

Archivist Account #1:

Communication has been around ever since man could first speak. There is around 6,500 languages spoken across the world and face to face speech was the primary mode of communication until technologies were able to advance. In order to convey messages to one another, man has continuously tried to improve upon this technique to make it the fastest mode as possible. Once messages began to be written, the spread of communication was able to spread even faster.

Advances in transportation greatly improved the speed at which communication occurred. Originally man would travel from place to place on foot to spread the word, and then man would send messengers to deliver messages by word of mouth or by written words. As man was able to train horses and animals, transportation would be faster creating faster ways to deliver messages. Around 500 BC and on, horses were able to provide swift transportation as the fastest mode to deliver messages. Especially as roads were able to advance from the 2nd to 11th century were able to speed up transportation with good road conditions.

Pigeons were also another way animals were able to help facilitate communications. Domesticated pigeons were first developed in Ancient Egypt in the 11th century that the idea that the birds would fly straight home from wherever they had traveled to. The scrolls attached to the birds would be able to transfer messages and carry the news of the owners.

Later into the 1400s printing became more prevalent as printing presses which was able to spread swiftly so all over the world would be able to start printing which lead to mass communications. These early ones were able to print books and provide rapid printing of pamphlets. In the 1600s, printing became more popular as a means of news to spread information much quicker and spread all over Europe. Postal mail became ever more common during this time period and was rapidly expanding as a communication source.

The telegraph was created in the late 1700s/early 1800s. This was utilized along with the Morse code to send messages across telephone lines. This technology laid the groundwork for the later inventions of the telephone and internet. The Morse Code was used as it was able to give letters a different representation to be able to send across distances. This was able to rapidly send messages electronically without using actual transportation to physically send the message. Rather than taking days to weeks through the postal service in transportation the messages would land at the other telegraph station almost instantly.

After this, Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone in 1876, which was a great invention through which people were able to speak to each other over telephone lines electronically. The technology has since evolved dramatically from the candle stick(1900-1930s), the rotary(1930-1960s), the push button(1963-1980s), then to cordless phones(1980s-2018), and eventually to cell phones(1980s-2020). As the telephone became increasingly advanced, it began to include other features. Examples of these advancements are the inventions of the answering machine, caller ID, camera, keyboard, and internet capabilities.

The cell phone's addition of the keyboard changed communication from allowing text messaging rather than only phone calls. This shift from calls to texts changed the mode of communication back to written forms rather than verbal disconnecting man humans from others because there was a screen interface between people communicating.

Quickly during the 2000s the cell phone began to turn into a miniature computer mostly through the help of Apple technologies. Apple began building computers in 1976 and released its first iPhone in 2007. This phone introduced precise touch screen capabilities and was unlike any other phones in the past. These iPhones had new models released every two years with features that were able to advance

each time like better camera quality, rapid web browsing, text messaging, and the use of applications (better known as apps). Apple nearly dominated the market in which almost every person had the same Apple technology and were able to all understand the use of everyone else's phone.

Apple products began to dominate the market through the iPhone, the Macbook, the iPad, and Apple Watch. All of these products used the same technology to operate so that the average person can be connected at all times and are able to contact each other immediately through iMessaging. Society became more focused on communication ever than before and became attached to their devices as a necessity for efficiency in common society in the 2010s.

By 2018, nearly anyone has a working home phone anymore, and most land lines became obsolete. Everyone uses their mobile smart phones and their number is attached to their identity as its a singular phone, not a family phone anymore. Communication has become the fastest it has ever been as people are able to send messages all over the world instantly. People have become so attached to their phones that communication lives through the screen of their devices and people shy away from talking in person. By 2019, cell reception was a little shaky during this time. More phone calls would just drop, and messages just wouldn't be able to send through. Many consumers believed that the cell companies needed to update their equipment, but in reality minor solar flares were hitting the earth's atmosphere causing satellites to weaken and drop calls.

