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*Welcome to the October edition of What's Emerging.*

*Sandy Teagle commenced work full time with Emergent Futures yesterday. Sandy will be working out of Brisbane so if anybody out there is looking for assistance in foresight work up that way contact her on [sandy@emergentfutures.com](mailto:sandy@emergentfutures.com).*

*We are organising a complete revamp of the website that should be finished by December. The new website will have a blog, and will allow archives of the newsletter and our published articles to be searchable on the website. We hope you will find the new site far more useful, and we will email out to you when the changeover is complete.*

*Paul Higgins, Sandy Teagle, Syed Ahmed Muqthar and Samantha Kyle-Little*

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## Business Tip

### Free phone calls

For our USA email subscribers there is a company called Futurephone which is offering free international calls from a gateway number in Iowa. You still have to pay for the call to Iowa but after that it is free. For many US people the call to Iowa is also free by calling using free time on cell phones, etc. Check it out and if you can explain what their business model is get back to us.

### Adobe to launch web meeting system

Adobe is launching a lower cost web meeting system through its new Adobe Acrobat 8 launch. This post describes the market, several services and the likely impact of the new offering. We are looking at implementing the system in our business.

### Stern Review on climate change

The British government has released an economic study which says the costs of ignoring climate change could run up to 20% of the world's GDP on an annual basis. This link goes to the report page. A major issue for all businesses to consider in the coming years.

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## Emerging issues from around the world

Click on the titles to read the full stories.

### **Virtual 'life assistant'**

Will the data centers run by Google, Amazon, etc evolve into virtual assistants rather than just search organisations? This interesting post thinks so.

### **Hydrogen petrol hybrid**

BMW has developed a car that will run on hydrogen or petrol through an internal combustion engine rather than using hydrogen in fuel cells. Is this the alternative hydrogen path?

### **Social Shopping**

Crowdstorm is just one of a number of new social shopping sites where the users get to rate products, creating a product popularity rating which informs future purchasers. An interesting phenomenon for marketers to try and figure out.

### **Lock down or not**

There is a big debate going on at the moment about the level of control that entertainment companies should exert over their content. Excessive content control means a poor user experience and pushes people towards not using the product legally while free use causes problems with business models. This web link goes to a podcast on the subject from the MIT Emerging Technologies conference.

### **Web 2.0 and the enterprise**

This is a very interesting blog on new Web 2.0 tools and how they might be adapted to new business models.

### **The risk of terrorism**

This article from Wired magazine lists the major causes of death from non natural causes in the US. Terrorism attacks are way down the list, even including the World Trade Centre attacks. Maybe more of our attention should be directed to where the risks are greater?

### **Do you want a pig liver**

No, not for dinner but to replace your failing one. This researcher believes that pig organ transplants for humans may be as little as five years away using miniature pigs with genetic changes to reduce implant rejection.

### **Nano stops bleeding**

A new biodegradable liquid has been created which forms a gel when applied to a bleeding wound. The gel stops the bleeding and can be left in place while the wound is stitched up over it.

### **Guided by a swan**

Researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology have developed a technology called SWAN – System for Wearable Audio Navigation. The system uses a number of

navigation devices to produce sounds that can be used to guide the visually impaired, or fire fighters in a smoke filled building.

### **A three terabyte DVD**

Researchers have developed a nano antenna that is able to focus lasers so tightly it may be possible to burn a three terabyte DVD, vastly increasing portable storage capacity.

### **Keep learning**

Recent research on the brain has shown that new neurons are born in the adult brain every day, mainly in the areas responsible for memory and learning, a feat which was previously thought to be impossible. Now it has been revealed that most of these new neurons die within weeks but that active learning increases the chance that they will survive. So get out there and keep learning if you want to keep your grey matter in shape.

### **Watching the brain**

Scientists at MIT are working on a way to follow calcium in the brain to give us a clearer idea of brain function and areas involved in basic motor and verbal skills and cognitive states.

### **Cyberspace dealing**

James Packer's Publishing and Broadcasting Ltd is thought to have used a secure online data room in its latest massive media deal in order to minimise the chances of the deal being noticed.

### **Coal powered fuel cells**

While we have been concentrating on biofuels and renewables, there is some really interesting stuff going on in fuel cells to produce electricity and other alternates for fossil fuel energy. This site from the National Energy Technical Laboratory details some of them.

### **Skype television**

The founders of Skype are planning to launch a free internet television service supported by advertising.

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## **What Are We Writing About**

This month's article is an opinion piece that Paul and Sandy had published in the Newcastle Herald following the announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister of a biodiesel initiative in the city. Go to the website front page to read about the pros and cons of biodiesel.

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