

# Spiritual Revival towards 2010 – Traditional religion or nouveau hippies?

**Some signals indicate that we will soon see some sort of spiritual revival in Western Europe and the United States. A religious revival is possible, but we think that the social conditions are more likely to bring about something more like a 'nouveau hippy' movement. While a religious revival would only present a minor opportunity for new telecoms services, a nouveau hippy movement would present far more opportunities. Of course, not everyone will be involved in such a revival, but the trend will provide significant new markets for telecoms companies. We will see an increasing demand for social group oriented services, for networked computer games and for music downloads and creativity tools. Many other minor services will also be needed.**

## Introduction

Europe and the USA are ripe for another major spiritual adventure, either a nouveau hippy movement or religious revival. Some time between now and 2010, some charismatic person will probably lead a major movement of one of these two kinds. It will combine spirituality, care for the environment and, for other people, some mystery, some personal health and happiness stuff, some social rewards, some love, and of course some sort of life code. We will present strong evidence that such a revival is likely, and speculate about the future service opportunities that will result from it.

## Contributory Trends

The evidence is a little different for Europe and the USA, so the strength and nature of the consequent trends are likely to differ somewhat too, though the overall effect will be similar. Many people today are characterised by subscribing to one or more of the following trends.

### Anti-science feeling

Firstly, there is a strong anti-science undercurrent in Europe. This has been obvious for years, but is increasing. Many people are less inclined to believe scientists than almost anyone who contradicts them. The reactions to BSE, genetic modification technology, the MMR vaccine and cellphone radiation are all typical examples of this. Environmentalism is another example of a field where emotion currently dominates over science. The USA anti-science trend is weaker, but there are certainly many subscribers to anti-science there too. This probably is partly a result of regularly conflicting views from scientific and pseudo-scientific bodies in the media on issues such as global warming. People often can't tell the difference between science and 'pseudo-science' and are confused by mixed messages, so end up believing none of them, and look instead for 'deeper' truths, which for many people mean their feelings, or emotional truths. This trend is also evidenced by the success of books such as 'The Da Vinci Code' by Dan Brown – a classic religious mystery that includes a mixture of legitimate research and creative writing, which is also a conspiracy theory – the latter always much more popular during times of social upheaval. The success of this book is also indicative of the increasing unpopularity of orthodox Christianity mentioned below, another contributory trend.

### Emotions in fashion

Secondly, emotional display is increasing. Men have felt encouraged (and sometimes even obliged) to show emotions, even to cry in public. There are good and bad effects of this. Seeing sports and pop stars crying regularly on TV is undesirable to most of us over 40. Women are encouraged to feel free to show their emotions more in the workplace, even the boardroom, without fear of criticism. Emotional intent and reaction are now legally significant factors in the treatment of racial offences and in employment law. Emotions, it seems, are in fashion. Concurrent with this trend is the fashion among psychiatrists to diagnose

Asperger's Syndrome in older men<sup>1</sup>. Asperger's, a 'mild' form of autism, is characterised by a lack of emotional display, lack of empathy, low social skills and obsessive interest in fairly obscure facts, hobbies or knowledge domains. (DSM 2004). Because of the current trend towards 'emotionality', many older people, particularly men, are left feeling emotionally inadequate. The gender-divided world in which they were brought up to conform to specifically male roles (that is, not to show excessive emotion (except maybe anger), not to hug their friends, etc.) now no longer exists, and many feel intimidated by the new emotional freedoms. Simon Baron Cohen<sup>2</sup> has gone so far as to suggest that Asperger's is, in many cases, simply an 'extreme male' form of consciousness, a lack of empathy being the significant trait in diagnosis. Interestingly, the highest increasing rate of diagnosis is currently in Silicon Valley, California – *Wired Magazine* has called Asperger's 'The Geek Syndrome'. A lack of emotional response, it would seem, now requires a diagnosis.

### Spiritual vacuum

Thirdly, with the decline of traditional religion throughout Europe, and a more polarised community in the USA, with the religious right versus a strong anti-religious community, a spiritual vacuum has been growing. While some people are happy not to have any spiritual feelings at all, most people seem to have the need to feel spiritual in some way, and certainly a need to feel that they are a 'good' person, even if they don't want to believe in any particular god. Traditional religion provided a universal benchmark of 'goodness' for people. Now, this is provided by an assortment of traits, beliefs and behaviours which can be grouped under the banner of 21st century piety (Figures 1 and 2).

The list is long, and includes political correctness, militant vegetarianism and

animal rights, new ageism, semi-mystical pseudo-eastern health regimes, crystal therapy, environmentalism, anti-smoking, anti-car, anti-speed, anti-capitalism, pacifism, religious extremism, and even the obsession with fitness.

