IoT

In 1999, a British entrepreneur named Kevin Ashton coined the term “Internet of Things” or IoT for short. Considering the speed at which technology is advancing, IoT will not only be a major part of our day-to-day life, it just might take over!

The current internet global network essentially connects human being with computers, in the not-so-far future, this network will grow exponentially and will connect humans with everything around them, from home appliances, to animals, plants, matter, and computers of course. The plethora of IoT applications go well beyond that and will be an integral part of the media, environmental monitoring, infrastructure management, manufacturing, energy management, medical healthcare systems, building and home automation, transportation, you name it. It is scary!

Without going too deeply into the technical details, each member of this expanded network will have their own unique IP (internet protocol) address, similar to the IPs each computer has today. Interaction or communication between members of this new network is achieved wirelessly via what is called RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tags which are not much larger in size than a grain of rice, incorporated in consumer items or any other product and implanted in living things, including humans! IoT systems could also be responsible for performing actions, not just sensing things. RFID tags are already used in many industries such as tracking automobile production. In 2014, RFID market was worth USD 8.90 billion. In 2024, the figure is expected to reach USD 27.31 billion.

The figures are astounding. Experts estimate that the IoT will consist up to 50 billion objects by 2020. The Internet of objects would encode 50-100 trillion objects, and be able to follow the movement of those objects. Human beings in surveyed urban environments are each surrounded by 1,000-5,000 tractable objects.

To recap, the Internet of Things, (IoT) is a scenario in which objects, animals, and people are provided with unique identifiers and the ability to transfer data over a network without requiring human-to-human or human-to-computer interaction.

Naturally, with all the marvels of this new technology lies the sinister effects which if not addressed, could have cataclysmic consequences on the human race as a whole. There’s no space here for an in-depth investigation of these menacing effects, but briefly, they include: a) losing one’s humanity in that man becomes “a thing” like anything else around him; b) privacy and autonomy, which you can kiss goodbye; c) artificial intelligence, when a machine will ultimately become more intelligent than man; and last but not least d) security issues, including cyber-attacks. This is not to mention the danger from the “authority” to disseminate subliminal messages through the network, effectively controlling everybody.

In the new film, *Terminator Genisys*, Arnold Schwarzenegger’s character rebels against the machines that have taken over. It’s a sci-fi movie, but it seems we’re moving in that direction!

For better or worse, the world is advancing and we’re squabbling over a plot of land! How silly we are.

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