

# Cultural Daily

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## The Viral Video is Video

Adam Leipzig · Thursday, October 14th, 2010

One-fifth of Americans have already made video calls, using their iPhones, Skype or other online or offline services. That's one of the results from a poll released today by the [Pew Research Center](#). Although the number of us making a video call at any given time is still low – only four percent – it has doubled in the past year. We're witnessing the exponential increase in two-way video as a means of popular communication, and it's spreading just like an end-of-the-year flu.

Cisco's [announcement](#) of a consumer HD video conferencing set-up, available this Christmas from Best Buy for \$599, underlines the trend.

Video is the next killer app.

Just as email was the killer app for the Internet's first generation, video will be what defines us for the next decade. Killer apps are always about personal communication, which has something to do with the fact that we're human. The postal service was the killer app in our nation's first century. Telephones were killer apps for two generations.

It's worth remembering that Alexander Graham Bell had no idea the telephone would be used for two-way communication. He thought it would be used to listen to symphony concerts from far away – initially, it didn't have a talk-back feature and was a one-way device, a wired precursor to radio.

Although two-way video conversation is just gaining momentum, video itself has been driving new technologies for the past three years. Video has been the “candy” pushing the convergence of social networking, better smart phones, and mobile wireless networks (3G and 4G). That's because consumers want to watch and share videos, so they need better devices, better infrastructure and better social networks.

With the adoption of video as the next killer app, we'll all need a new set of skills. Our ability to make, edit, upload and download video will soon be as basic a literacy as reading and writing. The ability to project ourselves via video will be equally important. I've already heard “Telepresence” used as an adverb, not as a trademark.

Video literacy is fast becoming the new mandatory literacy and, like a virus for which there's no inoculation, we'll all get it sooner or later.

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*Image by [Danilo Lejardi](#).*

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