with post-traumatic stress disorder for years. He had a very simple choice — live good or live bad. It was an easy decision. "I entered seven-day races, I went to Australia, I jumped off the Sky Tower, which is the highest structure in the Southern Hemisphere, and I continued my life, figuring, 'If I die, at least I will have had the experience,'" Lovy said. "And if I didn't die, I will have had the experience. To me, it was a no-lose situation."

Lovy also sought treatment for his disease. He underwent a procedure in which 80 radioactive beads were implanted in his prostate. The procedure was successful in killing the cancer cells, but he said he still deals with a number of complications.

Lovy had a resting heart rate of more than 110 before he started exercising in 1983. He said he was miserably out of shape and could barely make it across a room without getting out of breath.

"I was not looking forward to a long life," Lovy said.

So he began to jog, a little bit each day. He started out with a single lap around the track, and then two and then five. Soon he could make it around 10 times.

"It became an interesting challenge," Lovy said. "I moved up to 5Ks, 10Ks, then marathons, then I did a 24-hour race and then I did six-day, seven-day races, just to see how far I could take it."

Lovy said that during the longer races, he often will run 20 hours on the track

each day, reserving only four hours to sleep each night. He said he mixes about 20 minutes of jogging with five minutes of walking, even today at age 75.

As 2 a.m. rolled around on Saturday, Lovy approached his goal for the Relay. He wanted to complete 188 loops, one for each of the people on the back of his shirt.

Word spread that Lovy was getting close. It was impossi-

ble not to notice the man with the white beard and suspenders who had been speeding around the track all night.

"A few times I thought he was going to run over people, because he was really trucking through," Creason said.

Members from other teams began to cheer Lovy on. On his 188th lap, a group of kids walked with Lovy.

"That gave me some inspiration," he said. "They were nice kids."

After that 188th lap, Lovy took a break. He sat down, grabbed a drink and spent time with some Truman students supporting the cause.

When he had rested a bit, Lovy got back up and started walking. He set a new goal of 202 laps, and he made it. Then he went for 218. Again, no problem.

When all was said and done, Lovy had made it around 232 times.

"[He's] not going to stop," said Bridget Morton, a nurse who has known Lovy for five years. "He's going to keep working on the things that are important to him."

Relay for Life was no different from what Lovy has been doing for seven years. He kept walking. Through cancer, fatigue, hunger and thirst, Lovy continues to walk.

"No, you're not going to live forever," Lovy said. "But it's okay, you have a choice. ... Be nice, have fun, enjoy your life, enjoy other people. I remind myself sometimes when I really get grouchy that, look, this is a gift. Don't screw it up."

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Andrew Lovy
Cancer survivor



Students palpate, or preg-check, mares at the University Farm. They do this every day to check the pregnancy or reproduction stage of the horses

FARM | Students practice procedures on farm animals

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learn how to interact safely with all three species of animals and how to vaccinate and deworm them. Sometimes they must poll the cattle, which means removing their horns so they do not hurt the handlers or the other cattle. They also must castrate the bull calves and the sheep. McKinley said the students are allowed to castrate the calves and the sheep, but veterinarians are brought in to castrate the horses because the process is more difficult.

"Horses are very different from cattle," McKinley said. "You have to sedate horses for castration, and it's a surgical, intensive procedure. With cattle and sheep, it's just a small incision."

McKinley said the best part of the class was becoming familiar with animals she previously had not had experience with.

"My favorite part was learning about the cattle and sheep," McKinley said. "I've had horses my whole life, so that wasn't too interesting for me, but learning to work with cattle was really fun. It's difficult, so it was more of a challenge, and that was fun for all of us."

Glenn Wehner, instructor of the bovine classes, said these hands-on experiences can help agricultural science majors succeed after they leave Truman.

"All the work with the animals is done by students," Wehner said. "We've heard from many of our students when they come back that, whether they've gone to veterinary school, graduate school or the workplace, in most cases they have a lot more hands-on experience than their contemporaries, so that gives them a leg-up."



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