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Advertising Slogan¹

Before there were computers the main communication tool was the telephone. Alexander Graham Bell is generally given credit for inventing it in 1876 when in that year he was granted an American patent for it. There were several other people at the same time who also are said to have invented the telephone, but generally we think of Bell; probably because of the company that still bears his name: Bell Telephone.

During the more than 100 years before personal computers became commonplace², the telephone reigned supreme³ and over time it rapidly spread until almost everyone had one or more. Each telephone had its own unique number and these were listed in a telephone book which usually listed the name and address of the individual or business. The pages for individuals were white and the pages for businesses were yellow and usually in the back of the telephone book or they were printed in a separate book called the Yellow Pages. If we wanted to find a business, we would go to the Yellow Pages because in addition to just the names, addresses, and phone numbers of businesses, some businesses also had advertisements.

The Yellow Pages came up with a clever advertising slogan: "Let your fingers do the walking." It showed an illustration of a hand with two fingers on the page looking as though they were walking. What it meant was, instead of going out and trying to find a certain business, it was much easier to go to the Yellow Pages and look for it there.

Today telephones are just one function of smartphones, but we still let our fingers do the walking as we flip through screens or key in searches. Smartphones have address books for keeping telephone numbers as well as addresses, but because nowadays it is so easy to do a Google search to find something, there is no real need for Yellow Pages anymore.

Our PC and smartphone monitors have become windows to the world and we can discover just about anything we want without leaving the comfort of our homes. And as virtual reality becomes more popular, we can even enter into those worlds. Perhaps someday even travel might become obsolete⁴.

¹ Catch Copy is a Japanese expression; 和製英語

² 平凡のもの

³ This means there was no competition

⁴ 時代遅れ