

Using Virtual Worlds to Deliver Mental Health Counseling Services



Dick Dillon
Senior VP, Planning and Development
Preferred Family Healthcare, Inc.

“This telephone has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us.”

Western Union internal memo, 1876

*“I think there is a world market
for maybe five computers.”*

Thomas Watson, Chairman, IBM 1943

*“There is no reason why anyone
would want a computer in their
home.”*

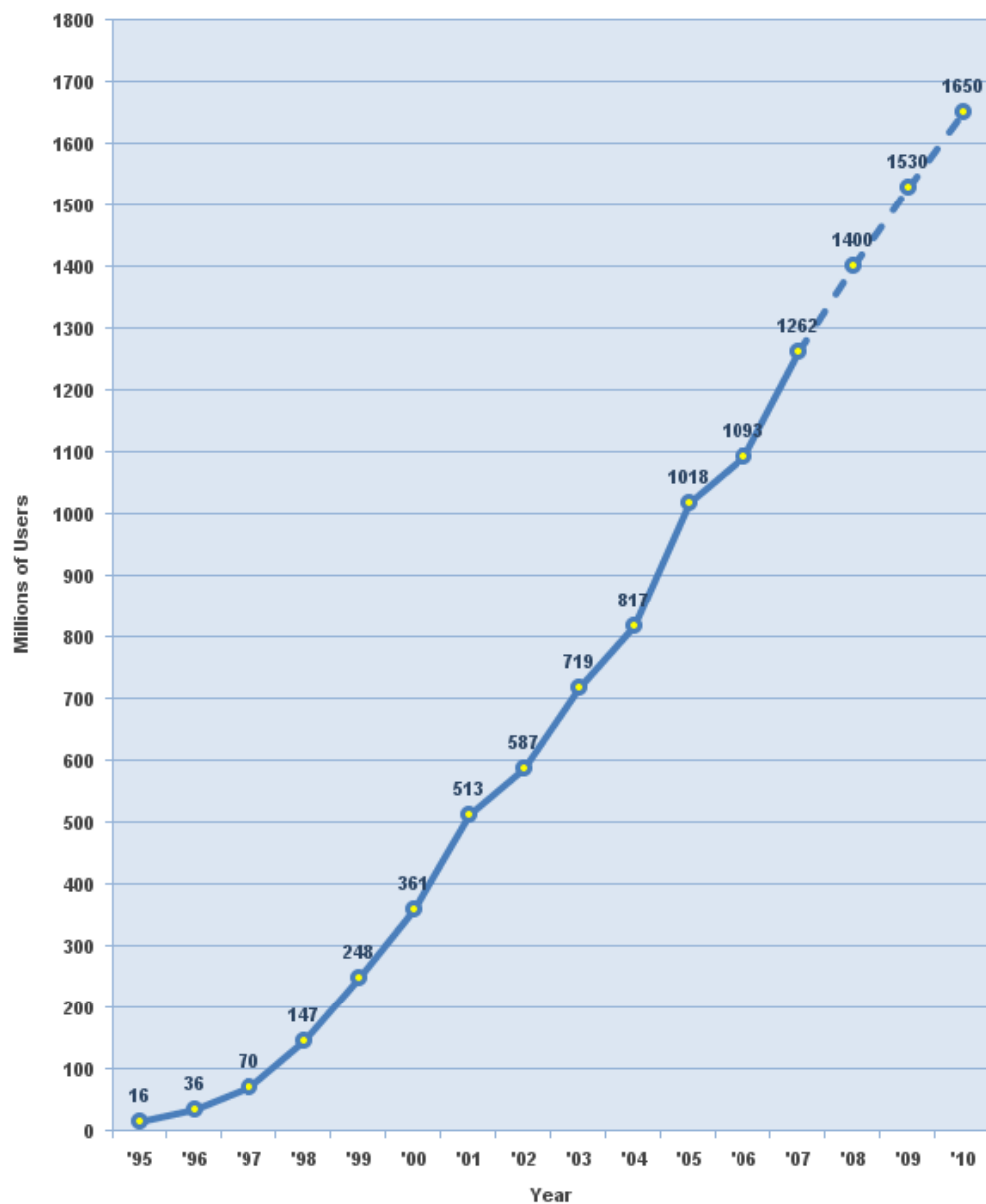
Ken Olsen, Founder, Digital Equipment
Corp. 1977

"A new idea is first condemned as ridiculous and then dismissed as trivial, until finally, it becomes what everybody knows."

