

## Wendy's View – The Technology Enabled Future



### Virtual Reality – The New Wild Wild West?

Recently I met up with a friend who was in the gaming industry for most of his life, and we discussed virtual reality (VR) - should it or shouldn't it and when will it become a reality. We agreed that the technologies necessary to make virtual reality a reality are already here, they are just too costly for the mass market right now. Somewhere in the depth of our military, soldiers are training in VR. The fact is just because we can create virtual reality, should we develop it for the mass market? Every time I have these types of discussions, the answer has always been 'if we don't do it, someone else will'. So, VR is coming whether we like it or not, just like serious artificial intelligence (AI, Terminator?), we'd better get ready!

VR to me is experiencing the Internet instead of surfing the Internet. We will be immersed in the world that we create with the difference being that we know we are in the 'Matrix'. Imagine being able to climb up Mount Everest, see the world from the mountain top, feel the triumph, the cold, the pain, breathing in the thin air, yet knowing that you won't die should disaster hits. Or, you and your friends create an Avatar like planet that only your group can explore. For those who always want to visit Paris in the spring can just go to the VR Paris anytime and it would be spring, summer, autumn, or any season and anyway you like it... It is like using your imagination to weave a perfect story that you can experience. Or you and the 'subscribers' can experience a wonderfully written story - the new breed of programs. This sounds wonderful until it isn't. What would the generation of kids growing up in the VR enabled world be like? Would they still want to visit the wonders in the physical world? Would they be isolated and just stay in the basement all the time? How does one manage and police the cyber bullies? Worse yet, since you can assume any look and feel in this virtual world, how do you manage your identity and ensure it's not stolen especially when commerce is enabled? Furthermore, how would people behave in this new VR frontier? Is this going to be the new wild wild west?

I think having your virtual assistant accompany you in the virtual world would be an excellent idea, especially for younger people. It's like you are Captain Kirk with your own Spock, he provides the sounding board to help guide you through this uncharted territory. Stay tuned...

Please tell me what you think and if you have interesting topics that you would like to share. Tweet to us at #techupforwomen, #techenabledfuture, #techenabledworld.