The Great Solar Flare of 2020. The earth really moved back into the dark ages during this year. March 10, 2020 the largest solar flare ever was released from the sun and hit the earth in a matter of seconds. This solar flare knocked out the entire power grid and all satellites in the atmosphere incinerated. The world was disconnected from all electronic devices and was in complete darkness. Modern, developed countries became crippled as citizens were unsure how to live without technology and without communication. The government realized the major issues and began setting up power lines and more renewable energy sources to provide citizens with the basics of power like heating, cooling, and just enough to power some household appliances. Communication was still at a lag. The news stations and government was unable to reach everyone in a swift manner because they couldn't transmit across radio signals or other methods like phones that had become so common previous to this.

The postal service, who had been declining in its use previous to this began to skyrocket. The most effective form of communication after the great solar flare was through letters by the postal service. Communication standards dropped dramatically lower as it still takes a considerable amount of time to transport letters back and forth rather than getting messages instantly. This decreased productivity and efficiency around the world due to the lag in communication. Then by 2025, the government has be able to recover some, but very limited cell service in order for officials to be able to do their job more swiftly.

It is now 2030. Almost 10 years after the great solar flare and things have struggled to improve. The world has been using the postal service as a major means of communication as it is unsafe to release new satellites into the atmosphere. Cell phone companies and carriers have gone out of business and most companies selling major electronics have decreased immensely down to only the rich. Apple has just released a spread into the Times about a potential new technology that would draw people out of this dark age of communication back into the future.

Archivist Account #2:

From the moment humankind was able to speak, up to the 21st century, people have developed increasingly advanced methods of communication. With regards to modern technologies such as smartphones, video chat communications, and even exchanged data, sending messages to the people in our lives has become much more impersonal, and users of these technologies have been much less in control of when and how their messages get to their desired destination. Humans have become increasingly dependent on the internet and data as communication. Due to the massive solar storm that wiped out most forms of modern satellite communications, humans have been forced to realize this reality. We have been set back many years, and have resorted to using relatively outdated communications technologies, at least until global networks are reestablished and are made available to Earth's citizens.

It was predicted that in 2013, 5 billion gigabytes of data was being generated daily, and that the amount of worldwide data would reach four zettabytes, approximately the capacity of 62.5 billion 64 gigabyte iPhones. By the time of the solar storm of 2020, global data grew to be almost 8 times larger than that of 2013. The instant the storm hit on March 10, 2020, about 85% of that data was completely lost, along with all long-distance communications, as data centers and poorly equipped satellites were overloaded from the power surges caused by the storm. Most government data centers, as well as those for larger corporations, were already designed to combat nuclear EMPs and solar storms. Therefore, lots of crucial data for multiple countries' infrastructures were unaffected by the initial blackout. Despite NASA's attempts (as well as organizations that could afford to do so, such as Apple, big banks, governments, and other scientific organizations) at shielding their satellites and power grids from magnetic fluctuations, as well as NOAA's attempts to predict the solar storm to take precautions before it hit Earth, satellite communication networks were completely knocked out along with the power, and most of the world did not have enough time to react. The amount of connectivity ordinary citizens once had was reduced to virtually nothing within just hours.

Most people had abandoned their landline telephones by 2018, but after most electrical grids were brought back online in 2022, this became the fastest way to communicate, setting us back to early 20th-century communications. In 2025, some satellites were able to be recovered but so few of them were online that most were reserved for government agencies so that they could manage the crisis more efficiently. Other satellites that were already in production prior to the storm have been since launched into space, but many are needed to be rebuilt from scratch, which will cost years and millions of dollars, so these are likely to also remain government and corporate properties for the years to come. Many citizens reverted to telephones, while most others began using the postal service as the primary method of communication. People were able to get back in touch with each other, but on a much more personal level, and not as efficiently as before. More energy has been returned every year, but functioning at the same scale that the world was used to before has not yet become reality again. Cell phone companies are now obsolete, but large companies that were able to sustain themselves through the crisis are looking towards new alternatives of communication.