

The Experiencers

This is your last job

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Up until today, the Intermesh Architects were critically responsible for overseeing that all the network channels were fully operational and tested for robustness; that ports were available in every household, and otherwise spaced out on a regular grid covering every city on Earth. From now on maintenance would be automated, and except for the occasional emergency call, they would not need to show up for work on a regular basis ever again.

Today, Intermesh Architects all over the world were packing up their things, cleaning out their desks, and taking in their last dusty breaths of office life. Today was the day they would join the ranks of the Experiencers. In fact, it was their very job that guaranteed this day would come – that sooner or later they would also be up for the Transition, in succession to all the other jobs. From this day forth, their full-time job requirement would be solely to Experience.

New experiences came out at a blazing rate that itself was increasing, according to the Law of Accelerating Returns. An experience was built to satiate the senses, to inspire a human mind to produce new thoughts and to make novel associations. The experiences of the early days resembled roller-coaster rides, meditative states, wilderness treks, drug highs, extreme sports, and the like. Later, the sheer variety and complexity of experiences continued to exponentially increase. For a human mind, a new experience became the basis for a new set of associations, that when plugged back into the Intermesh, seeded ever more new experiences. Once the gears of this perpetual intelligence machine were set in motion, there was no stopping it. Armed with the associations of all of Earth's 15 billion inhabitants, the ideas and meta-ideas that spewed forth allowed for unprecedented innovation. One by one, the jobs that had once evaded mechanization (under the false pretense that they required feats accomplishable only by the human intellect) fell into the hands, or rather perceptrons, of the self-assembling minds. Wave after wave of people left their jobs and entered the Transition on the road to becoming the Experiencers. Nevertheless, humans remained essential to the Intermesh. They were its fuel.

The unique associations produced by a human mind are a priceless resource that had begun to be tapped in the very early days of the Internet, via crowdsourced encyclopedias and community-tagged photo collections. As new devices and tools for capturing, recording, and synthesizing thoughts, ideas, and

events continued to emerge, uploading all of one's experiences became a real possibility. Uploading became ever more convenient and more frequent with network ports available around every corner and in every household, until what had once been the Inter-net had become a very dense Inter-mesh.

Humans, being fallible records of past facts and events, could nevertheless make the leaps of reasoning and inconceivable associations that no computational system was capable of. Here, a symbiosis was born. Give a machine a task, and it will be repeated indefinitely with perfect memory and precision. Show a person two things, and he will find a way that they are related. Use the machine to house and process the facts, and the human to connect them: each human brain providing unique paths between distant concepts; each providing a distinct set of connections. Find the shortest path between any two pieces of knowledge in the world, and a new concept is born. Find the most efficient solution to any problem by harnessing the experiences of billions of Experiencers, and you have the throbbing, pulsating, dizzying power of the Intermesh: the engine that reconstructs the world and the experiences within it every second of every day.

The exponentially growing number of experiences perfectly guaranteed that no two individuals could ever have the same set of experiences, and thus, that each inhabitant of Earth housed a unique, continuously expanding collection of associations in his or her head. And every single association was carefully uploaded, logged, and tracked in the denseness of the Intermesh. Not even a sliver of an idea, thought, dream, emotional upswing, metaphor, heuristic, was lost. All helped form the mesh of connections, the Global Cloud knowledge, that allowed for the planning and construction of every object on Earth, every new experience, and in turn, every new self-assembling mind. The Intermesh reached further and accomplished more with every passing day.

The world today was not the world of yesterday, shaped and reshaped by the 15 billion Experiencers and their unique associations. The set of experiences available had exceeded what the human mind could fathom – the Intermesh had succeeded in surpassing the human imagination. With every passing day, the duration, complexity, and detail of the experiences available was increasing. Also increasing were the number of discontinuities that the Experiencers had begun to notice. Their experiences were losing interpretability. Then, there came a day when fifteen or so billion people all around the world were unable to make sense of their experiences. This perpetual intelligence machine had finally circumvented its fuel source.