

# A VISION OF THE FUTURE...

## Year 1 - *A Golden Age of Information Resources*

Campus Calgary Digital Library (CCDL) is a success! The university recognizes the importance of information literacy and fully integrates it into courses - students claim more satisfaction with their degrees and graduate students take less time to complete their dissertations and theses. Librarians, archivists, curators and museologists are embedded in every department. The integrated Information Resources (IR) model and CCDL are emulated by many other learning institutions.

The semantic web starts taking shape. Various artificial intelligence systems emerge, organizing virtually the massive amounts of online information available. Beta versions of smart search engines appear. These look at retrieval patterns of information to create relational models, eliminating the need to learn controlled vocabularies, limiting interfaces, Boolean logic, and even where a topic might fit within a discipline. All new print materials are tagged with radio frequency IDs and are locatable using cell phone embedded Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

## Year 10 - *The Google Era*

In the face of an impending world energy crisis, print publishing falters and Google successfully petitions for changes in copyright. It finishes digitizing every book and after purchasing The Scholarly Journal Archive (JSTOR), all journal articles as well. Entire museum and archival collections are reproduced digitally in 3D, with full interactivity. Smart search engines now have the capacity for automatically assigning subject headings — plotting a resource within the knowledge tree.

## Year 20 - *Dark Days*

The sudden collapse of the oil and gas market sends the information industry into a tailspin. The government of Alberta merges all six universities and there are massive cutbacks in IR budgets and staff. Insufficient power resources cause the semantic web and smart search engines to falter, throwing the Internet into disarray. Massive power failures have users wondering how they will ever be able to retrieve information.

## Year 30 - *A Slow Recovery*

Wind, solar and nuclear power become major energy sources, and using trees for paper is banned. All publishing in Canada is now digital and the merged universities now only purchase online materials. Visual and federated searching finally merge, producing a personalized interface for the user. Physical museums and archives disappear, replaced with merged worldwide virtual collections. Windows XXXXP is released.

## Year 2046 - *IR Takes Control*

After some yet undiscovered evil multinational corporation attempts to control all access to information, world governments intervene and turn information governance and organization over to IR specialists. IR is recognized internationally by the United Nations for its efforts in making any form of information available and accessible to any user at any time. With advances in neurology, embedded micro-implants allow information retrieval to occur within a heartbeat. The micro-implants can sense mood and determine need, instantaneously creating new knowledge in the user...

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(This article was written using the collaborative software at Writely.com).



The Information Revolution Begins