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Stay Connected...

Arthur C. Clarke is no Nostradamus. Nevertheless, his predictions on global communications are turning out to be astonishingly true. In 1945, he proposed the theory of global communication, which said that by positioning three communication satellites at predetermined geo-stationary space orbits, people across the globe could be brought under a common communication network. Not just that. He also predicted that people world over would carry universal communication terminals called 'comsoles' that could provide two-way voice and picture communication enabling retrieval of any and all information known to the human race. How true he was. Replace comsoles with cell phones and the picture becomes clearer. Clarke's theory has actually turned into a grand reality.

Cellphones today are not just phones that can be carried around or a status symbol that can be flaunted around. It is an indispensable personal piece of equipment that keeps you connected to the world all the time. Just look at the plethora of possibilities a cell phone could open up soon. One could surf the Net while on the move, check bank balances while on a holiday, send messages while travelling, listen to music on the beachside, trade on stock exchanges on the fly and conference with business accomplices in real time, not to mention its role as a personal organiser.

The advent of Internet undisputedly is the greatest technological development in the history of mankind. But discordant notes about Internet creating sedentary population bereft of social contacts have always been echoed by anthropologists and social analysts. But with cell phones turning into default terminal equipment to access and retrieve information, this perception is changing. The cell phones around, there is no need to run towards a desktop to surf the Net nor is it necessary to lock oneself up in a room to be in touch with the cyber community.

Enabling this transformation are technologies in the form of WAP, WML and a host of other hot technologies. WAP or Wireless Application Protocol is the wireless equivalent of http while WML is the wireless equivalent of HTML. Most leading software companies in the world today are working at developing WAP servers and gateways to enable mobile Net surfing. Apart from WAP enabled WML that would make websites available on mobile handsets, technologies like general packet radio service (GPRS), enhanced data GSM environment (EDGE) and Universal Mobile Telephone Service (UMTS) would create high bandwidths of upto 2 megabytes. This is a large enough bandwidth on a mobile device to view clear video images. With a new low frequency direct wireless technology called bluetooth technology, mobile phones can establish contacts with laptops as well, thus converting laptops into high-speed Net access terminals.

What next? With technology changing so rapidly, predicting the future now may be a risky affair even for sci-fi writers like Clarke.

Stay connected.

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Indian Software Exports - U.S.A. Tops the List

USA is the favourite destination for Indian software exports. More than 60% of all the software exports from India reach the Americas (USA and Canada). President Clinton's visit is expected to improve the India's export scenario vis-à-vis US. In 1998-99, India exported almost 61% of its total software exports to USA

Export to Europe was at 23% and more market opportunities in Japan, South Africa, Canada, France and Middle East were discovered. The six OECD countries (U.S.A, Japan, U.K., Germany, France and Italy) together have almost 71% of the market share of the worldwide software

market. Interestingly, India's exports to these countries is also almost 79% of its total software exports.

In the coming years, software companies in India are expected to strike quite a few deals for joint ventures and strategic alliances in Europe. The trade with European nations is growing rapidly, especially with new opportunity in 'Euro' currency solutions. Over the next two years, software exports to many countries in Latin America, West Asia and Australia is also expected to increase.

The new markets being vigorously explored include Korea, South Africa, Latin America and countries in Eastern Europe. U.S.A. continues to be India's largest export market and would continue its leadership position. To increase software trade with Japan, Nasscom has launched special program called NINJAS (Nasscom's India Japan Alliance in Software). Recently, Nasscom has also signed a software pact with Israel.