



Maggie Philbin

Maggie Philbin has worked in radio and television for 30 years on a wide range of science, medical and technology programmes. Currently providing analysis and comment on technology for BBC Breakfast News and a regular reporter on BBC 1's "Inside Out", and BBC 1 The One Show she has a unique resonance with audiences, having grown up with them on much loved shows like "Swap Shop", "Hospital Watch" and "Tomorrow's World".

Many of the everyday gadgets we now take for granted were demonstrated on live television for the very first time by Maggie – the first truly mobile phone, the first car navigation system, the first fax machine, even the first supermarket barcode reader.

Additionally, Maggie's extensive radio and television career has also included working with ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5. She has covered stories all over the world, from earthquake prediction systems in Iceland, to wave power technology in Norway, to possibly the most dangerous system for rescuing people from ski cable cars in Switzerland! In September 2008 she worked on a project with the BBC, NHK (Japan) and RAI (Italy) to give the first live international demonstration of Super Hi-Vision, the broadcasting system that will be used in ten years time!

Her reporting career on live programmes from "Hospital Watch" to "This Morning", on network television and on local radio has taken her into every imaginable and unimaginable situation. "The most memorable moments have come from people I've met, who have been generous to trust me with their stories and experiences. I never take this job for granted."

In 2007 she and the BBC Radio Berkshire news team beat the Today Programme at the Sony Awards for the quality of their news coverage.

She is keen to help improve the visibility of successful scientists and engineers, both to encourage young people and women to pursue careers and reach top positions in these areas.

"In Britain we have a history of viewing scientists as remote loners, who pursue their unfathomable work in dusty laboratories. In an era where many children aspire simply to "be famous" and where winning "X Factor" is seen as the ultimate goal, it's vital for the science and engineering community to raise their profile and use powerful role models to help young people understand the reality of these professions.

It's heartbreaking to think of the amount of talent and innovation going to waste, simply because children and their families haven't the faintest idea what an engineer or technician actually does."

In November 2008, she pioneered "TeenTech", a lively interactive one day event which brought 400 young teenagers, scientists and technology companies together. "The kids had their stereotypical image of engineers completely reversed and the companies were staggered by the enthusiasm and innate talent of the teenagers." The BBC1 Politics show devoted half their programme to the event. TeenTech will run again as part of Science Week in 2010.

Maggie sits on the panel of the New Engineering Foundation, which supports the development of Vocational Education and helps lecturers in FE get cutting edge career development in industry. She is also patron of the Daphne Jackson Trust which helps scientists, engineers and technologists return to their careers.

"Getting the right support and training is key, whether you're 16 or 60. It makes an enormous difference not only to the personal development and confidence of individuals but to the success and reputation of companies and institutions."