

@ Emergent Futures | New Around the World | What Are We Writing About

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*Extra links that we couldn't fit in this month's newsletter...*



## What's Emerging

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### **Pakistan the world's most dangerous country: Kilcullen**

A top counter-insurgency expert says Pakistan is a "lost cause", and without wholesale change the country risks spiralling into lawlessness. [Read more...](#)

### **Bye bye black and white: iRex color e-reader in 2011?**

We heard the news of E Ink being bought out, and mass producing colour displays by 2010, but today brings news of another e-reader manufacturer's experiments in colour. iRex is developing a new colour, writable e-book reader said to be on the market by mid 2011. [Read more...](#)

### **EcoFaeBrick**

EcoFaeBrick uses 75% of processed cattle waste as the material to make bricks. [Read more...](#)

### **Researchers mine cell phone data for insight into human behavior**

In 2007, the number of cell phone accounts worldwide passed 3.3 billion -- half the number of people on the planet. Now, scientists are discovering that a world buzzing with cell phone calls and text messages has a side benefit: reams of data about who calls whom and about where they are at what time. [Read more...](#)

### **Spreading patterns of mobile phone viruses**

Mobile viruses are little more than a nuisance today, but given our increased reliance on wireless communication, in the near future they could pose more risk than their PC based counterparts. [Read more...](#)

### **How twitter will change the way we live**

The one thing you can say for certain about Twitter is that it makes a terrible first impression. You hear about this new service that lets you send 140-character updates to your "followers," and you think, "Why does the world need this, exactly? It's not as if we were all sitting around four years ago scratching our heads and saying, "If only there were a technology that would allow me to send a message to my 50 friends, alerting them in real time about my choice of breakfast cereal." [Read more...](#)

### **The symbolic power of money (by Alon Nir)**

They say money can't buy happiness. That might be true, but a new study suggests money holds more benefits in store than just the obvious ones. A clever set of experiments by Xinyue Zhou, Kathleen D. Vohs and Roy F. Baumeister suggest that simply handling money can dull physical and emotional pain. [Read more...](#)

### **From sugar water to Spandex**

Someday, your Spandex tights and dashboard may be made out of sugar cane rather than petroleum, if start-up Genomatica succeeds on its plans. The San Diego-based start-up has reached a technical milestone in converting sugar--derived from sugar cane or beets--into an industrial plastic called 1,4-butanediol, or BDO. [Read more...](#)

### **Quantum entanglement in photosynthesis?**

Nanotechnology is, ultimately, a mechanization of the molecular processes of life. One of the most important of those processes is photosynthesis. If we really understood photosynthesis as deeply as we do, say, gear trains, and had the machinery to build whatever molecular machines we designed, we could build trees that produced gasoline from sunlight and the CO2 in the air. [Read more...](#)

### **Study shows Twitter is a broadcast medium**

New Harvard Business research data seems to prove something many had already figured out: Twitter is a broadcast medium, not a conversation. Comment -This article seems to ignore the fact that most of these systems are governed by power laws where there is a very small core of major users, content creators, etc - eg Wikipedia. [Read more...](#)

### **Smartphone operating systems: The market share, usage disconnect**

Smartphone Web usage and market share may be two statistics that don't mesh very well, according to a report by AdMob, which serves mobile ads. In a report released Wednesday, AdMob compared its market share stats vs. Gartner's. [Read more...](#)

### **Time to cash out: Why paper money hurts the economy**

Two years ago, Hasbro came out with an electronic version of Monopoly. Want to buy a house? Just put your debit card into the mag-stripe reader. Bing! No more pastel-coloured cash tucked under the board. Turns out it wasn't Lehman Brothers but Parker Brothers that could smell the future. At least, that's what participants at this year's Digital Money Forum believe. [Read more...](#)

### **Fred Wilson Google talk on disruption**

A great presentation by Fred Wilson on the disruptive effects of the internet. This is only a draft and there may be a more complete version somewhere but this is great. Here is the Google intro to it: *Fred will be talking about "disruptive industries". Media/entertainment has taken the brunt of the disruptive force of the internet and internet technology but that's just the start. What industries are next? Energy, education, consumer finance, and health care all seem ripe. What are those industries going to look like in 20 years, 40 years, 60 years?* [Read more...](#)

### **Computer program to take on 'Jeopardy!'**

I.B.M. has announced that it is in the final stages of completing a computer program to compete against human "Jeopardy!" contestants. If the program beats the humans, the field of artificial intelligence will have made a leap forward. [Read more...](#)

