



Published by Emergent Futures Pty Ltd

Extra Links Mid March 2011

Welcome to the Middle of March edition of What's Emerging

By accident there is a bit of a theme on collaboration, social media and collaboration in this edition. Paul wrote a piece on Quora on the attributes of a futurist, Quora is a collaborative site where you can pose questions of interest and get answers from a range of people. There is another blog comment on shared ownership following on from the Flexicar piece in the middle of February. We were asked to write a commentary piece on social media for regional Australia which has just been published, and there are a number of links on social media, distributed solar energy, and connected devices in the links as well as Facebook's plans to disrupt the high price of SMS messages charged by telecom companies. While we say this is by accident the reality is that social connections and collaboration, and the increasing number of connected devices and sensors are going to significantly change the world and our scanning is reflecting that.

We hope that you continue to find the newsletter interesting and valuable and would welcome any feedback.

Cheers

Paul Higgins, Sandy Teagle, Kim Stewart, Anitha Mendonca, Syed Muqthar, and Samantha Kyle-Little

SECTIONS

- [What we are writing about](#)
- [Business Tips](#)
- [What's Emerging](#)
- [More Links](#)

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What we are writing about

My response to a Quora question: What are the main attributes of a futurist?

As a matter of principle we are trying to get better at how people think about the future and the problem with relying on data is that it is all historical. I have extreme difficulty with the type of futurist or strategist who builds scenarios or models that give likelihood and probabilities which ignore trends breaking and unknown or unimagined events occurring and changing the whole pattern. [Read More...](#)

Why owner-less means access more

Owner-less has been a trend for quite a few years. First at the edges, and in environments that responded to the call for sustainability and conservation. For our comment go to the [Blog](#) which also links to the post we had in the mid February newsletter on [How Flexible Car Sharing Messes with Your Brain](#). [Read More...](#)

Errors in state revenue estimates growing in size and frequency

The report, States' Revenue Estimating: Cracks in the Crystal Ball, found that in fiscal year 2009—the first of the ongoing budget crisis—half the states overestimated revenues by at least 10.2 percent. That equated to an unexpected shortfall of nearly \$50 billion in personal income, corporate income and sales tax revenues. For our comment go to the [blog](#). [Read More...](#)

A commentary on social media for regional Australia

We were asked to write a commentary on social media for the Australasia Pacific Extension Network which is a professional organisation for people involved in community and rural development, adult education, communication and other fields. You can read the commentary by going to our [Home Page](#) and looking at the latest downloads. For APEN's newsletter you can go to their [Publications page](#). [Read More...](#)

Aussie houses are world's most overpriced

"We've had 20 years where the Australian consumers have been willing to borrow more to buy an asset that they believe always goes up in value - the classic sign of an asset bubble," he said. For our comment go [here](#). [Read More...](#)

[↑ Top of the page](#)

Business Tips

Our business tips are in our main newsletter please click [here](#).

What's Emerging

Its official - You can't beat the internet

To avoid detection by Libyan secret police, who monitor Facebook and Twitter, Mahmoudi, the leader of the Ekhtalef ("Difference") Movement, used what's considered the Match.com of the Middle East to send coded love letters to rally the revolution. [Read More...](#)

Light-emitting rubber could sense structural damage

The new type of sensor could be an early warning system for bridges and buildings under stress. [Read More...](#)

Larger cities drive growing wage gap between the rich and the poor, study shows

"Our results show that overall up to one-third of the growth in the wage gap between the rich and the poor is driven by city size independent of workers' skills," says Pavan. [Read More...](#)

Pixar studios 3D printing

The Z Corp equipment creates the characters in full color. The 3D printer that made this model uses inkjets very similar to the ones in commercial printers and sprays the ink onto an off white surface that is similar to plaster. [Read More...](#)

Computers get in touch with your emotions

Kay Stanney, owner of Design Interactive, an engineering and consulting firm that works with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Office of Naval Research, says that a lot of information about a user's mental and physiological state can be measured, and that this data can help computers cater to that user's needs. [Read More...](#)

Blogs wane as the young drift to sites like Twitter

The Internet and American Life Project at the Pew Research Center found that from 2006 to 2009, blogging among children ages 12 to 17 fell by half; now 14 percent of children those ages who use the Internet have blogs. Among 18-to-33-year-olds, the project said in a report last year, blogging dropped two percentage points in 2010 from two years earlier. [Read More...](#)