William James, (Past APA President) 1879

Did You Know...?

Internet Users in the World Growth 1995 - 2010



“When I took office, only high energy physicists had ever heard of what is called the World Wide Web... Now even my cat has it's own page.”

Bill Clinton

Have you used digital media lately?

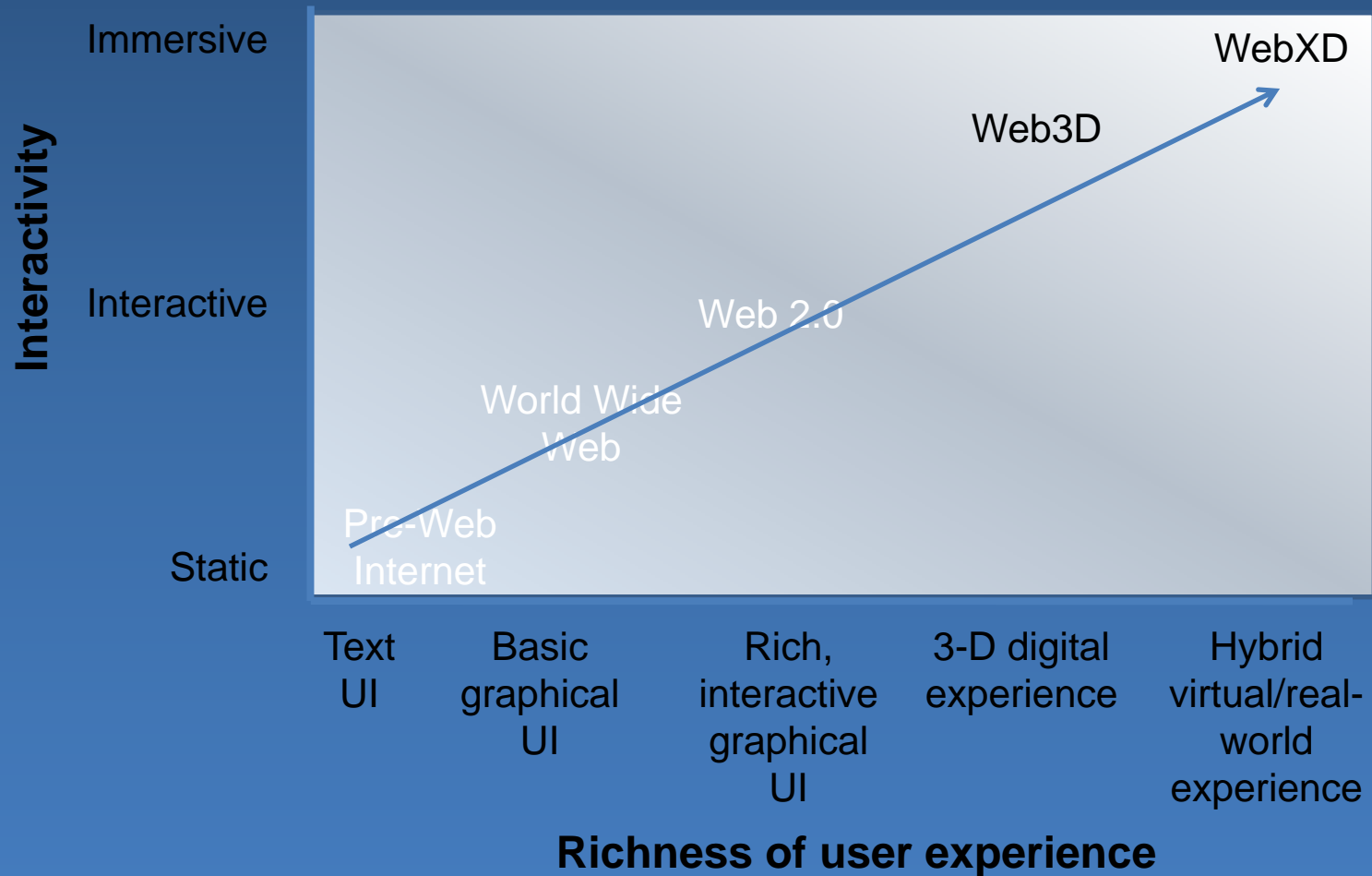


HOW

Have you used digital media lately?



