



Peter's predictions came with the advice that they should be taken with a pinch of salt. Things often turn out to take an entirely different path. That was in July. His advice was preceded by some thirty years by Frederick Pohl who died in September.

Pohl was a noted science fiction writer in the fifties to eighties. Just as Azimov established the Three Laws of Robotics" before robots existed, so Pohl was a forward thinker about how society would function in the future; much of it in collaboration with C M Kornbluth, another writer.

He wrote of Society dominated by powerful business interests and the public manipulated. He edited Sci-Fi magazines; won a Nebula award and was a sought-after speaker. As a futurist he was often asked about the future. His thoughts always included a warning that predictions, even in the short term, were "all but useless".

Returning to Peter's predictions and pinch of salt; He thinks about where current trends will lead.

Some of his previously predicted changes have not only happened, but more are on the way. The App stores and music stores are already massive and growing. The services and capabilities being incorporated into mobile devices are making them more complex, but easier to use.

Tailored Devices & Licences. Software packages are getting larger as more 'bells and whistles are added. There was initially a problem about the disk space taken up by them. That problem diminished as disk capacities increased even as cost reduced.

The rising price of complex software packages was putting people off, as was the need for constant updates. The solutions need to suit both supplier and the user.

The supplier now puts his complete package on a single disc and a user will pay only for the elements that he wants to use. This keeps prices down. For additional elements the user pays a further fee and the supplier simply issues a key to unlock the newly licensed components, thus saving on his supply costs.

The same sales model could apply to mobile device components – you buy the services you want, tailored to your needs with the option to activate other components later if you wish.

If updates can be automated, or, if preferred, you can use the "cloud", where each time the software is used it is downloaded from the cloud in its most up-to-date form.

Walled Gardens. Powerful companies (e.g. AOL and Compuserve - remember them?) tried to 'wall-off' their territory and force people to pay for the content they provided. They were defeated by sites like Netscape and Napster who provided access. Peter predicts that all attempts to build such 'walled gardens' will fail in turn because the public will not countenance them.

Technology today is the Science fiction of just 60 years ago.