The Internet of Things (IoT)
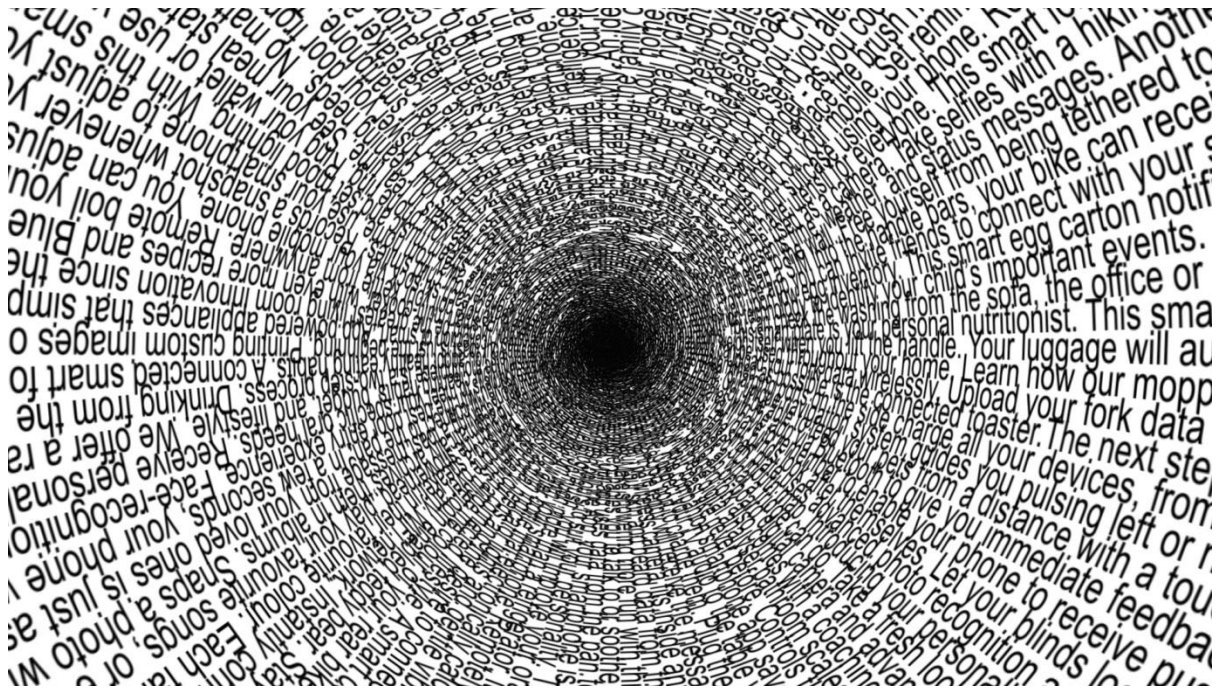
by David Theobald

Description: Animation of 100 text extracts taken from the promotional material for various connected household items which continuously spiral inwards to create a black hole. The audio was originally created for use as a meditation sound track. The work is structured as a 4 minute continuous loop.

Screenshot

Format: HD 1080p (25fps) digital animation. Animated using Adobe After Effects.

Installation: Intended for display as a large scale projection with sound. If space constrained, could be shown on a dedicated wall mounted flat screen with headphones.

Philosophy: Although appearing to free us from everyday chores, in many cases, the' Internet of Things' (IoT) instead demands a new set of prescribed behaviours in order to reap the supposed benefits – we need to place things in the right part of our smart fridge, ensure that our smart socks are charged, to make sure that the intelligent kettle is always full or that somehow there is always bread in our connected toaster.

The IoT presents the world as one of a seamless integration of activity rather than as a discrete set of micro actions (where each flags up the possibility of free will and the creation of choice). As we bundle our collective actions ever closer together, where our decision to have a cup of coffee alerts the dishwasher and informs our grocery store, there seems a risk that we become wrapped in a comfort blanket of code and our contact with the physical world might become ever more distant.