This trend is certainly true of both the USA and Europe. Its aim is to achieve an inner feeling of self-worth; that is, believing that you are being holy. Unfortunately, it is very often accompanied by sanctimonious behaviour too.

### Love for fellow man

Fourthly, people seem to be showing much more love for their fellow men than before, and it is fashionable to be seen to be caring of people overseas. People seem to feel more connected to the world around them where once their attention was much more localised. This has been particularly conspicuous in the sympathy for people in Iraq, and after the recent tsunami. While other catastrophes have seen a large response, the more recent ones seem to have received far more than earlier.

### Science of happiness – importance of relationships

Fifthly, a lot of recent scientific research has highlighted the importance of high-quality relationships for happiness, and the lack of impact on happiness of material wealth. Many people already realised this of course, but others are now starting to take note. Coupled with the huge recent debt problem, many are ready to refocus.

### Flirting technology

Sixthly, new technologies make it easier for people to communicate more intimately, to flirt, to show affection to people where previously they might have kept such feelings to themselves, or develop secret relationships more easily. This is especially evident with technologies such as text messaging and email, which bypass the

social barrier of embarrassment and give people a low risk mechanism to approach people with less fear of embarrassing rejection. Web sites such as Friends Reunited have also made it easy for people to track down old sweethearts from school or earlier jobs. There is no longer a social stigma associated with using computer technologies to find partners. People seem quite open to using technology to improve their social and sex lives. Broadband, webcams, chat rooms, mobile phones and instant messaging are all important tools already. Soon, people will be able to afford large displays, for life-sized, full body-language images over broadband. In the UK, the number of single-person households is increasing and predicted to carry on increasing at least until around 2020<sup>3</sup>, which could signal an ever-increasing demand for these social technologies.

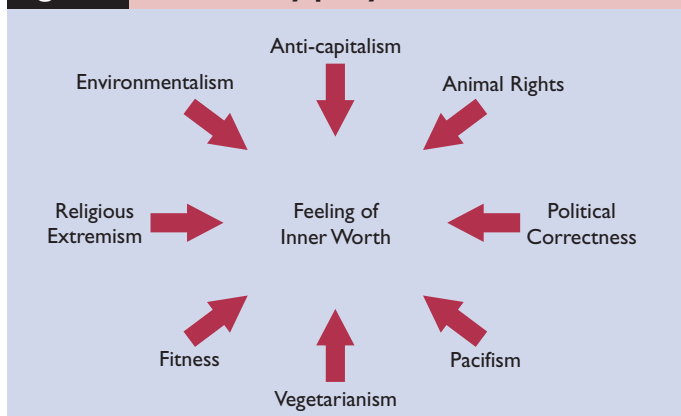
### Lifestyle gurus

Seventhly, Many people are feeling fat wallets but thin emotional reward and are looking to lifestyle gurus to help them find happiness. Online lifestyle advice is also proliferating, from sites that offer personal 'diagnoses' (for example, RealAge.com) to sites that advocate a particular diet/lifestyle/lifestyle guru (for example, atkins.com). This 'lifestyle' guidance has even found its way into the corporate world, with business consultancies using astrology, crystal healing, relaxation techniques and other 'alternative' approaches to aid large organisations (for example, The Institute for Management Excellence - <http://www.itstime.com/>).

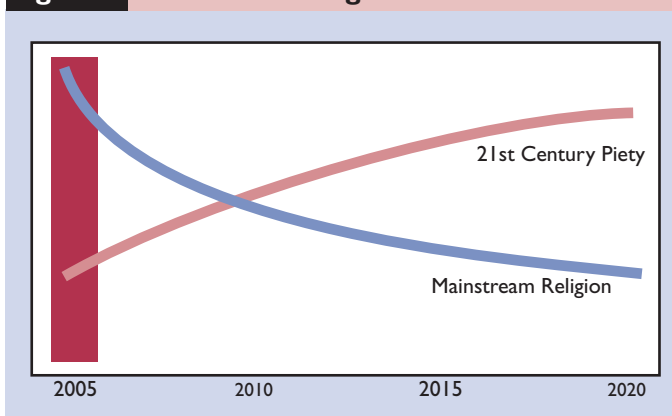
### Slow lane and downshifting

Eighthly, closely related to the discovery of the value of relationships is the trend of downshifting, where people take a less-well-paid job that allows them more control over their stress and more time to do what they want (Figure 3).

