Study: Rumors of Writer-Word Death Greatly Exaggerated

For the past few years, academic experts have been prophesying the end of the written word and the rise of the visual. In an article last year, Scott McNeely, chief executive of Sun Microsystems, said that "the written word has become a non-entity in the digital world." In fact, the death of the written word may be the digital world's most hyped rumor.

In 2005, Pulitzer Prize-winning literary critic and Wall Street Journal literary editor Robert Pinsky said: "We are seeing a time when words are no longer important. We are moving into a world where visual is preeminent."

The reality is that written words are more important than ever. The written word is as preeminent as it has been since the invention of the printed word. The written word thrives in the digital world — when it's properly contextualized.

In the wake of the digital revolution, people have been confused about the role of the written word. Some have argued that the written word is dying, but the real story is that the written word is more important than ever.

In 2000, the average American read 42 books, but that number dropped to 34 books in 2006. And yet, more people are reading books online than ever before. In fact, more people are reading books online than are reading books in print.

The written word is not a luxury — it's a necessity. Without the written word, we would not have the ability to communicate effectively. The written word is the foundation of all communication, whether it's in the digital world or the physical world.

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