Evolution of the multidimensional Web



Slide Courtesy of Forrester Research

Web 3.0 Operationalized: “Second Life”



Non-Profits in Second Life

ACLU

Amer. Cancer Society

America's First Harvest

Kiva

National Council (for Community Behavioral Health)

New Media Consortium

Preferred Family Healthcare

And hundreds of others (see <http://www.nbhorizons.com/list.htm>)

Interactivity + Immersion = Engagement

“Web 3 – D will deliver in the next three to five years.”

- Erica Driver, Forrester Research

Face-to-face doesn't necessarily mean in-person

In-Person Meeting

Face-to-face



Simulated In-Person Meeting

Video conferencing & telepresence



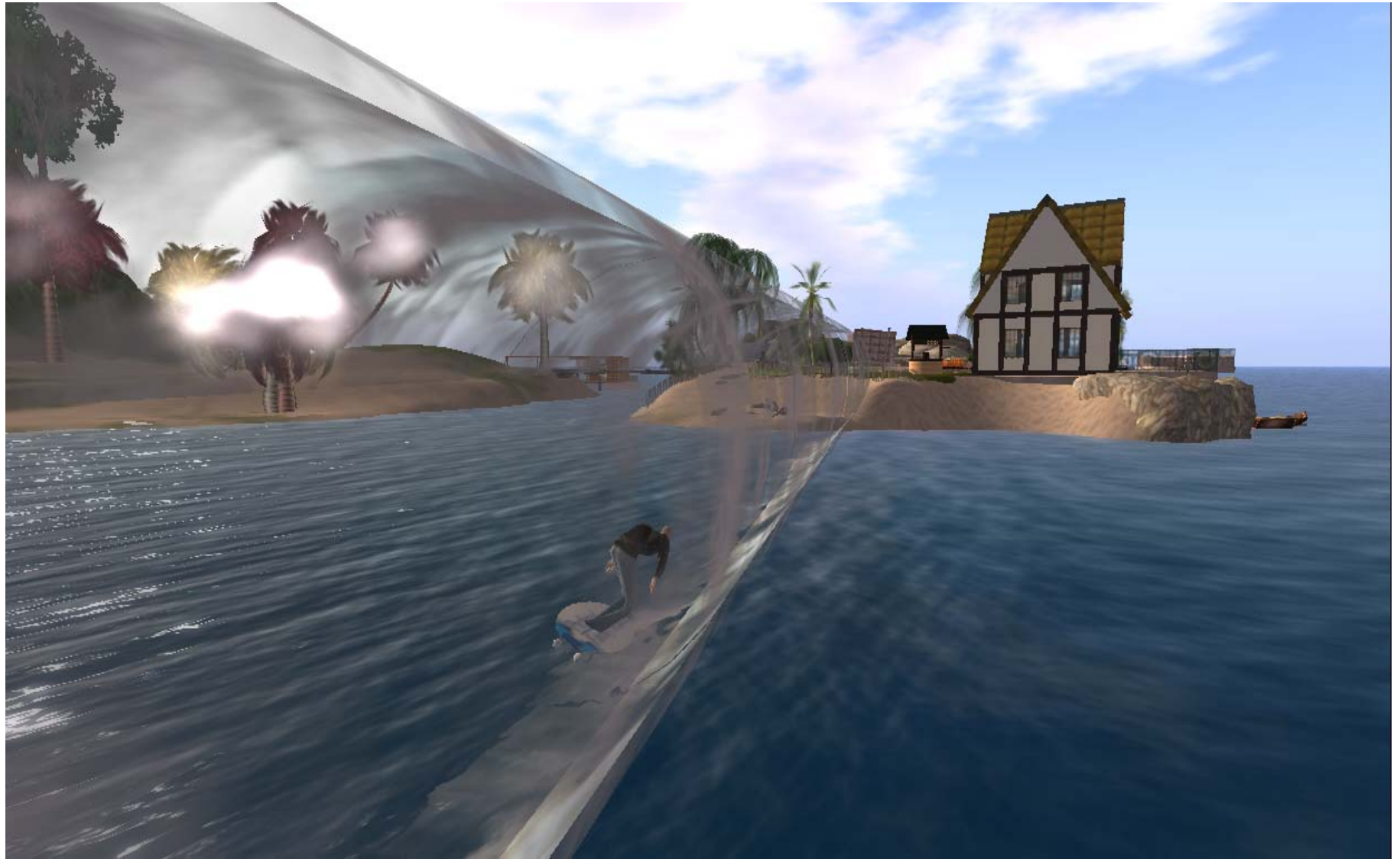
Immersive



Research Supports Use of Virtual Worlds

Gallese, V. , et. al – Mirror Neurons and Embodied Simulation.

The same parts of brain activate when we are watching and identifying with an action as if we were doing the action ourselves.





Research Supports Use of Virtual Worlds

Jeremy Bailenson, Stanford Virtual Human Interaction Lab – Vicarious Reinforcement

How you appear in a virtual world can affect your behavior in real life. People who watch their avatars engage in physical exercise are more likely to do so themselves in real life.