Brain doesn't need vision to 'read' material

Unlike other tasks that the brain performs, reading is a recent invention, about 5,400 years old. Braille has been in use for less than 200 years. "That's not enough time for evolution to have shaped a brain-module dedicated to reading," Amedi explained. [Read More...](#)

Drug follows melanoma wherever it goes

Researchers testing the nanotherapeutic agent, which has been under development for over a decade, hope it provides a way to target melanoma and map its spread throughout the body. Researchers have tested the drug in animals and found no toxicity. Safety tests in five melanoma patients should be completed by the end of the year. [Read More...](#)

Physicists discover quantum law of protein folding

To put this in perspective, a relatively small protein of only 100 amino acids can take some 10^{100} different configurations. If it tried these shapes at the rate of 100 billion a second, it would take longer than the age of the universe to find the correct one. Just how these molecules do the job in nanoseconds, nobody knows. [Read More...](#)

The tectonic forces that are shredding New Zealand

This week the New Zealand city of Christchurch felt the force of a 6.3-magnitude earthquake. The quake came just five months after an even larger one struck 40 kilometres west of Christchurch, near the town of Darfield. They are a sign of the tectonic processes that are gradually shredding the country. [Read More...](#)

Now the doctor is always in: New radiology app for 24/7 diagnosis

The FDA recently cleared a radiology app for the iPhone and iPad that will let physicians view medical images including MRI, CT and PET scans. [Read More...](#)

21st century medicine, 19th century practices

Paul Higgins: It is frightening to read how antiquated the information systems are in the American health system given all the advances that are occurring, many of which we have posted here on this site. [Read More...](#)

Automaton, know thyself: Robots become self-aware

This lack of adaptability "is the reason we don't have many robots in the home, which is much more unstructured than the factory," Lipson adds. "The key is for robots to create a model of themselves to figure out what is working and not working in order to adapt." [Read More...](#)

Heinz to adopt Coca Cola's "PlantBottle"

Coke's patented PlantBottle, made from up to 30 percent plant-based material, will now be used for Heinz ketchup. Heinz says it will convert all of its 20-ounce bottles in the U.S. this summer. [Read More...](#)

Harvesting business ideas from inside and out

Medtronic taps social networking and crowdsourcing to find innovation in unexpected places. [Read More...](#)

User-generated site adds historical layer to Google Maps

OnSwipe, led by entrepreneur and writer Jason Baptiste and backed with \$1 million in venture capital, is working on technology that turns any website into an interactive, slide-and-zoom, constantly updated read on a tablet, without the need for readers to download an app as they do with The Daily, Popular Mechanics and even Wired magazine. [Read More...](#)

Calling all cars: Cell phone networks and the future of traffic

Networks of sensors connected by the Web are making it possible to monitor traffic, parking availability, air pollution, road quality, and more in real time and across large distances. This kind of data gives drivers real-time travel time predictions, makes it possible to create smart roads where tolls and signals can adapt to changing conditions, and provides urban planners with accurate and detailed pictures of traffic usage and its effects, improving city layout and planning for the future. [Read More...](#)

Paul Higgins: The fact that this is a story is Microsoft's problem: moonlighting within Microsoft, in pursuit of new apps

Microsoft has taken an unusual step. It has relaxed a strict rule and will let employees moonlight in their spare time and keep the resulting intellectual property and most of the revenue, as long as that second job is writing apps for Windows Phone 7-based devices. [Read More...](#)

Foreign investment ebbs in India

India's rise has captured the world's imagination, as the economy grows at nearly 9 percent a year and a growing consumer class buys cellphones, cars and homes. Yet foreign businesses and investors, once increasingly eager to tap that stunning growth, have started looking elsewhere. [Read More...](#)

Just spectacular: Fly over the 'Brainbow'

Using a clever trick of genetic engineering, in which genes for three or more different

fluorescent proteins were combined like paints to generate different hues, researchers created a system to make each neuron glow one of 100 different colors. [Read More...](#)

Sedimentary clues to an ancient megadrought

A new analysis of deep lake sediment suggests that the breakup and melting of massive icebergs in the North Atlantic may have triggered one of the most widespread and intense droughts in the past 50,000 years. [Read More...](#)