### **All washed up for Jatropha?**

The drought-resistant "dream" biofuel is also a water hog. [Read more...](#)

### **Siri: A powerful virtual assistant for the iPhone**

A new paradigm for using the Internet is about to begin: Virtual Assistants (VA's) are coming to a mobile device near you. In the last week of May a stealth start-up demonstrated the first public version of their mobile virtual assistant, Siri . This may mark the beginning of the era of consumer-grade virtual assistants on the Web. [Read more...](#)

### **Holographic meetings, gestures as mouse clicks and the Microsoft magic wand**

Earlier this month, Microsoft applied for a patent for "Virtual Office Devices" which would allow users to have meetings with holographic images of other, remote attendees. [Read more...](#)

### **Twitter's phenomenal growth suddenly stops**

Twitter's growth has suddenly stopped, at least according to the numbers from Compete. [Read more...](#)

### **The state of internet TV: Consumers may pay for content; aggregators win**

Bernstein's annual consumer survey reveals that folks may be interested in cutting their cable connection for sites like Hulu, but are unlikely to make the move. Meanwhile, consumers may even pay up for professional content. [Read more...](#)

### **Barry Diller: The internet 'absolutely' will become a 'paid system'. time projection: within 5 years**

The days of the free Internet will draw to a close over the next five years, according to the chairman and chief executive of IAC, the interactive services company which operates a collection of more than 30 Internet sites which produce \$1.5 billion a year in revenue. [Read more...](#)

### **AOL solidifies spot on hall of shame**

For the second year in a row, Internet service provider AOL has received top honors – for providing the worst customer service. [Read more...](#)

### **Antibodies by genotype**

A startup called PIKAMAB, based in Menlo Park, CA, believes that it can make monoclonal antibodies more effective by grouping patients together based on their genotype and offering a customized antibody developed for that genotype. [Read more...](#)

### **Disease of rich extends its pain to middle class**

Often called the "disease of kings" because of its association with the rich foods and copious alcohol once available only to aristocrats, gout is staging a middle-class comeback as American society grows older and heavier. [Read more...](#)

### **'Passion for digital' pumps P&G's spending**

Even as Procter & Gamble Co. cut measured U.S. media spending 18% overall last quarter, it more than doubled spending on internet display ads, according to data from TNS Media Intelligence.....Of course, the jump is relative. [Read more...](#)

### **MIT hopes to exorcise phantom traffic jams**

We've all been there - stuck in traffic, inching along, running late and getting angry when suddenly everyone starts moving. Mathematicians at MIT are determined to find out what causes them - and more importantly, how to prevent them. [Read more...](#)

### **Sweden's pirate party sails to success in European elections**

A wave of revulsion against a law that targets file sharers has swept the Pirate Party into a seat at the European parliament. Not even in existence when the last European elections took place, the Pirate party managed to secure 7% of the national vote in Sweden. [Read more...](#)

### **Wikipedia to add video options to articles**

Wikipedia is a great knowledge base, containing tons of text and lots of photos, but it's lacking when it comes to videos. This is all going to change in a couple of months, as Wikipedia has big plans for video. [Read more...](#)

### **Can governments till the fields of innovation?**

INNOVATION — the tricky, many-step process by which ideas become products and services — has typically been seen, studied and celebrated at the micro level, as a pursuit for entrepreneurs and clever companies. But governments are increasingly wading into the innovation game. [Read more...](#)

### **The newspaper isn't dead yet**

Why newsprint still beats the Kindle. [Read more...](#)

### **Wall Street's toxic message**

An interesting article on the economic crisis by Joseph Stiglitz. [Read more...](#)

### **Cell phones that listen and learn**

New software tracks a user's behaviour by monitoring everyday sounds. [Read more...](#)

### **Investors bet on payments via cellphone**

On a PC, having to fill out a form and type in a credit card number to buy something is only mildly annoying. On a cellphone, it could make you want to skip the purchase entirely. This is why investors, start-ups and major corporations are pouring money into services that make it easier to use cellphones to buy goods and transfer money. [Read more...](#)

### **DNA-like molecule replicates without help**

Researchers pondering the origin of life have long struggled to crack the ultimate chicken-and-egg paradox. How did nucleic acids like DNA and RNA--which encode proteins--first form, when proteins are needed for their synthesis? Now, scientists report that they've cooked up molecular hybrids of proteins and nucleic acids that skirt the dreaded paradox. [Read more...](#)