The worst is behind you...

Clive (Max) Maxfield - August 20, 2012

About three years ago, during a regular checkup, my doctor said "You're past 50 years old... how come I haven’t sent you for a colonoscopy yet?" Sad to relate, before I could come up with a witty answer, I was quickly booked in.

The night before the exam, I drank (what seemed like) ten gallons of the most obnoxious "stuff" known to man (even worse than American beer) to clear out my system. Good Grief! It certainly did clear out my system! The next morning, while I was lying on the bed after being wheeled into the examination room, the doctor in charge (whose job I do not envy) commiserated about the stuff one had to drink and quipped "Ah well, at least the worst is behind you."

I tried to hit him, but the anesthetic took hold...

Actually I have to say that modern anesthetics are absolutely incredibly. My recollection is that I went from being awake to ... well, being awake again. I don’t recall anything in between (no sliding down into unconsciousness and no fighting my way back up through the "fog"). It was all quite amazing really.

But that’s not what I wanted to talk about...

I remember reading a science fiction story ages ago. It must be more than 30 years ago now. At one stage the hero was on a bus or a train or something. As he walked through the vehicle, adverts that were targeted specifically at him appeared in front of him (I think something similar was portrayed on the original Total Recall movie - the one starring Arnold Schwarzenegger).

At that time I really didn’t think much about this, except perhaps that it seemed rather unlikely. Of course that was before the Internet and smartphones and suchlike. Now we have adverts targeted at us on the Internet based on the sites we visit and the things we look at and the items we order and the articles we read. How long will it be before we see adverts targeted specifically at us on those little TV screens on the back of airplane seats and suchlike?

But that’s not what I wanted to talk about...

I was listening to the NPR (National Public Radio) while driving into work this morning. There was a short piece on Bryan and Jordan Silverman – two brothers from New York – who have created rolls of toilet paper printed with adverts, some of which have coupon codes that can be read by smartphones. As the brothers say, these adverts really are playing to a captive audience.
This would certainly make me "pucker up" (grin)

So is the worst really behind us? Is this as low as it gets (pun intended)? Or can you think of something that is even more cringe-inducing?

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