Immune molecule regulates brain connections

The number of connections between nerve cells in the brain can be regulated by an immune system molecule, according to a new study from UC Davis. The research, published Feb. 27 in the journal Nature Neuroscience, reveals a potential link between immunity, infectious disease and conditions such as schizophrenia or autism. [Read More...](#)

Tobii and Lenovo show off prototype eye-controlled laptop

The verdict? It works extraordinarily well -- Tobii clearly knows what it's doing, because even with our sloppy calibration at the start of the session, the system still detected where we were looking with pinpoint precision. [Read More...](#)

IBM fuels social business adoption with partner and academic skills initiative

IBM has unveiled new programs to help business partners embrace the growing social business market opportunity and to financially reward them for their value to clients. [Read More...](#)

A pacemaker the size of a tic tac

Medtronic is using microelectronics to make a pacemaker so small it can be injected. [Read More...](#)

Investors are drawn anew to digital music

The heightened interest in a field that has had few winners and a vast graveyard of losers has left some long time executives and analysts scratching their heads. [Read More...](#)

Space tourism may mean one giant leap for researchers

A \$200,000 ticket is prohibitively expensive except for a small slice of the wealthy, but compared with the millions of dollars that government agencies like NASA typically spend to get experiments into space, "it's revolutionary," [Read More...](#)

Newborn mice can fix their broken hearts

For a few fleeting days, the beating heart inside newborn mice can regenerate itself after an injury. Stem cells, surprisingly, were not involved. [Read More...](#)

25 women-run startups to watch

We continue our Women in Tech coverage with a list of startups with female founders and CEOs by Allyson Kapin, one of our Most Influential Women in Technology in 2010. [Read More...](#)

Edison taps Teradata for smart meter data

Projects such as Southern California Edison's expected to create more than \$4B in demand for data analytics products by 2015. [Read More...](#)

Our Cites Can Evolve: From Abstraction to Insight

Sensors are increasingly embedded in everything from police cars to parking meters and are generating massive amounts of data from every city department and street corner. [Read More...](#)

Stomach pacemaker could help obese lose weight

Patrick Hetzner tried diets and exercise, just about everything short of stomach stapling to lose weight. Nothing worked. Five months ago he tried something new: a stomach pacemaker that curbed his appetite. [Read More...](#)

Scout cookies go high tech

It's certainly a large-scale program--it generates some \$700 million in revenues. But it's also a program that's been bound by tradition, but is now adapting to our contemporary digital lifestyle: Starting this week a number of troops in San Diego are accepting credit card payments via iPhones. [Read More...](#)

World food prices hit new record: UN

The FAO Food Price Index, which monitors monthly price changes for a basket of commodities, averaged 231 points in January - up 3.4 per cent from December and its highest level since

FAO started measuring food prices in 1990. [Read More...](#)

Teach for America is giving its teachers mini-headsets so that they can get a classroom assist when the going gets tough

Teachers-in-training will have their very own personal angel to discreetly coach them through new lesson plans, with the same ear-bud wiring that feeds live information to NFL coaches.

[Read More...](#)

World's biggest producer of wind energy records \$4 billion in profits in 2010

To sweeten the deal even more, the company's power generation rose 8 percent to 154,073 gigawatt hours and they produced half of that electricity without emitting carbon dioxide.

[Read More...](#)

Helping consumers with data from twenty million credit cards

Bundle.com is a personal finance website with a mission to "help US consumers make smarter decisions with their money". What really makes it stand out is the company's unique access to detailed, anonymized transaction histories from 20 million Citibank credit cards. [Read More...](#)

The confluence of mobile, location, social, and group

What happens when more and more consumers have nearly full-fledged, connected computers in their hands everywhere they are? [Read More...](#)

Android, take a letter: Robotic hand helps people type

That's supposedly what people with mobility problems will one day be able to say to their robot companions if engineers at Virginia Tech in the US get their way. They want to create robots with the manual dexterity to operate the machines people regularly encounter in everyday life.

[Read More...](#)

The age of relevance

What's the Next Big Thing after social networking? This has been a favourite topic of much speculation among tech enthusiasts for many years. [Read More...](#)

Beyond the numbers: A closer look at China's wind power success

In 2010, China overtook the United States as the global leader in installed wind power capacity, representing yet another triumph in the much-hyped clean tech race between the world's two largest economies. Looking beyond the numbers, however, the true nature of China's wind energy development appears far more bleak. [Read More...](#)

How can smart planning help cities adapt to climate change?

