

3. The world we live in has changed

1 New companies have been created

- Some are small start-up companies, also called dot coms (.coms). Others such as Microsoft, Google, Yahoo, AOL, eBay and Dell have become giant companies.
- These firms are specialized in the manufacturing of hardware, software and micro-chips, in logistics, in consulting and support/after-sale services.

2 Three types of companies have emerged

- The "brick and mortar firms", also called "physical" companies, which operate in the traditional way from office buildings or store fronts.
- The virtual "click" companies, which operate on the net only (Amazon.com).
- The "click and mortar" companies, traditional "brick and mortar" which open e-commerce sites on the web, while still selling from their high-street/main street stores (Gap, Toys'R'Us, Tesco, etc.).

3 Several types of exchanges have developed

- B2A (Business to Administration), also called B2G (Business to Government), concerns relations between governments and companies.
- B2B (Business to Business) concerns commerce between companies.
- B2C (Business to Consumer) and C2C (Consumer to Consumer) concerns transactions between companies and consumers, and sales between individuals.
- P2P (Peer to Peer) concerns exchanges of files between individuals.

4 Our everyday life is changing

a. There are changes at work

- Companies hire staff online, and sometimes lay them off by e-mail or by SMS!
- Multinationals develop videoconferencing to reduce travel costs and to encourage teamwork on a global scale.
- Employees send and receive e-mails at work, and training is often organised online.
- New technologies have made tele-working and home-working possible.
- Companies use their site to project a positive image of themselves.

b. There are changes in our everyday life

- Central heating and alarm devices can be monitored at a distance.
- People shop online with e-commerce.
- They watch TV on computer screens, on mobile phones or MP3 players.
- Music and all sorts of documents are downloaded from Internet sites.
- Teenagers play games on their play-stations, on TV and computer screens.
- We communicate with relatives, friends or people we don't know by e-mail, in chat-rooms, on blogs, by SMS, in the street, at work, from home or in cyber-café.

- 5 New words** have been coined: teleworking, telecommuting, on-line, on the web, e-commerce, e-trade, e-tailing, e-ducation, e-training, e-revolution, m-shopping, web-grocers, netizens, netiquette, to google, e-mail, webaholics, podcast, blog, chat, etc.

CAN YOU ANSWER?

1. What has changed in our everyday life?
2. Are new technologies always positive at work?

Words, words, words...

1

start-up/dot com/.com company:
entreprise sur Internet

support/after-sale: après-vente

3

P2P: poste à poste / égal à égal

4

heating: chauffage

5

blog: site d'expression

chat: site de conversation

e-: en ligne

m- (= mobile): avec son téléphone portable

netiquette: règles de bienséance

netizen: internaute

tele-working/commuting: travail à distance

webaholic: mordu du web