



DIGITAL LIFE

"People are tired of stories of flying cars and weird science. What interests me is not the far future, but tomorrow. Somewhere in the world the future is already happening. You just need to know where to look." – Mike Walsh

AURAL PLEASURES

How often do you consider sound as a key part of your travel experiences? Louis Vuitton in partnership with Soundwalk are now releasing slick city guides narrated by Asian celebrities, blending personal anecdotes with ambient sounds. With most of us carrying smart phones, geo-tagged audio tours are going to be the guide books of the future. Once luxury brands exhaust the possibilities of expensive objects there is only one thing left to sell - curated brand experiences.



IPAD - THE ULTIMATE TRAVEL COMPANION

The iPad is still in its tech honeymoon phase. Pull one out on a plane, and you can still expect to be inundated with conversation starter questions. Enjoy it while it lasts! But the real question for early adopters is which apps should you pack on your travels? Here are my top five - Newspapers (FT, NYT and WSJ), Evernote (cloud based visual diary), Kindle (my entire book collection), FlightTrackPro (lets you see the live flight boards of any airport in the world) and Pulse (coolest news reader).

CHINA RISING

Last month, I spend a frantic few days encountering the extraordinary Shanghai World Expo. The scale of new construction in China is only matched by equally rapid developments in the mainland's digital arena. Consider these 3 facts. Last year, with over 384m online users, China overtook the US as the biggest web market in the world. In just 12 months since the launch of 3G, mobile internet users have grown by 116m. Finally, the world's most successful social network is not Facebook but Tencent's QQ with 568m users!



SOUVENIR

The first thing people ask when you return from your travels is whether you have brought them back a present. Souvenir - its a funny word. Literally from the latin - subvenire - to come to mind. I prefer 'sou-veneer' - for the following reason. Despite the fact that luxury brands are more or less globalised - the first thing a well heeled traveler does upon alighting on foreign shores is start buying things they can easily get at home. Of course, it wasn't always so. God help Marco Polo if he had left behind the silk and noodles, and strolled through the gates of Venice with a rather fetching Louis Vuitton bag. Even if it was a fabulous fake.

Mike Walsh, author of Futuretainment and CEO of innovation research agency Tomorrow is a leading authority on the digital future. Mike specialises in high impact keynote presentations and executive insight workshops on next generation consumer trends. He is represented by O2 Speakers, Asia Pacific's only professional speaker management company. If you would be interested in a free video briefing of the rise of digital China and to subscribe to Mike's newsletter please visit <http://www.mike-walsh.com/o2speakers>.