

## Future of TV: Part 2

In TV's Future, You'll Be In Control

Dave Friedman, August 2009

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A few weeks ago, we looked at the changes in TV we see arriving in the near-term -- namely, technology that is here, but has yet to see its full potential reached. Now, in our mini-series of articles on TV's fundamental shift to a digital infrastructure, we get to the meat of the plot.

Exactly how dependent are we on TV? We'll specifically address the key findings from Razorfish's recent TV study, and then offer a prediction of what this medium will look like in 10 years.

(Special thanks to my colleagues Andy Pimentel and Joe Crump who conducted the study and shared their findings at the recent Cannes International Advertising Festival.)

### The Study: Today's Couch Potatoes.

We start our examination of the future of TV by taking stock of where we are today. What behaviors surrounding this beloved medium are in the very DNA of TV? To find out, Razorfish embarked on a study broken into three parts: Deprivation, Youth and Technogeeks.

**Part 1: Deprivation:** In this experiment, we wanted to see what it was like for the average American family to live without TV for an extended period of time, as a way to gauge how important it is in our collective daily lives.

It was a simple concept: eight average American families, no TV for a week, and we'd pay them each \$350 to keep photo diaries of their experience.

Then, we got a call from our researchers. No one was going for the study. We reduced the timeframe by a couple of days and tried again. Still, no takers. After a few more tries, we asked the question: How long would it take for a family to be willing to give up TV for \$350?

*The answer? Just 2 days.*

The study had determined its own headline: Three days without TV was too long, a week was unimaginable.

**Part 2: Youth:** We interviewed kids who are most tied to interactive convergence, meaning they participate in digital activities like gaming, and have no sense of distinction

between short-form content (five minute video) and longer-form content (30 minute sitcom). We asked them to draw out their vision of what TV should be.

One of the most interesting themes from these findings was that these youth believed TV should be able to react to you – for example, offer an appropriate viewing suggestion based on your mood. What was most important to this audience though? Portability. No matter where you go, whether it's your mobile device, your hotel room in Shanghai, the screen on the back of the seat on a plane, you should be able to get your personalized TV experience -- whatever that is, wherever you want.

**Part 3: Technogeeks:** This last part of the study revolved around people commonly referred to as “bleeding-edgers” or “early adopters.” This group is the segment of the public who are comfortably ahead of the technology curve in screen-based entertainment.

For example, one woman in the study could commonly be found VJing (having friends over to view videos from her Apple TV). Another man streamed the NBA finals from his Slingbox to his phone while he was at an amusement park.

One of my favorite examples came from a woman who called up The Wiggles videos on YouTube based on her two-year-old's requests of songs. In this case, YouTube is really just one voice-recognition code away from a two-year-old becoming able to navigate the site.

Ultimately, we've determined that TV is going digital and portable. In other words, it's getting “Internetty.” So, what do we think it will look like 10 years from now?

## In 2019, TV Will Be...

- ➔ **Persona-based:** TV will know who you are, and what you are watching, based on a profile you (and your behaviors) define. Maybe you enjoy animal programming (on Tuesdays)—the TV will know this information. For instance, on Tuesday, when you get home, the TV will suggest that evening's documentary on cheetahs.
- ➔ **Channels as brands, not numbers:** The concept of channels as numbers is a thing of the past. Instead of a channel guide, you will see an interface with options like “Lazy mode” (show me something that I might like based on previous selections), Trends (think real-time Nielsen ratings), Friend Networks, Search, Mood, Timeline (how long you have to watch), etc.

