

t's almost a marriage made in heaven, isn't it?

Science Fiction and the Internet. What a couple! Should it really be a wonder why SF topics are among the largest and most active topics on the worldwide network of networks?

The strong relation between SciFi and cyberspace should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the two. Science Fiction and futuristic themes have always captured the hearts, minds and imaginations of dreamers and ponderers. SciFi, after all, is a collaboration of good imagination coupled with realistic possibilities. Much of what Jules Verne imagined as fiction at the end of the last century is now very much a reality towards the end of our 20th century. When author William Gibson coined the word "cyberspace" more than a decade ago, it was mostly in the context of fiction. Nowadays, the explosive growth of the Net has made the concept of cyberspace an easier term to grasp (even for the Net newbies).

The Internet serves as a modern tool of choice to link large numbers of diverse individuals who share a common hobby or interest. Science fiction fandom has always been driven by the camaraderie of its followers. The staying power of the Star Trek fan universe is a testament to this. The same goes with the "almost-overnight" sensation and explosion in X-Files fandom... its popularity has gone beyond "cult" status by now.

The Internet serves the SF fan two advantages. The first is the ability to be in direct contact with other SF fans worldwide. Do the producers of modern SF shows, books and movies take these electronic fan-gatherings seriously? You better believe it! Chris Carter, producer of the X-Files, has been known to make online appearances in commercial online services like Delphi. Babylon 5 creator Joe Michael Straczynski is a known participant in the B5 newsgroup.

The second advantage is the ability to explore and delve into vast resources. Fans who are hooked up to the Internet or the online services have access to much more information about their favorite shows than they normally would have by simply watching the show or reading TV Guide. Some online sites are dedicated repositories for scripts, synopses, fan submissions, FAQs, episode lists, images, QuickTime movies or soundbites. Only on the Internet can you sign up to a special mailing list that promises to teach you the

Klingon language. Free of charge, of course.

All of this interaction will undoubtedly give SF fans more influence over the Science Fiction world. Gradually, the fans will have the ability to control the direction and shape the destiny of their favorite shows or movies.

Regards,

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