

# „Digiligion“? – Living in a digital world

by Stefan Erhardt



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„Digiligion“ – Living in a digital world behandelt die fortschreitende Digitalisierung und deren Auswirkungen auf alle Lebensbereiche. Dementsprechend zeichnet sie sich durch einen starken Lebensweltbezug der Schülerinnen und Schüler aus. Die Lernenden führen Umfragen zur Mediennutzung durch, werten diese aus und entwickeln einen *media literacy test*. Sie diskutieren, kritisieren und bewerten die Rolle digitaler Medien in ihrem Leben und deren Einfluss auf unsere Kommunikation anhand von authentischen Zeitungsartikeln, Statistiken, einem Hör-Seh-Verstehen, einem Cartoon und Mediationstexten. Entwickelt sich die Digitalisierung immer mehr zu einer neuen Religion?

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## Oberstufe (Niveau)

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## Competences and skills

The students enhance several **communicative competences**. By working with texts, statistics, cartoons and videos, students improve their **writing** and **reading skills** as well as **listening/viewing comprehension**. They work on their **speaking competences** concerning discussions and comments and practise **mediation**. Furthermore, students enhance their **media competences** in that they actively use digital media, for example blogs, internet tools and presentations. In contrast, they practise constructive critique on digitalisation and digital media by discussing and commenting on the effect on individual and social life.

# “Digiligion”? – Living in a digital world

## Facts

The digitalisation of societies has taken on a presence that has made not only an important economic factor for business and marketing, but has also become an enormous influence on people’s lives. Some, who have followed this development critically even call it a revolution and the next stage in the technological development of humankind.

The speed and the volume of digital inventions and their spreading amongst almost all inhabitants of this planet over a relatively short period of fifty years have established a digital standard not only amongst Western cultures. Nowadays, kids grow up surrounded by digital devices (at least by one, namely a mobile phone with internet access) which they learn to use quickly and, thus, see them as the regular background to their life experiences. As one recent article in the well-known magazine *Nature* called it: “An explosion in information technology is remaking the world, leaving few aspects of society untouched.” This includes education and socialising. Some teachers see this trend of including digital devices in schools positively, advocating the seemingly obvious advantages of computerised knowledge and promoting their enthusiasm for new teaching methods and situations with sometimes missionary zeal. This view is backed by an undeniable satisfaction regarding the progress mankind has made in terms of access to information. Others see the impact of digitalisation rather critically, pointing out the drawbacks digital media have had on young people’s perception of reality and relationships or the negative impact of electronic media on basic skills like reading or writing.

Here are some of the concerns uttered by scientists of various provenances:

- Everyday work with computers is hindered by hardware problems, data loss, virus infection or advertising.

The way users work today may lead to social isolation.

## Topic 1: Digital media literacy

### M1 Social media usage

#### Survey



1. Work in groups. Prepare and conduct a *social media usage survey* amongst either your classmates, your fellow students in your year or among as many students in senior classes as you can reach. Afterwards, evaluate, quantify<sup>1</sup> and summarise your results in diagrams. Consider the following aspects:
  - Discuss which items you would like to include in your survey.
  - Try and think of all forms of media your generation uses (perhaps also “outdated” ones).

#### How to create diagrams and charts in Microsoft Excel

- a) Open up *Microsoft Excel* and choose an empty folder.
- b) Create a table of your data by using the different cells.
- c) Select the cells you want to represent in your diagram with your mouse cursor.
- d) Select “insert” in the menu at the top. You then find “diagrams” in the top middle. You can either choose your preferred diagram type directly or select “recommended diagrams”, which will show you what diagram types are suitable for your data.
- e) After selecting your diagram type, you can adapt it with your specific information. Give the diagram a heading. Adapt the diagram elements (title of the axis, labelling the data etc.) by pressing the “+”-button at the top right of your diagram.
- f) You can export the diagram as a PDF file by selecting “file” in the top left corner and then “Export”.

#### Working with statistics

2. Describe the diagrams below in individual work. Write a short text.
3. Analyse the diagrams with respect to your age group.
4. Share your results with a partner. Discuss in how far the statistics represent the results of your *social media usage survey*.



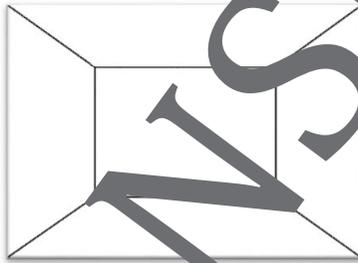
1. **to quantify**: to measure the amount of sth and express it in a number

## M7 Worksheet: Digitalisation – a new digital religion?

### Mediation



1. Placemat activity: Get together into groups of 4 students. Each of you work on one of the text excerpts from Christian Hoffmeister's *Google, Inseer*. From your excerpt, outline the characteristics "digiligion" shares with religion and write them down in your field of the placemat. For this purpose, mediate the German texts into English.  
You can use dictionaries to translate unknown words.
2. Present your results to your group.



### Working with the texts

3. Discuss the characteristics, decide on keywords and note the main characteristics in the centre of your placemat.
4. In your group, discuss the effect and consequences the use of 'religion-like' characteristics could have on users.

### Further activity

5. Look at the logos used by high-tech companies like *Microsoft*, *amazon*, *Huawei* or *IBM*. Do their logos support the author's theory about them having something religious in their design?

## M8 Steve Jobs announcing the first iPhone in 2007

### Pre-viewing activity

1. What would you expect from a public presentation of a new electronic device by one of the leading companies? Think of the style of presentation, the persons involved, the location of the presentation, and the elements included in such a presentation.

### Viewing / Listening comprehension



2. First, read the tasks on your worksheet. Watch the beginning of the clip (0'00''– 0'09'') and answer the following questions in keywords. Watch the beginning for a second (and third) time and complete your answers.

- a) What is shown on stage?

- b) How does Steve Jobs enter the stage?

- c) What is his posture like? What gestures does he make?

- d) What clothes is Steve Jobs wearing?

- e) What is his first sentence to the audience?

- f) How does the audience react to his introductory sentence?

- g) All in all, what impression does he make?