- **People become channels:** People will become channels. Consumers will subscribe to their content streams, and many people will make money simply from being influential.
- **TV—your television—is portable:** TV will be portable and live in the cloud. Wherever you are, whatever device you are using: laptop, mobile phone, screen on back seat of a car, in your hotel—you'll be able to watch your own personal channel.
- **TV is transactional:** Links to purchase items via real-time auctions will exist. *Oprah's* "My Favorite Things" show might include a real-time review of each product by your friends and the public, and the items will be available for purchase. The *Oscars* might team up with *InStyle* magazine and link to dresses similar to the red carpet styles that are available for purchase (and searchable by price range).
- **Content is viral/Maps trends:** Whether it's the news, the latest *SNL* Clip, the NBA Finals or YouTube videos of protests – TV content will be viral. Popular shows, clips and user content will be cropped, mashed, and shared. Some channels will track global trends of what is the most watched segment of the day.
- **Content is deconstructed:** Content will be served in a dozen new ways—all on-demand. A viewer will be able to "log in" and see that 14 of her friends are watching the YouTube channel of her high school. Or she can view her bookmarked shows alongside a list of her friends' suggestions. Viral videos, news shows, funny ads, movies etc—you'll be able to choose the combination to make your own show. Think "America's Funniest Home Videos" (as determined by you and your friends).
- **Content is truly interactive:** Capabilities for commentary and gaming will be built-in to our TVs. A viewer watching *SportsCenter* might see a ticker on the screen displaying updates on the players in his fantasy baseball team. He'll watch as one of his friend's shortstops has an error, and then send a quick IM over the TV to gloat.

Augmented reality will change the face of gaming. For example, when a pitcher specializing in knuckleballs enters a game and warms up, you can pass the time by swinging and trying to hit a knuckle ball in your own home.

It may be sooner than 2019.

Many technologists say that it won't be a decade until the scenarios described above become reality, especially since much of this technology is already in existence.

**Here are some of the fully-cooked elements around today that will help move this paradigm shift along:**

- Hulu-snacking, choosing your own “prime time.”
- Project Natale—full body motion capture, facial recognition. Your body becomes the controller for games.
- Boxee and Apple TVs. Browsing content in new ways.
- Facebook and *CNN* (e.g. during Obama’s inauguration) demonstrating the power of TV when combined with your social graph.
- Twitter trending topics.
- TiVo ads, and T-commerce (ordering a pizza through Tivo’s interface).
- On-demand Netflix and Amazon movies.

## Conclusion

So, what will this mean for marketers and advertisers in the decade to come? What happens to the :30 second spot? How will brands get their messages across? What will become of them? Will they survive? The dramatic conclusion to this series in next month’s *Chief Marketer*. Stay tuned

## About the Author



David Friedman has spent the last 20 years helping companies build stronger businesses through the use of digital technology. Named President of the Americas in May 2009, he is responsible for Razorfish operations in North and South America as well as its Global Solutions Group. He continues to build the agency’s presence and capabilities, including sponsoring the development of its EDGE analytics platform and overseeing its expansion into Latin America. He is regarded as an industry thought leader, providing commentary on a wide range of marketing topics and penning a monthly column for *Chief Marketer*.

He previously served as president of Razorfish’s Central Region from 2004-2009 leading an era of significant growth. Prior to his role as Central president, David managed a number of practice groups, including Consumer Products and Retail practices. This followed his role as head of the Global Strategy Practice at legacy company Scient. He joined us in 1999. David joined us from Accenture, where he served as associate partner working in Strategic Services. He holds an MBA from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business and a BA in Economics from Cornell.

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Razorfish is one of the largest interactive marketing and technology companies in the world. With a demonstrated commitment to innovation, Razorfish counsels its clients on how to leverage digital channels such as the Web, mobile devices, in-store technologies and other emerging media to engage people, build brand loyalty and provide excellent customer service. The company is increasingly advising marketers on Social Influence Marketing™, its approach for employing social media and social influencers to achieve the marketing and business needs of an organization. Its award-winning client teams provide solutions through their strategic counsel, digital advertising and content creation, media buying, analytics, technology and user experience. Razorfish has offices in markets across the United States, and in Australia, China, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom. Clients include Carnival Cruise Lines, MillerCoors, Levi's, McDonald's and Starwood Hotels. Visit <http://www.razorfish.com> for more information, and follow us on Twitter at @Razorfish.

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