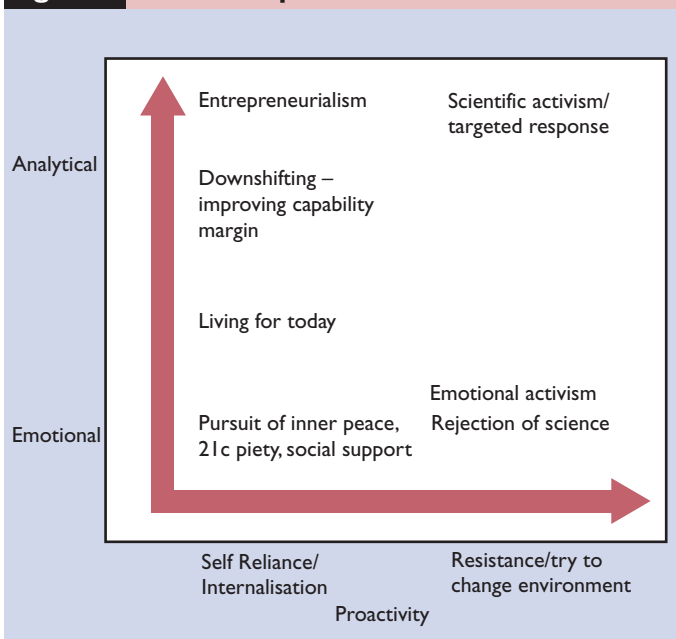
**Figure 1** 21st century piety



**Figure 2** The new dark age



**Figure 3 Behaviour patterns**



In the USA, The Slow Lane trend is manifested by people abandoning the rat race, fast food, supermarkets, and the other high-speed low-human-contact lifestyle, and opting for a slower life with richer human contact. They are waiting in queues and chatting to shopkeepers, rather than rushing around. So while some people are still trying to pack more into a frenzied life, others are dropping into the slow lane, and feeling happier. Similarly, across Europe, having started in Italy in 1992, 'market towns' (populations of under 50 000) have been applying for membership of the 'Citta Slow scheme'. Membership entails concentrating on local services, supporting local farmer's markets and other food cooperatives, redesigning town centres to give pedestrians and cyclists priority, and generally making the town a more-pleasant slower place to live. In the UK so far, Ludlow<sup>4</sup> and Aylsham have both had their membership applications accepted, and Diss, in Norfolk, is currently being considered for membership.

**Retiring baby boomers**

Ninthly, the baby boomers are nearing retirement. This generation is the largest cohort in existence and the most heterogeneous. The 'early' baby boomers were in their early 20s during the late-1960s, and many of them have retained the 'hippy' philosophy of life. These people now have more money, are wiser and more experienced than they were in the 1960s, and have (or will have shortly) much more leisure time. These people are also the most political cohort alive today, so it is possible that we will see 'single-issue' political movements emerging around the themes of quality of life for older people, local services and voluntary initiatives, and even the legalisation of cannabis (Rosie Boycott, a 53 year old journalist and founder of Virago

Press, is already involved in this), as well as a more widespread use of 'alternative' therapies and spiritual disciplines.

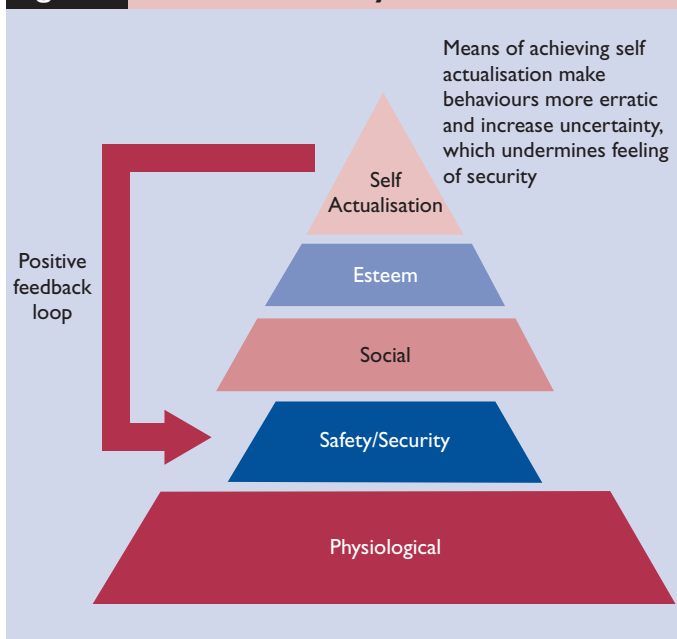
Many people caught up in the 1960s movement are nearing retirement, and have grasped opportunities to downsize or run their own 'lifestyle' businesses, their own way. More and more firms are offering flexible working hours and home work facilities, in response to the need for a better work/life balance. Telework opportunities are being taken up with increasing regularity by this demographic, and the advent of broadband has meant that home workers can 'drop out' of office life while still maintaining meaningful contact with their colleagues. Similarly, after retirement, these people will demand (and expect as their right) more personal care and more respect than any previous retired generation.

**Insecurity at the self actualisation layer**

Tenthly, most Westerners are fairly wealthy. In terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Figure 4), most people spend most of their time at the top of the pyramid, in self-actualisation.

