#2 Voice Computing

The hottest topic in AI this year is something called voice computing. In fact it’s been described as the latest disruption in technology. Voice computing at its simplest is when you use your voice to control your devices like what you’re doing right now getting this flash briefing, rather than touching your keyboard or screen. Now we use tools to hold, touch or swipe for information or to perform tasks. With voice computing these tools disappear and are replaced by voice assistants on smart speakers who respond to voice commands. The entire notion of what a computer is and does is different because of voice computing humanized with names such as Alexa, Siri, Cortana or Bixby. Computer speech technology crossed a threshold in the last five years. We know human beings can understand and comprehend an average of 95% of what another human being says. Compare that to artificially intelligent computers which can now understand and comprehend 99% of what a human says to them. Let’s look at the numbers. There are 2 billion desktop and laptop computers in the world and 5 billion mobile phones. By the end of this year there will be more than 200 million smart speakers worldwide, a number expected to grow to 8 billion by 2023, but there are devices such as home gadgets and appliances, 100 billion of them, expected to connect to these smart speakers and that market is exponentially larger than even mobile.

The days of going to a browser to type in a query or starting at a homepage on a screen are disappearing. Instead we will have voice discovery of information. Content will be filtered through a voice assistant which is able to understand the semantics and underlying intent and context of what we want because they have data of everything we’ve done, the purchases we’ve made, the podcasts and music we’ve listened to, the vacations in our calendar, the email sequences from a friend. All of this is discoverable by voice assistants and will be brought to bear in understanding the nuances of our requests.

Screens and smart phones won’t be eliminated just as the jet airplane didn’t kill off the car but people will gravitate to the more natural interface of voice. Computers will follow us around rather than us needing to go to them. This is called a voice first future.

Until next time, I’m Dr. Peper, from short and sweet AI.

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### [James Vlahos: "Talk to Me" | Talks at Google - YouTube](https://www.theverge.com/2019/5/20/18537019/artificial-intelligence-alexa-siri-cortana-google-voice-computing-james-vlahos-talk-to-me)

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