

Tech Tent: Future Farmers, Minecraft And Doom

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Every Friday, Tech Tent (BBC World Service) provides a digest of the week's technology news. Here's what we are looking at this week.

Big Data on the farm

It's the world's oldest industry and one you might not think was that forward-looking - but farming is undergoing a whole new data-driven revolution. Farmers are dealing with an ever-growing amount of data. From drones that provide aerial views of crops to combine harvesters that measure the output of every square metre, to sensors that give minute-by-minute updates about the health of animals, there is a lot of data. We will hear from a farmer of chickens who is adapting to the new way of farming. Rob Carter, the cofounder of Field Margin (which aims to help farmers navigate their data through a smartphone app), will be our special guest. Our colleagues on BBC Radio 4's Farming Today covered technology and farming throughout the week. They have a special report for Saturday morning's edition of On Your Farm.

Minecraft in the classroom

We've not heard much since Microsoft bought Minecraft. But this week the software giant announced a big push into education, launching a classroom version of the game. Jane Wakefield, Jane's correspondent, went to BETT, the UK's largest educational technology show, in order to speak with Microsoft about the plan that allows children to learn Minecraft at school and then play it at home. To log in, schools will need an Office 365 Account. This is part of Microsoft's strategy to compete with Google as the top software provider in the classroom.

Lessons from Kickstarter

Kickstarter received a lot criticism last November when the Zano miniature-drone project crashed onto the ground. The crowdfunding platform asked an investigative reporter for help to figure out what went wrong. Mark Harris' 13,000 word report has been published. It is both an inexplicable account of how to fail in a technology business and a cautionary tale for anyone who doesn't know that crowdfunding is different from ordering items from Amazon.

We talk to him on the programme about where he thinks this leaves crowdfunding as a way of getting tech ideas off the ground.

Doom moves up one level

Twenty three years after the legendary game Doom came out, it still has a dedicated community of players, and they have something to celebrate this week. John Romero, one of the original developers, has released the first level since the mid-90s. He spoke to Zoe Kleinman, our reporter. Minecraft He admitted that he was nervous about the reaction of the community but most fans have been positive.

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