But many people feel stressed by the bewildering range of options available. Should they be doing yoga, or learning feng shui? Swimming or weight training? Crystal therapy or colonic irrigation? Become a wine expert or learn to paint? Paradoxically, successfully rising to the top of the pyramid of needs, they nevertheless feel deeply insecure, worrying that they might not be making the most of their life, that there might be a greener fad on the other side of the fence. With their feeling of security undermined, it is impossible for them to be happy. They may have met their physical needs but find that, within the cultural world, a similar hierarchy of needs exists

**Figure 4 Maslow's hierarchy of needs**



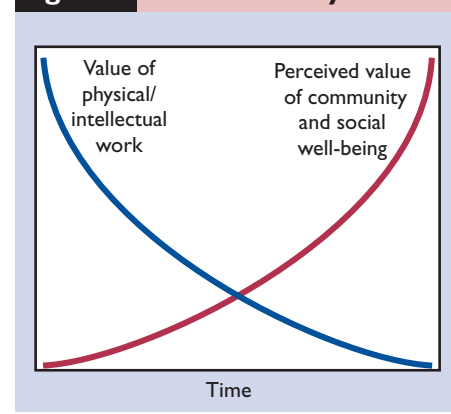
which they must now climb. People in this situation often long for a life code. That is why every new diet or lifestyle book does so well. They are desperate for guidance, guidance that once came from religion and a strong extended family structure.

**Care economy**

Finally, the long-term socio-economic trend is towards the care economy. This recognises that the unstoppable march of technology will eliminate most physical and mental work by automating it, leaving those jobs, or parts of jobs, that rely on human contact. It is possible to make a robot to wash out bed pans, but not to replace the caring part of a nurse's job by a machine. The same goes with teaching, policing, therapy, child care, hairdressing, acting, singing, sports, and millions of other jobs. Future human work will be dominated by human emotional skills, not by intelligence or physical dexterity (Figure 5).

Physical dexterity may soon be required again for nursing/caring, (some recent court cases have seen several patients winning back the right to be lifted by their carers), but it will clearly be care oriented. No

**Figure 5 Care economy**



matter how sophisticated the mechanical lifting mechanisms are, they still have a 'stigmatising' effect, so people prefer to be lifted by other people.

## Spiritual Revival

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Altogether, these social forces and technological tools point towards a more loving, caring, more emotional sub-community, which may undo much of the social fragmentation that has been evident in recent decades. Paradoxically, for other reasons, counter-trends will affect other parts of the same communities and will increase tribalism and conflict, we will probably see some intergenerational conflict, inter-cultural conflict, and there is already even an anti-child-centric movement! Both of these 'spiritual revival' trends are likely to be strong, but they will generally affect different segments of the community, and will exist alongside each other. Society is not homogenous and social trends rarely affect everyone. But in terms of the 'love society', some people are already starting to drift in these various directions, and it will not take much to convert this slow drift into a torrent. As people start to notice, natural leaders will emerge to drive it forwards.

There is a natural group size for these caring behaviours. If everyone loves everyone, relationships become too thinly spread to be worthwhile and dissatisfaction occurs. We can only love sustainably when we concentrate on a smaller number of meaningful relationships. Nevertheless, people who are currently living a high-speed high-intensity lifestyle, but not feeling very happy will be ripe for the picking. They will look at their high stress levels, thin relationships, high debt levels and general discontent. They will compare with people who have dropped out, who live easily, peacefully, with high-quality relationships, lower stress and better happiness and health levels. Many will switch.

### Nouveau hippies?

In a highly secularised society, such as most of Northern Europe, the overall effect of this revival might be something akin to the hippy movement, where people were conspicuously loving to each other, at least superficially, for some years before they finally got bored or frustrated with it and moved on. If so, the natural leaders may well be charismatic people aged 50–70, who experienced the 1960s and therefore know the pitfalls of the 'Love Generation'. Michael Eavis (Figure 6) is an example of this type of person – now 69 years old, he has held the Glastonbury festival on his land since 1970, where it has grown in size every year from

about 1000 people to well over 100 000. As well as being a shrewd businessman, he still maintains the hippy philosophy, and has just been awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Bath for his 'services to the arts'.

These 'charismatic' hippies are not afraid to embrace new technologies – Michael Eavis has ensured good mobile reception at Glastonbury by erecting temporary masts for a number of years now – his was also the first festival in the UK to install temporary ATMs. Live webcasts of the festival have been available since 1999, and their own radio station, Radio Avalon, has been broadcasting from the site since 1983 and is now also available online.

### Religious revival?

Religious revival is a strong contender though, and may occur instead of or alongside a nouveau hippy movement. Some people might go for religion while others become nouveau hippies even in the same town. In some places these two movements may even merge, resulting in a new, more relaxed type of Christianity, or even a new hippie movement shaped by Christian ideology.

