

## **People have an inherent need to express themselves.**

Experiences that allow people to communicate with each other or simply to be heard tend to be rewarding, satisfying ones.

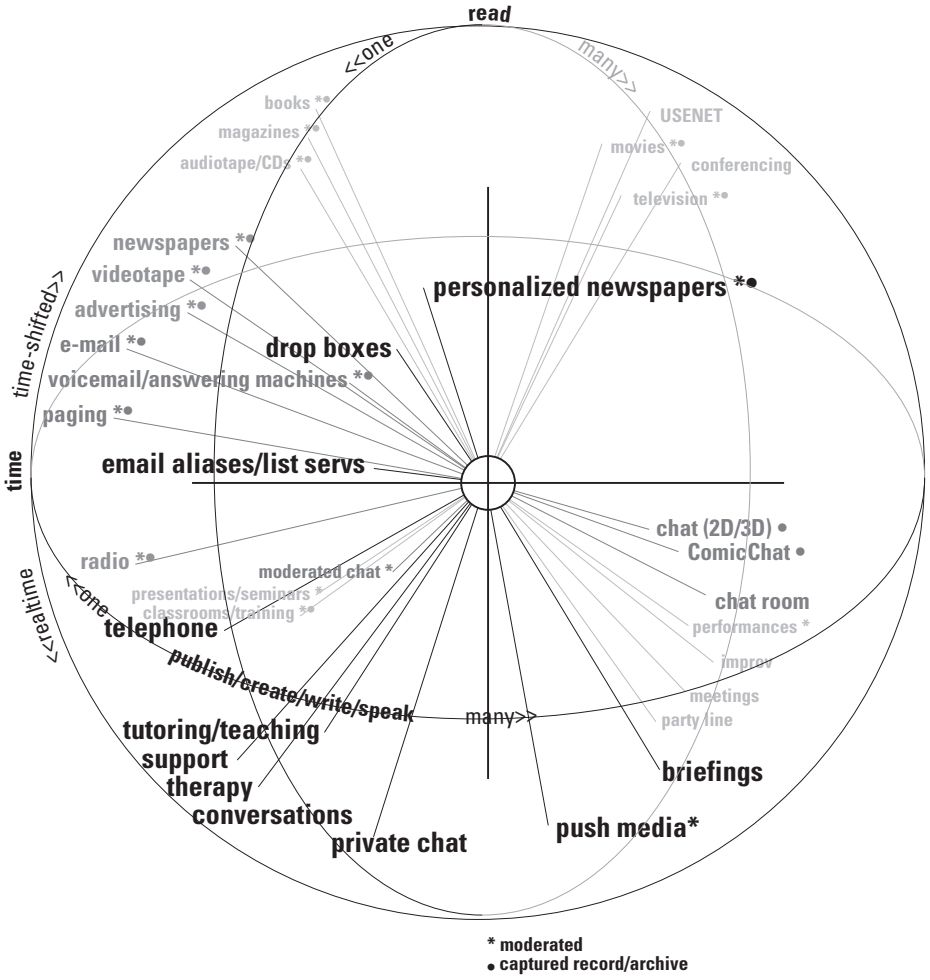
There are many different ways to communicate, whether through text, gesture, or speech. The results can be recorded in sound, on paper, as data, or not at all. Communications among people can be monologues, conversations, speeches, presentations, arguments, or discussions between one, two, or among many people. Communications between a person and a machine can be typed, spoken (employing speech recognition and speech synthesis), or gestured (using a variety of input devices like mice). However, machine responses will, most likely, be limited to algorithmic ones within a narrow field of appropriate or possible responses. This is because machines are very unsophisticated, not at all intelligent, and mostly are incapable of dealing with ambiguity—trying to have a conversation with one quickly reveals a computer's conversational limitations.

Like productive and creative experiences, opportunities to meet others, talk with them, and share personal stories and opinions are always viewed as valuable and interesting. Because these experiences involve two or more people, they also inherently involve high levels of control, feedback, and adaptivity. The telephone is an excellent example of a communicative experience, as are chat lines, discussion boards, and cocktail parties. Some of these are so valuable and enjoyable for some people that they have become virtually indispensable.

There are several types of communication, each with distinct strengths and weaknesses: Some are time-synchronized; others are time-shifted. Some are more private than others. However, even taken together, they still do not reach the rich diversity of traditional forms of communication.

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## **Communications**



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