Research Supports Use of Virtual Worlds

Zach Rosenthal – Duke University

Virtual Crack House (cue extinction)

“What we’re trying to do is take people into a virtual crack-related neighborhood or crack-related setting and have them experience cravings, just like they would in the real world,”

AA Groups and Meetings in Second Life:

Friends of Bill W. Group

- *Monday 11 am - 12noon
- *Tuesday 6 pm - 7pm
- *Wednesday 6am - 7am
- *Wednesday 9 PM -10 PM
- *Thursday 11 am - 12noon
- *Friday 6pm - 7pm
- *Saturday 10:30am - 12noon
- *Sunday 4 pm - 5pm

Temporary Location on Recovery Island:

New Beginnings Women's Group

- * Sunday 6 PM - 7 PM

Serenity Forest Group

- *Wednesday 12 noon - 1pm
- *Wednesday 7pm - 8pm (Voice+Chat)
- *Friday 9am - 10am

Serenity Shore AA Group

- * Women's Meeting Wednesday 6 PM - 7PM

Sober Life

- *Monday 6pm - 7pm
- *Tuesday 8pm - 9pm : LGBT and friends. All welcome
- *Thursday 8pm - 9pm

Successful Sobriety

- *Thursday 5pm - 6pm (Speaker Meeting)
- *Saturday 6pm - 7pm

Recovery Island

Tuesday 7am - 8am

Preferred Family Healthcare's Presence in Second Life

Second Life Main Grid

- Preferred Family HC Island
- Non-Profit Commons
- ARTC Art Gallery
- Commonwealth