The Christian trend is already aligning with some of these forces, so we may see overall growth now that the community is ready for change. There has been a decline in traditional religion in the UK, such as the Church of England and Roman Catholicism. Some people have abandoned religion and opted for secularism or 21st century piety, but many have just rejected the form in which it was presented, and would be susceptible to new approaches. Others have moved to small independent churches that offer a more close-knit group, with a package of shared beliefs and a common life-code. Most importantly, they offer a stronger social reward, with more friends, closer relationships, more genuine love, better support and consequently an overall happiness improvement. These factors are already common within the hippy subculture. In both cases we see a few dozen people in the 'tribe' with smaller cliques of closer friends. Even areas such as the desire for physical health and child care are catered for in many of these churches. Small tribe-sized churches are ideally placed to capitalise on the forces outlined above and will flourish in this revival.

But this will not account for everyone. Not every churchgoer is driven by social factors. Many people have also been 'returning to the fold' of more orthodox forms of Christianity, having been tempted, if only for a while, by the more charismatic and experiential churches. Deep religious experiences can create great closeness (as

can hallucinogenic drugs), and this closeness may have been what people craved. However, without a sufficient explanatory framework behind it, this can often embarrass participants in retrospect, as can getting to know other people too well, too quickly. When the natural trajectory of developing relationships is artificially accelerated, it can result later in an embarrassed 'withdrawal' by the people concerned (this may be similar to the 1970s disillusionment with the hippy movement). When close relationships are missing from our lives, small orthodox churches can offer a more socially acceptable, sustainable and safe substitute.

### Religion versus hippies, or both?

So, in the next few years, some people will become either nouveau hippies or join small churches. The proportion that go either way will depend on marketing and the existing preferences of the community. In a highly secularised society, religious revival will probably lose out to a nouveau hippy movement if this is pushed by sufficiently charismatic personalities with the skills to form sustainable communities around themselves. In areas where people still have enough religious background, religious revival may also occur. Ultimately, the package that is made most attractive to people according to their own backgrounds and prejudices will win most people. But the evidence is that we will see one or both of these trends bear out in the next few years.

## Telecoms Impact

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So assuming that this spiritual revival does indeed take place, how can telecoms companies benefit from it? There are many diverse technologies and services that could be developed or enhanced to target this new market. Almost all of the new services will arise from the hippy trend rather than the religious revival one. This is because we already have the services appropriate to religion, whereas the last hippy movement was decades ago before we had today's technology. Services that are already used in the religious community include online churches, church web sites and mailing lists, virtual priests, broadcast interactive religious services, online confessions, sermons, remote services, and of course evangelisation TV. We will probably see more use of these as people gradually get more used to being online for every aspect of their lives.

However, most of the interesting new services belong to the nouveau hippy movement. As such, this section will be highly speculative, since, although we are fairly sure about the coming trend, the precise manifestation of it is much less certain, and will emerge from the movement

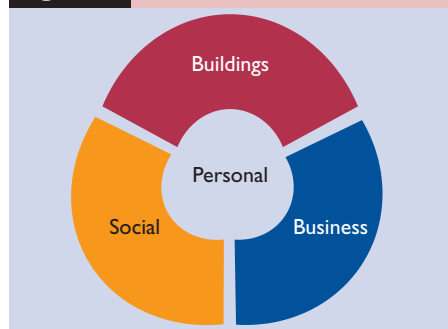
as it progresses, more akin to cult fashion than to corporate design. What we do expect is that a lot of the most significant services will result from the demands for greater socialisation, networked shared spiritually oriented experiences, music, immersive games and lifestyle sharing.

### Group communications

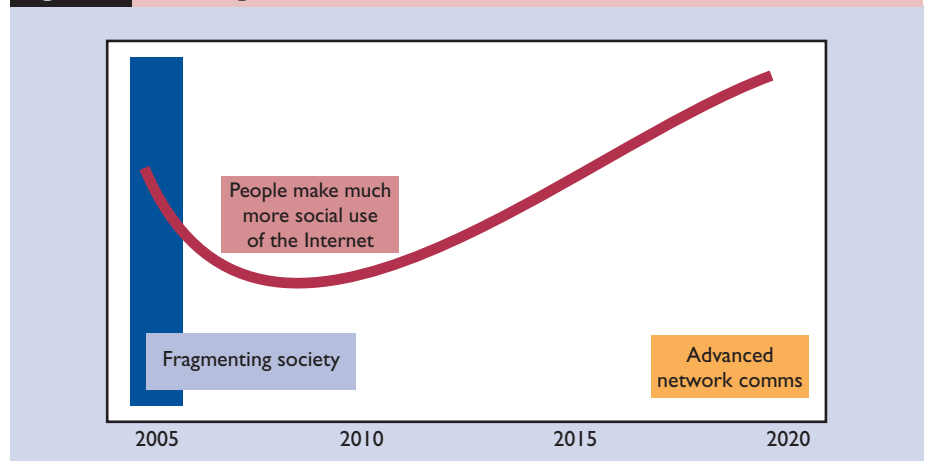
Group-oriented communications will be important for the spiritual revival. Increasing focus on love will mean people will get together more often and have more intense relationships. They will be unwilling to let each other go when they part, so the demand for telecoms will increase. Since people will try to have bonds with a number of people, we will need telecoms services that are aimed at looking after groups, rather than just one to one relationships. We may expect that the tendency for teenage girls to try to talk constantly to several friends will extend into significant parts of the adult population too. BT has already recognised the importance of the social communication sector (Figure 6), as have some of the mobile companies.

