Break Out Groups from the Robots & Avatars Forum – 25th November 2009

Break Out Group 3

Connectivity Processes

- Is the conversation on connectivity solely about the internet, when texting still seems to be the most widely used form?
- Digital connectivity is vital to our everyday lives we feel lost/ isolated/ helpless without it.
  We talked about how we feel when our phones break!
- Both sides of the connection need the same infrastructure to be connected. This is limited by the technology available and the cost of owning that meaning that only a certain, privileged, section of society can experience it fully.
- Will a move towards paid for content on the internet limit connectivity?
- We need to remember that connectivity refers to the emotional and physical as much as technology or processes.
- A more natural experience in the interface with connectivity platforms would make people more comfortable and help to persuade people to use it more.
- Can we move connectivity forward by investing in the infrastructure or is there a limit to what it can and should achieve?
  This question arose from an article related to mobile phones all having gps, so you can use applications to know where all your friends are without having to directly contact them. This led to a conversation about a Big Brother style society and whether that was desirable.
- How much is too much connectivity? We all need down time.
  Following on from the above point we started talking about how tiring it is to be connected all the time – all day at work or school and then all evening for pleasure. None of us were in favour of being constantly connected for privacy (above point) and mental health issues.
- We all have emotional connections with technology – assign them personalities.
  We started talking about the Asian belief of a spirit in inanimate object (this had come up earlier in the Forum day) and moved on to talking about coaxing our phones, computers or printers when they don't work as though they were people and that would alter their functionality/ behaviour.
- Platforms such as Facebook are good for keeping in touch with people far away by being able to see what's going on in their life. However it doesn't necessarily mean you are fully connected to them all the time as it can be passive – i.e. looking at pictures of other people or reading what people have written on their walls without actually participating yourself.
- One positive of connectivity is the lack of isolation it creates. This is particularly useful in old age or for those who are housebound.
- A negative of connectivity is the inability to separate your personal and professional life. Does this force an online "split personality" where you have one profile/ name for professional and one for personal? What are the implications on identity?