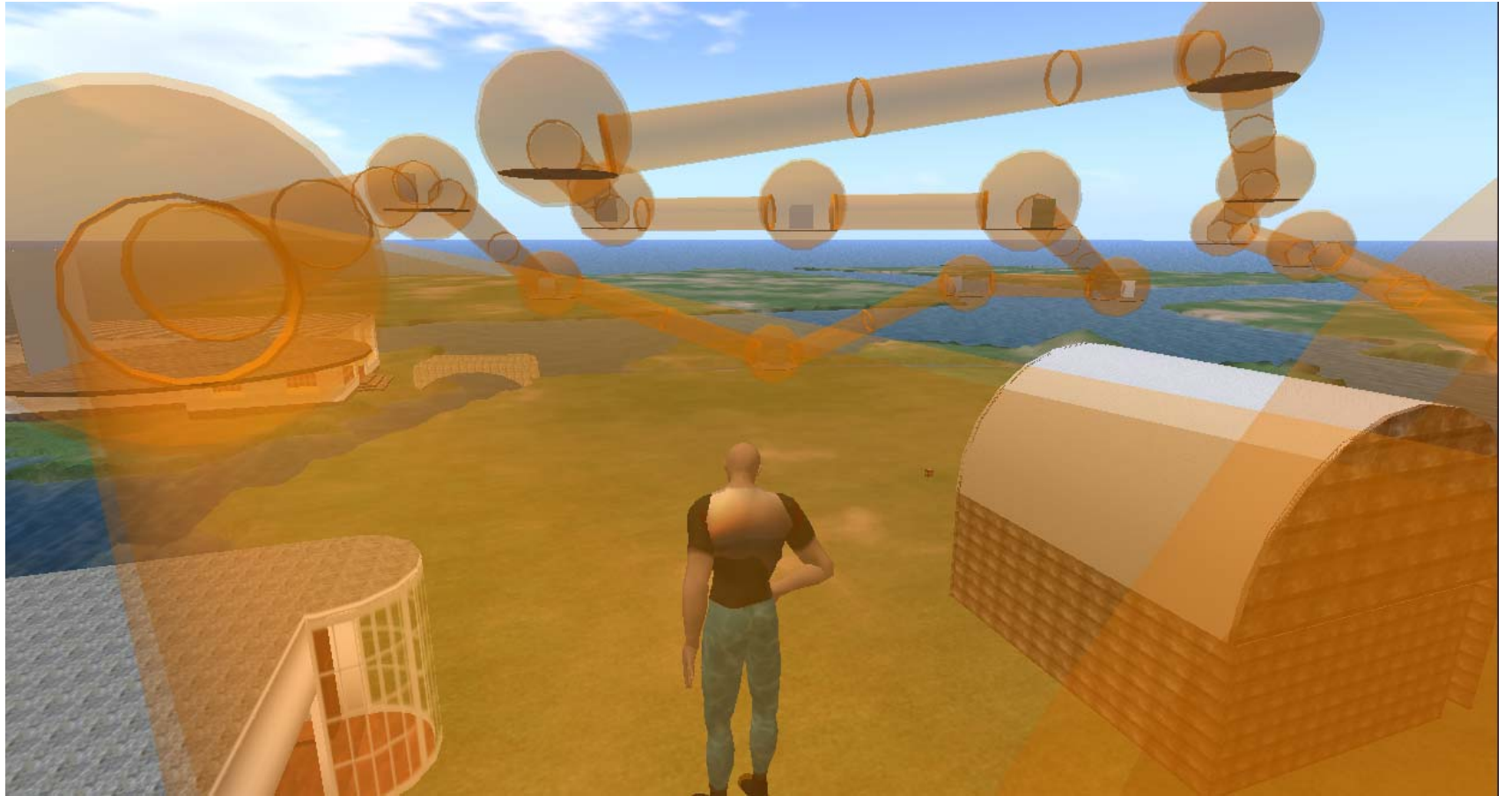




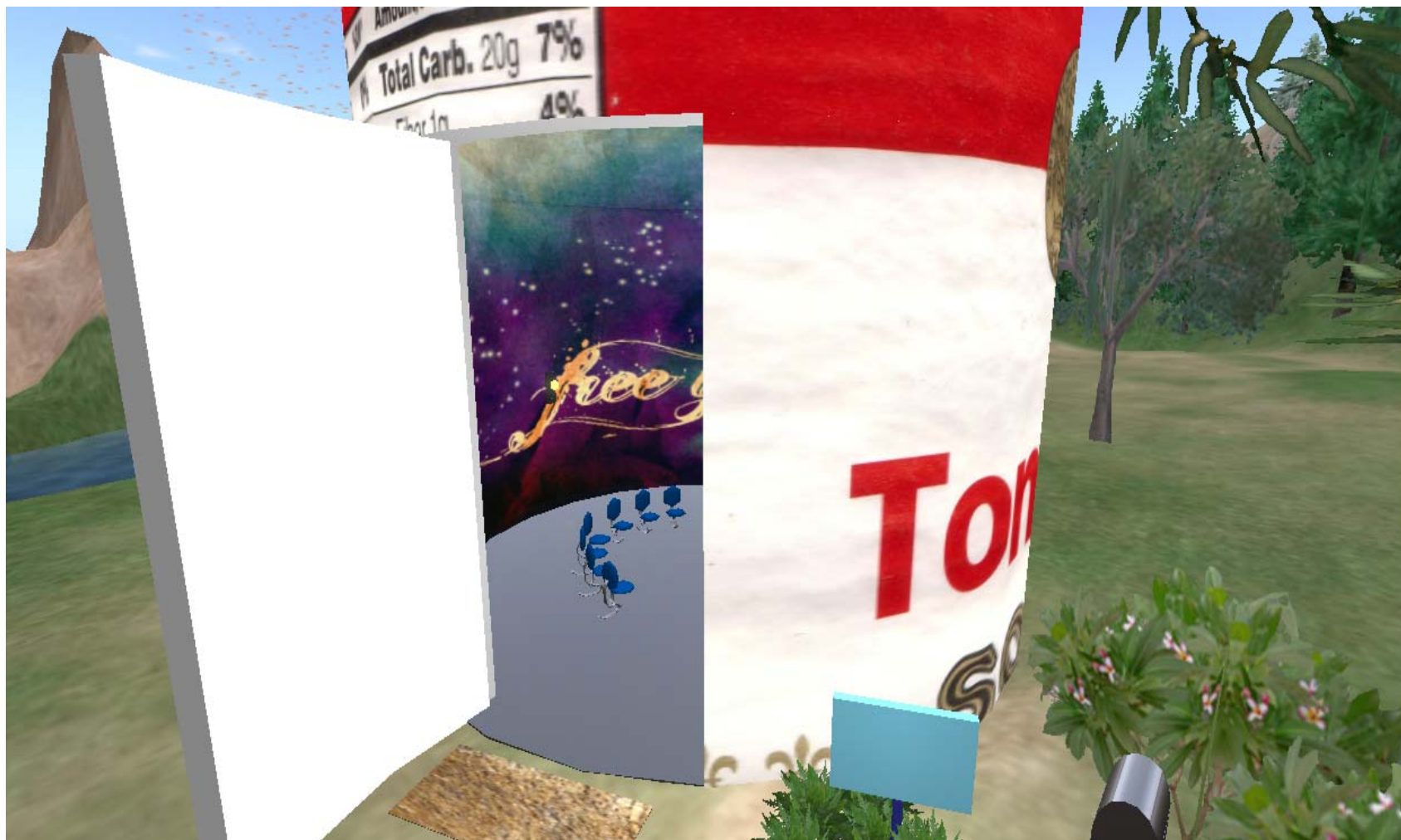


The Portal

In December, 2008 the Missouri Foundation for Health awarded PFH a \$300,000.00 grant to study the delivery of care in a virtual world...The Portal was created for this project.









Young kids and brothers need
To find a religion
To get through rehabilitation what is
My only intention
I wanna be successful and sober
In life is what I forget to mention
If you don't follow the rules and
regulations
You'll get a longer time extension
If there's any physical contact
You'll go straight to detention
We attend group and learn coping
Skills and watch intervention
I try to be open and receive help
For my problems and addiction
To have a family and a career
Is my only mission
Cob E.

Virtual Counseling

The actual delivery of services, both group and individual, via patient and clinician avatars is currently possible.

Role Playing

Works with staff and with clients.

- Allow “oversight” by staff managers, clinicians.
- Complete control over scenarios, or use all of SL as a “living laboratory”.

Staff Training

- Bring together staff from distributed program sites
- Collaborative Learning environment
- No down time for travel
- Machinima creation allows future sharing

Virtual Conferencing

- Allows real-time sharing, review and commentary
- Allows users to create and develop unique objects
- Innovative ways to educate and inform others and to display data
- Time and cost savings in bringing people together within and across disciplines and geography

Virtual Counseling

Potential

- Flexibility of service delivery
- Access
- “It will happen, whether we like it or not”
- Research opportunities
- Impact of anonymity (full or partial)

Virtual Counseling

Concerns

- Lack of control
- Impact on Therapeutic Alliance
- Loss of meta-communication
- “It’s not the way we’ve always done it”
- Impact of anonymity (full or partial)



“Like the Web in 1993, most of the good ideas haven’t been thought of yet. “

Sibley Verbeck, CEO, Electric Sheep Co.,
on NBCs Today Show (March, 2008)

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