Push to talk, instant voice messaging, being able to see where your friends are on a phone display and broadcast texting are

**Figure 6 Four-sector market**



**Figure 7 Tackling loneliness**



all good examples of group-oriented services that will benefit greatly. New telecoms services will be a key factor in increasing social interaction, reducing loneliness and generally improving happiness (Figure 7).

### Games, emotional networking and cyberdrugs

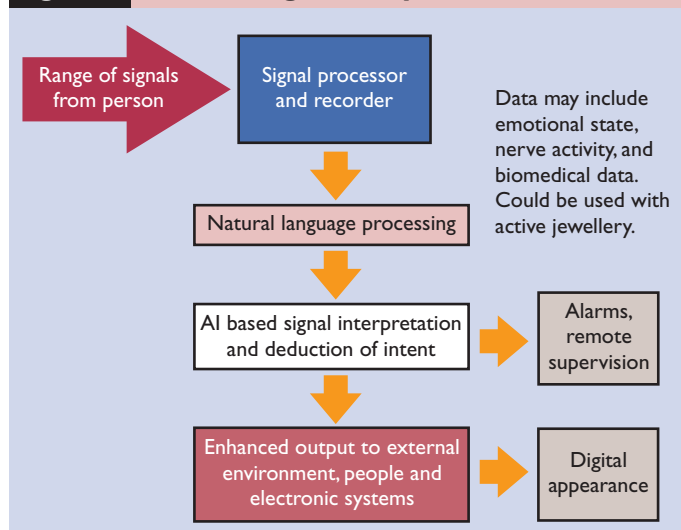
It is likely that games companies will capitalise on the new trend once it is under way, but a great deal of development will also be done by individuals on an open source or shareware basis. Increasing scientific understanding of spirituality and perceptual processes will link to advanced levels of artificial intelligence to produce a wide range of interactive spiritual games. New interfaces that are able to detect emotional state, relaxation, stress, and even simple thoughts will have a strong role too, making the interfaces more intuitive, more emotionally linked, and requiring less intellectual and physical activity, helping people to get much more deeply involved in a game without having to focus on the interface per se. These games will indulge people's spiritual needs both on an individual and networked game basis, and could become a major platform for the new

spirituality. Some of these games might be highly emotional. Some will undoubtedly be sexual, and many will aim to indulge emotional bonding between people. Emotional bonds will be very important to the nouveau hippies and emotional networking will be a popular activity. Even when people are physically together, they may use electronic media to enhance their relationships on the emotional level, (Figures 8 and 9).

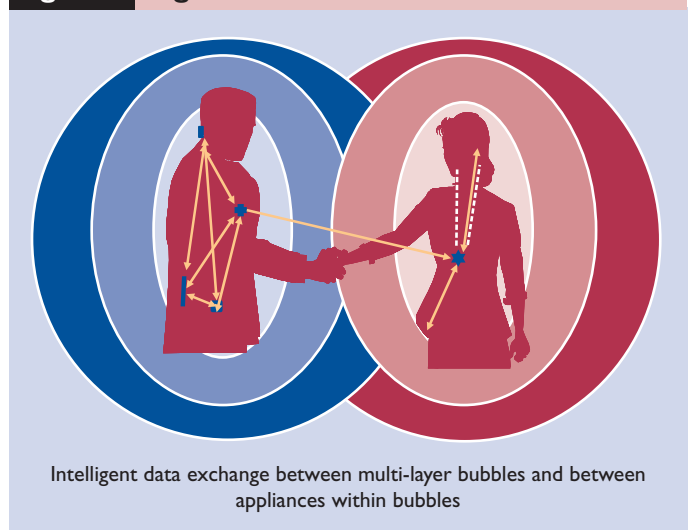
In fact, calling these activities games is probably greatly understating their potential significance. Some may be totally frivolous and nothing more than games, but other will evolve into massively shared spiritual and emotional activities that may persist for long periods on the net and be very important to the many players. People may join in for a few minutes or a few hours, perhaps dipping in and out frequently over months.

