

The future of second life

Nathan Tia, a creative lead for Centric, a new-media agency, has never met his boss face to face. Wouldn't that be a nice day at work! But how did Nathan Tia find a job like this?

It's not because he's an under-performer who hasn't been singled out for a pat on the back.

It's because Tia, who works from home, was hired through a "virtual interview," conducted on the Internet-based virtual world Second Life.

For the uninitiated, Second Life is a 3-D virtual online world where more than half a million users create their own avatars who interact, build homes and businesses, participate in an economy - and now, get hired.

As virtual worlds are being hailed as the next evolution of social media - a kind of MySpace 3.0 - they're being tapped by everyone from eBay to big staffing agencies as both a recruiting tool and a vehicle for "face to face" interviews.

So when they tell us this is just the start, what can we expect in a few years?