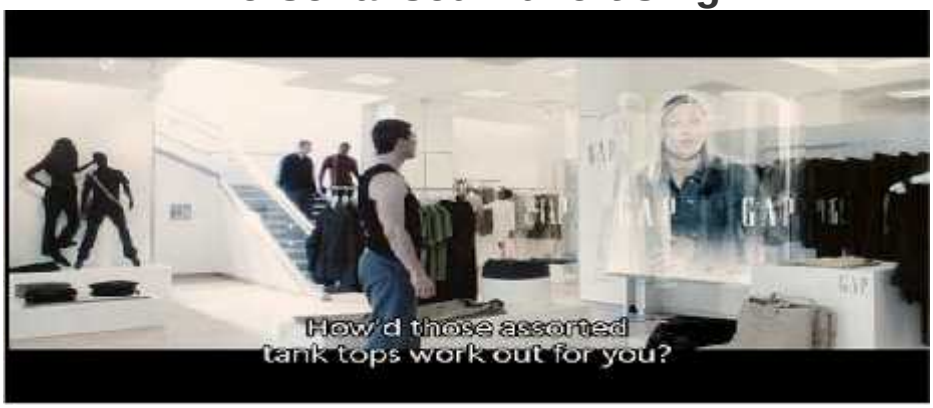
Personalised Advertising



As a panicked John Anderton (the character played by Tom Cruise) races through a shopping mall, he is besieged by a flurry of interactive advertising. Screens, apparently sensing his predicament, make their pitches: selling the American Express blue card, a women in a bathing suit beckons to Anderton and asks: "Need to escape? Blue can take you." Another says, "John Anderton: you could use a Guinness right now".

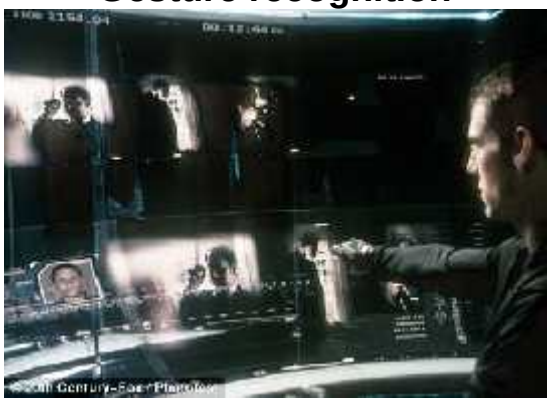
The main bits of technology they based their ideas on - retinal scanners and databases of consumers' preferences - already exist. The "video wallpaper" used to convey the messages was the most futuristic part of the scene.

Privacy concerns, and advertisers' fears that consumers might find the intrusion all too much, are probably bigger barriers to this concept becoming reality than technology.

E-paper

Anderton, still looking uncomfortable with his colleagues in the Future Crime department on his tail, races on to a busy subway train. Around him, it looks like a normal commuter scene - until you notice the newspapers being read have moving pictures on their front pages. And then the headline on one paper changes to show a picture of Anderton, along with a banner headline announcing that he is being hunted.

Gesture recognition



Tom Cruise doesn't have to stoop to the level of using a mere mouse and keyboard to operate his computer. In this future, the gloved user moves in a dance-like way before a semi-circle of huge screens, moving and manipulating windows, icons and images with his gestures

Guided cars The traffic of the future will be completely regulated, computer guided - and will run up the side of buildings. Only the rich will be able to afford to drive their own vehicles	

Jetpacks In this film, we get to see the benefits - and fatal flaws - of jetpacks. Benefits for the cops include dramatic, sudden entrances from hovering aircraft, and not having to bother with staircases when chasing criminals. The flaws are obvious when the officer(already an easy target flying through the air) gets in a fight mid-flight, loses his balance and spins out of control.	

3-D Videos

3-D video is at the heart of the weepy bits of the film - where Anderton gazes at the holographic images of his dead son and estranged wife. There are no cardboard glasses in sight as Anderton watches the images flicker to life.

Optical scientist David Burder, who runs London based 3-D Images Ltd and holds several patents related to 3-D technology, says that even today you can cast aside the funny specs if you want to see images in three dimensions.

"In Star Wars everybody sees the hologram of Princess Leia, but I'm afraid it's not like that," says Burder. "However, the idea of projecting an image into space - that is sort of possible."

Dr Steve Benton, a scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is working on creating holographic projection. Today, he can project a small, wire-frame box into mid-air.

"It's a ghostly-looking apparition," says Burder, "and that is the state of the art. It's extremely primitive, in the same way the first computer graphics were just wire-frame.

"You don't have to wear funny glasses or anything - you can put your hand through it and interact with it," he adds. "If the image is taken with a multi-lens camera, you could have a picture of yourself in the bath, with your legs dangling out the side of screen by half a foot, or even a foot. That is current technology, and commercially available."

Spider – Bots

The Pre-Crime division uses miniature spider-bots to look for suspects