

Amish Technology: Reinforcing Values and Building Community

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The stereotypes about the Amish and the way they use technology make them seem as if they live in the dark ages and refuse to advance. This is not all together true. They are suspicious, but they do not immediately refuse new possibilities. The decisions about technology are carefully considered each time new technology is brought forth. Some technologies may be determined not acceptable if they bring social changes altering or downplaying their religion, traditions, communities, and families. The Amish may use alternate technologies when required for purposes of production, while choosing to remain autonomous (Wetmore, 2007).

Summary

Wetmore (2007) expressed the Amish community has values and unwritten rules called “Ordnung” that complement the whole keeping them together. They also nurture each other as mentors for the purposes of teaching how to live as an individual should as well as continuing the community, the priority instead of any individual more important than the other. Humility is promoted as you can see while they are helping families within and outside of their communities. Changes, including technological options are voted on twice a year within each community headed by each pastor. The vote not only reviews what the community wants, but also how other same communities may view to be incorrect practices, so they are not disconnecting ties with other Amish groups. Amish believe that social change is often tied with technological change (Wetmore, 2007, p. 14). Some Amish communities have electricity even which most of the modern communities aware. The electricity is used off the grid in these circumstances and powered by generators. Transportation using vehicles is possibly allowed when required if they are not the person driving. Marketing using modern technology is also possible if they hire a modern promoter to do so. The policies required for produce may be upheld but will most likely

be altered such as keeping the produce fresh. There may be a single phone for all to use. Most youth who visit the modern waters come back to the community enjoying their “normal” way of life. There is a lot of pressure to change due to regulations and policies from the outside world, the Amish will review and change as little as they absolutely need to while openly making changes that benefit them while keeping them unique from the modern world. Their values will remain most important and have stood the test of time (Wetmore, 2007).

Compare

Multiple journal articles show the Amish are on to something by reviewing social patterns during the design and creation of new technologies. Supporting the idea of reviewing technology as the Amish does, comes Waelbers (2011) discusses how practitioners should test and be responsible for the uses and needs of the technology. He believes unintended outcomes as well as intended outcomes should be reviewed. Gonzalez (2015, p. 4) also supports the Amish’s beliefs. He states that technology could highly create social changes and even says technology is a social activity. Arnaldi and Bianchi, (2016, p. 1) went as far as saying to steer the direction of scientific and technology development towards socially desirable ends.

Contrast

Although research shows it is agreed to review social changes while creating technologies, it is equally reported how it would be a poor choice to stunt the growth of technology by using this judgement alone. Waelbers (2011) suggests to us that we need to be forward thinking. In his report we cannot stop creating something that may have a socially negative response. The users should have a choice to choose well or poorly. As values change and focus more on human needs, production and creating assets alters the technological goals that society has already determined we have to be open to advancement (Gonzalez, 2015). Arnaldi & Bianchi (2016) question limiting the abilities for diversity and variabilities for the people suggesting us to continue creating new

designs regardless of social changes. While the Amish do not allow for technology to let there be an option to sin, the general public gives options for the people to choose to follow the word or not. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (King James Bible, 1769/2017, Romans 3:23).

References

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