

Will a robot make your job a thing of the past?



It is, absolutely, a possibility that the job that you do now may be replaced by a robot, or a drone, or even an App! But it isn't all doom and gloom.

Drivers and receptionists are most at risk of losing their jobs to robots, according to new data released by Adzuna.

The job search engine also claims that teaching, social work, IT and nursing are the professions least likely to suffer job losses because of increasing workplace automation.

Analysis of over one million jobs vacancies in December 2016 found that almost ten per cent of adverts were for roles, research by an Oxford University study finds, likely to be automated within 20 years.

Professional driving was found to be the least future-proof role, with Adzuna's research noting the potential disappearance of 29,137 advertised jobs in this sector.

Receptionists, accountants, labourers and waiters round up the most at-risk professions, as software evolution changes employment trends in these areas.

Automation rarely results in large net losses to jobs, however it does radically change the nature of jobs available.

20% of students leaving our schools, colleges and universities and entering the workplace, will be taking up jobs that didn't exist when they started their education!

History shows that the things that were feared would create mass unemployment did no such thing. The motor car was the end of the horse

drawn carriage, stable boys (and they were just that) would no longer be needed. What about the saddle makers, blacksmiths and all the other people employed in trades reliant on horses providing the power? The motor trade, in the UK alone, is a £69bn industry and employs over 800,000 people. There are close to 25,000 black cabs on London's roads every day. Over 5bn bus passenger journeys a year throughout the UK and a logistics industry worth £96bn a year employing 2.3 million people across 188,000 companies, all due to the internal combustion engine.

Add to the above the need for massive infrastructure improvements to accommodate all that traffic. This enables us to meet the output required to deliver the ever-increasing demand for goods and services. I think it is plain to see the motor car didn't bring about the end of gainful employment, instead it created jobs and even industries that didn't previously exist.

Now, we are told that driverless cars and drones will make driving jobs a thing of the past, but without a crystal ball who knows what jobs they will create? I think whatever they are there are plenty of black cab drivers, whose cab's I've been in, who could do those jobs. The last one told me he would make a better job of being the Mayor of London than any of the past three!!

The first ideas resembling the internal combustion engine motor car were around in the 1700's, it took until the 1880's to become a reality.

It can be argued that humans knew that one day we would be able to fly, but it took 120 years from the first successful air balloon flight in 1783 to the Wright brothers first, heavier than air, flight in 1903. Incidentally the air industry in the UK was worth £52bn last year and employs 200,000 people.

These inventions took years to become reality and we had plenty of time to think of possible uses. The basic idea of a car or airplane hasn't changed much from conception through invention to mass production.

But what of the phenomenon of our age, the Internet? First use of TCP/Internet Protocol was reported to be in 1983, just seven years later the Internet was already in a form that we recognise today. From dial-up to DSL and now fibre, download/upload speeds that were measured in Kbps are now in Gbps. Wireless technologies have developed at an even greater pace. Entire industries have evolved due to the on-going development of the web, here are just 8 that didn't exist 25 years ago:

- 1) E-bay - 1995
- 2) Google - 1998
- 3) LinkedIn - 2002

- 4) Facebook – 2004
- 5) YouTube - 2005
- 6) Twitter – 2006
- 7) WhatsApp – 2010
- 8) Instagram – 2010

And here are ten jobs that did not exist just 10 years ago:

- Digital Marketing Specialist
- Social Media Manager
- DevOps manager
- Blogger
- SEO Specialist
- App Designer
- App Developer
- Cloud Services Specialist
- Data Miner
- Big Data Analyst

In conclusion, automation, AI and robotics will continue to evolve and will replace certain jobs, however, with evolution comes opportunity. Tomorrow's jobs may not be the same as today's but, chances are, there will still be enough jobs to go around. The trick is to evolve with them so that we have the right skills to do those jobs.