Immersive games will let people explore a spiritually rich environment, so we will need navigation tools for the physical, virtual, emotional and spiritual worlds. By linking interactively to emotional and mental states, people may use them to train themselves in spiritual skills, such as meditation, perception or state change. Recent experiments have shown that strong

**Figure 8 Personal signal analysis**



**Figure 9 Digital bubbles**



electromagnetic fields can alter perceptive states in the brain, and we should expect that the next few years will see people starting to use such effects recreationally, just as they use chemically based drugs today. Inducing strong fields in certain parts of the brain might be an important part of such emotional and spiritual networking and exploration. Given the importance of chemical drugs in the first hippy movement and in modern life generally, it is not impossible to imagine that we will see the creation of cyberactive drugs, which affect the brain chemically, but are tuned to work in tandem with electromagnetic stimulation. For example, drugs can already be put into the body in such manner that they are only activated at key locations, and we should expect this technology to be used increasingly in the design of location-based recreational drugs. They may further be tuned to respond to specific contexts so would therefore be fully linked into cyberspace in principle. They could lie dormant in people's brains until such time as the person is in a certain location and a certain event is happening. Large-scale coordinated experiences may result.

In the further future, even thought detection and dream linking will be possible. Today, computers can recognise a dozen words or so by pattern recognition on electrical signals from the skin. New monitoring techniques are able to locate which part of the brain a signal comes from to the nearest few millimetres, so thought recognition technology is likely to accelerate. Again, it is also possible today to detect when someone is in a dream state, and suitable injection of audio or visual stimuli could be used to assist dreaming about a particular subject. When people are dreaming simultaneously, it ought therefore to be possible to link their dreams together to some degree.

## Music

Music is highly linked into spiritual experiences of all kinds, so increased use of all kinds of music-related services should be expected. In particular, automated music generation that allows evolutionary development would be useful. People can interact with automated composition, pushing it in directions they like, and allowing it to quickly adapt to their changing tastes and needs. Music composition can be a group activity and can help in bonding, so is a good starting point for shared spiritual experiences and increasing social bonding. It will have a central role in the nouveau hippy movement, which is already using wireless LAN and satellite technology to link music festivals worldwide, and to broadcast proceedings on the web, both live and as video streams. The Burning Man festival, held every year in the

Nevada desert, has been using satellite broadcasting since at least 1999. Music's role in emotional orchestration at major religious festivals is well proven too. Music will certainly be linked into many of the games to a high degree.

## Flirting

Flirting is on the increase, and has been since the discovery of text messaging. Most adults flirt regularly using text messaging and email. This is one of the trends contributing to the spiritual revival (or at least the love bit of it), but it will also increase as a result of the revival. People will attempt to have more numerous and deeper relationships, and flirting technologies will be a key part of this virtuous circle. As the opportunities for flirting increase (and have been increasing), so the structure of socially acceptable loving relationships may change, resulting in simultaneous loving relationships being conducted via different media. There is also a current trend in the development and design of 'emotional' wearables, that is, pieces of jewellery and clothing that display the wearer's emotional state or needs (Figure 10), hence making the communication of emotions easier.

## Classes

One of the big trends already accompanying the growth of spirituality is the growth of classes for people to learn new types of exercise, new ways of thinking, meditating, dressing, whatever. This will increase as the movement gathers speed. We will see a strong demand for classes, and for lifestyle gurus.

People cannot always get out to a physical class, so classes could be distributed across the Internet or digital TV. This is especially appropriate for community networks, where the social side of the classes can be more readily accommodated, since people can physically meet up with other class members outside of the classes. We might also see an opportunity for tuition

based on artificial intelligence, backed up by avatar technology. BT has extensive experience in the design of learning platforms, and this knowledge could be applied to meet the demands for learning in these new fields.

## Location-based services

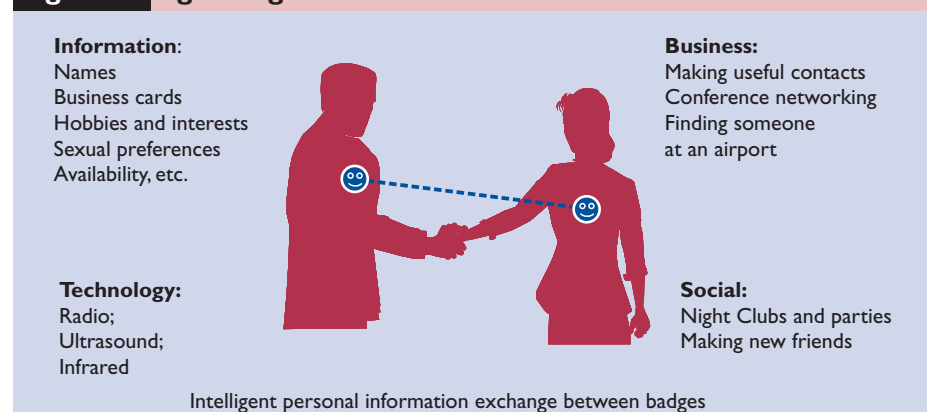
It is important for people to be able to track their friends, so services based on this need will be successful. Some people will want access to the 'spiritual layer' of data in a place too. This can easily be added to the augmented reality overlays that we expect in towns in the future. People will therefore be able to see the spiritual content for the area where they are. This could be an interactive process, where they can share experiences with other people, past and future, by using or contributing content.

