

*Address by Martin Keating • Southeast Tulsa Rotary Club*

Thank you, Bill, and thank you, fellow Rotarians.

If you had the pleasure of making up a session at the Rotary Club of Tulsa a few years ago when I was the sergeant at arms (or "Sarge," as I was lovingly and reverently known), you may remember that I always started my gig with this:

"All right, Rotarians, listen up!"

Today, I have a story that richly deserves that opening line, so...

All right, Rotarians, listen up!

A massive change is coming in the way the world communicates. It's a tectonic shift that could well be bigger and vastly more significant than the Industrial Revolution and the Internet combined. A new, trillion-dollar industry is being born, and we here in Tulsa are at its very epicenter.

My briefing today is entitled, "We live in a 3D world. Why don't we communicate that way?"

Well, we're about to, and I'm going to show you by answering two questions:

- (1) What's coming? and
- (2) How will it affect every human being on earth?

Rumor has it that, back in 1899, U.S. Commissioner of Patents Charles Duell declared that everything that could be invented had been invented. Turns out that's an urban legend, but it rang true because some people doubted (and still doubt) the limitless creativity of the human mind. Current technology will shrink the doubters' ranks even further. It waits for no one. It disrupts, it sets new pathways, and it simply leaves some people behind. But that only proves the magnificence of what we can imagine and fashion.

First question: What's coming?

Imagine being able to see and talk with people anywhere in the world as if they were right in front of you. Real-time, 360-degree, full-color images, via a simple and portable device as small as a cell phone. You won't be able to tell the difference between the real and the replication.

When that happens, and it will, it will revolutionize or replace all existing forms of electronic communications, including television, telephones, and personal computers. Forget voicemails, pagers, and needless travel. All gone, like the carrier pigeon. In short, no more business as usual.

There's never been envisioned a more dramatic or all-encompassing advancement in human communications. It will forever change the world, and it lies just ahead. Ten years from today, the names of billion-dollar new technology companies not yet started, or just getting off the ground, will be household words.

Second question: How will it affect every human being on earth?

Your imagination is your magic carpet to our astonishing future.

Imagine

...bringing your family home for a holiday and visiting with everyone around the table, even though they remain thousands of miles away.

...sitting with your friends on the 50-yard line at the Super Bowl in, say, Tampa, when you're in Beijing.

...admiring a brand-new car in your garage, even though it hasn't yet been manufactured.

...discussing business with associates on a plane to Tokyo while you're flying to Paris.

...enjoying a live play from inside the theatre on Broadway, but you're in a Sydney hotel.

...personal golf lessons from Tiger Woods who appears as real as if he were standing next to you; a surgeon at Johns Hopkins beside and guiding the hand of a medical student in India; astronauts en route to Mars sitting around a fireplace in the Alps; breathtaking armchair voyages around the world; and a million other applications of crystal-clear 3D transmissions in our tomorrows.

And those tomorrows will be the fulfillment of ventures underway today.

At 3DIcon, we're one of those ventures. I can't speak for others in the industry, but I can give you a snapshot of where we are in building the future of 3D communications. We're a public company, on the Bulletin Board, and we're already a leader in this pursuit. Some say we're THE leader.

Over the next five years, there will be hundreds of companies expanding the 3D horizon. Competitors, yes, but also collaborators. The territory is vast.

Right now, the 3D communications revolution is being fashioned in university labs and in home basements. Most remains pure research, and most is still 2D simulation of 3D. Our research is being led by the University of Oklahoma, both in Tulsa and in Norman, and it is tightly focused on accelerated commercial development of pure 3D outcomes. The goals of OU's research are to produce patentable and copyrightable intellectual property, to produce proof-of-concept technology that demonstrates the viability of that intellectual property, and to assess opportunities for manufacturing technological products in Oklahoma and elsewhere.

Today, we're in the third phase of what we hope will be a very long relationship with OU. We've added to the funding and extended our current sponsored research agreement and expanded its scope from electrical and computer engineering to include collaboration with several other disciplines. We are looking at even wider vistas with the University for additional 3D applications. 3DIcon owns the exclusive, worldwide marketing rights for all commercial, government, and other applications for new intellectual property covered by its agreement with OU.

The University of Oklahoma has made significant progress in the research field of 3D display systems. We expect to see more and accelerating progress in intellectual property development and continued work on building demonstrable prototype systems with these emerging technologies. Then, of course, come the marketing efforts.

Our "next-generation" 3D display technology should be well suited for such industries as retail, manufacturing, entertainment, construction, healthcare, and the military. We're still assessing our role in disseminating these incredible intellectual properties. It'll be an evolutionary path and not a straight one. Direct retail sales or licensing? Paper or plastic? This is a brand-new industry. There is no template for us to follow. We are literally blazing a new trail.

In addition to everything else I've mentioned, imagine eye-popping outdoor advertising, 3D games, and air traffic control freed from the flat two-dimensional radar screen. Think TSA, the Transportation Security Administration, and full-color, can't-hide-anything baggage inspection. The list of users encompasses the world and is probably endless.

So, let me wrap up.

A lot of people have said we were simply lucky to have stumbled onto this idea. Perhaps, but there's a bit more: I remember a great quote: Luck is when preparedness meets opportunity.

I joke that when we started, few people could even spell "3D," let alone explain it. In 2000, a Google search brought up a few thousand sites mentioning 3D. This morning, it was 373 million! And 99 percent of the hits are still to 2D sites that feature 3D simulation. In five years or so, it'll be the reverse. Talk about timing. It's the perfect marketing storm for a wondrous technology.

David Ross Boyd, the first president of the University of Oklahoma, was a mail-order hire. Over a hundred years ago, the distinguished educator traveled by train to Norman, Oklahoma (Oklahoma Territory at that time), expecting to find a great institution. He thought he would be taken to some beautiful campus with gothic buildings and flower gardens. Instead, when he got off the train for his first visit, he was surrounded by a flat, dusty prairie. For miles in any direction, there was not a single tree, not even a tall shrub. Not one paved street. There were eleven students, operating out of a three-room building. THAT was the University of Oklahoma. There stood David Ross Boyd in the middle of an open field that went on forever. In front of an increasingly nervous group of businessmen who had brought him to Oklahoma, he turned around, slowly, full circle. After a deafening minute of silence, Boyd put his hands on his hips and announced, "What possibilities! What possibilities!"

We live in a 3D world. Why don't we communicate that way?

What possibilities, indeed!

There you have it: my look into the not-too-distant future.

Time to leave. Thanks for listening.

*Let's go change the world...together!*