Someone making a spiritual journey through an area could leave a digital 'pheromone trail' in the augmented reality overlay which could be followed by other people later. Similarly, people will have digital bubbles, that interact with those of other people that they encounter, digitally exchanging information and occasionally introducing the people to each other. Many other 'virtual air' services are explored in a paper 'Virtual Air', by Ian Pearson and Robin Mannings<sup>5</sup>.

## Web broadcasts

Many of the first-generation hippy events would have been well suited to web broadcasting, and the nouveau hippy events are similarly suited. The worldwide and distributed nature of the 'psychedelic trance' dance music scene means that 'webcasts' are already a common feature of this subculture, closely linked to the wider 'nouveau hippy' movement. We should expect considerable use of the net, community nets and TV. We should also expect significant broadcasting of event-related information on mobile nets, from simple alerts to broadcast video clips.

**Figure 10** Ego badge



## Mobs

A related field is that of flash mobbing, where people gather quickly at a particular location, directed by text messages or emails. If a spiritual event is suddenly taking place, we might expect it to gather increased numbers by this means. Messaging and navigation services would be useful. A music-related flash mob has already taken place at Waterloo station, where several hundred people gathered and began dancing to their individual Walkman soundtracks. Several more 'mobile clubbing' events are already being planned.

Very significant amounts of downloads via the nets should be expected, associated with music and video material from spiritual events.

## Lifestyle guides

Many people feel a lack of guidance in their lives today, and one of the key elements of the spiritual revival for many people will be lifestyle guidance. People are already demonstrably responsive to such guidance, as evidenced by the recent improved market success of trendy new diets – the more recent fads have been much stronger than previous ones. People are also willing to accept more guidance in other aspects of their lives. A strong sense of belonging to a group can be achieved by encouraging a shared lifestyle, so people may feel more comfortable if the new movement supplies a lifestyle. But of course with new technology, it is possible to track people and monitor their behaviour quite closely. As well as location tracking, technology can monitor electronic media use, conversation, and meetings with other people. Linking to radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags in food packaging, knowing the locations of fitness clubs and night clubs, being able to monitor consumption to a high degree will effectively provide a subscription to a voluntary artificial intelligence (AI) policing network. Trackers and monitoring technology will become a fact of life for many people. They will be guided constantly by messages and alerted automatically when their behaviour deviates from the desired path. Of course, many other people will not want such an imposing influence and will simply not bother with these aspects.

## Summary

We have argued that there are some weak but convincing signals that our society is about to embark on a new spiritual revival of some kind. Our analysis indicates that given the nature of society today, this is likely to take the form of a religious revival for a few people, but a nouveau hippy style revival for many more. Many new IT services will be

required to supply the demands of this revival, and some existing services will increase. In particular, the games and music industries will have enormous opportunities, but there are also prospects of some new social threats such as cyberactive drugs. The demand for telecoms services will also increase, especially those that are geared to group/community communication, rather than one to one.

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## Biographies

**Ian Pearson**  
BT



Ian Pearson graduated in Maths and Physics from Queens University, Belfast. After four years in missile design, he joined BT Labs as a performance engineer. He has since worked in areas from chip design to mobile telephony. He currently works as BT's futurologist, mapping the progress of new developments throughout technology, considering both technological and social implications across the whole of industry, government and society. He spends much of his time advising on the major threats and opportunities facing us in the future, at conferences and in the media. He still dabbles in research, currently in ultra-simple computing, conscious computing and social trends. He is a fellow of both the Royal Society of Arts and the Institute of Nanotechnology.

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**Dr. Deborah DiDuca**  
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Dr. Deborah DiDuca obtained her research psychology Ph.D. in the field of religion and mental health from the University of Essex, before joining BT in 1999, where she helped to design a learning platform based on pedagogical theory. During her stay at BT she worked on, and managed, various user-centered research projects, mainly investigating the use of internet technologies by different types of community. She transferred to Chimera, the socio-technical research institute of the University of Essex, in 2003, and since then has been developing new research frameworks for the user-centered study of new technologies, as well as pursuing other research interests. She is also a fellow of the RSA.

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