A report from the Center for Clean Air Policy found that cities that implement best practices in city planning — specifically with green infrastructure — can help communities improve air quality and human health, while creating economic prosperity, and a lower demand on energy.

[Read More...](#)

Technology will make collaboration your next competitive advantage

New tools are changing the way people work with each other, their companies' partners, and their customers. [Read More...](#)

China reportedly plans strict goals to save energy

With oil prices at their highest level in more than two years because of unrest in North Africa and the Middle East, the Chinese government plans to announce strict five-year goals for energy conservation in the next two weeks, China energy specialists said Friday. [Read More...](#)

Memo to newspapers: Incremental change is not helping

Making the transition from being traditional print publishers to digital-first media outlets hasn't been easy for newspapers — in fact, many have stubbornly resisted, and tried to dip their toes into digital waters gradually without investing any substantial effort or resources. [Read More...](#)

Kinect as 3D scanner: Fabricate yourself

A new project uses the Microsoft Kinect as a crude 3D scanner. Joris from i.materialise sez, "Fabricate Yourself is a tool by Karl Willis of Interactive Fabrication. Released at the Tangible, Embedded and Embodied Interaction Conference, the tool lets people strike a pose in front of a Microsoft Kinect. If they like the pose they can 3D print the result. [Read More...](#)

Scientists build world's first anti-laser

The discovery could pave the way for a number of novel technologies with applications in

everything from optical computing to radiology. [Read More...](#)

How the iPad 2 will revolutionize education

These are just a few of the uses that are immediately obvious. However, the wonderful thing about technology is that investigating new applications is educational in it-self. Tech-happy students will be eager to explore new ways of using tablets and sharing their discoveries with the world. [Read More...](#)

Armies of expensive lawyers, replaced by cheaper software

Some programs go beyond just finding documents with relevant terms at computer speeds. They can extract relevant concepts — like documents relevant to social protest in the Middle East — even in the absence of specific terms, and deduce patterns of behavior that would have eluded lawyers examining millions of documents. [Read More...](#)

Textbooks' digital future

Harold Elder is not your typical Apple fanboy. Yet the 58-year-old University of Alabama economics professor pre-ordered an iPad to make sure he had one of the first ones. The device is "something that I've been waiting for for years," he says. "It really has the possibility of making the learning experience much richer." [Read More...](#)

Stellar wormholes may exist

It's speculative, but could pairs of stars be connected via tunnels in space time? [Read More...](#)

Android overtakes BlackBerry as the top U.S. smartphone platform [REPORT]

According to comScore's data, Google's Android rose from 23.5% market share in October 2010 to 31.2% in January 2011, enough to securely grab first place from RIM's BlackBerry, which fell 35.8% in October 2010 to 30.4% in January 2011. [Read More...](#)

Finnish library uses games to crowdsource indexing

So far, more than 20,000 people have visited the Digitalkoot site, and volunteer gamers have contributed more than 85,000 minutes of their time to helping its efforts. [Read More...](#)

Under Armour smart garment includes embedded sensors and on-board computer for biofeedback

The technology, adapted from the U.S. Special Forces and NASA through technology partner Zephyr Technologies, could be a breakthrough on both sides of the evaluation spectrum. For example, the touchpoints display not only heart rate, breathing and acceleration, but specific aspects of drills never measured before. [Read More...](#)

The world's technological capacity to store, communicate, and compute information

The study by the USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism estimates that in 2007, humankind was able to store 2.9×10^{20} optimally compressed bytes, communicate almost 2×10^{21} bytes, and carry out 6.4×10^{18} instructions per second on general-purpose computers. [Read More...](#)

Wearable Sensor Reveals what Overwhelms You

The Q Sensor could help you manage stress by showing when you are under pressure. [Read More...](#)

Reprogrammed stem cells are rife with mutations

Adult cells that have been reprogrammed into stem cells harbor a number of genetic mutations, some of which appear in genes that have been linked to cancer. [Read More...](#)

DNA molecular robots learn to walk in any direction along a branched track

Such control was not possible until now because previous devices were only able to move forwards in a straight line. The robot might find use in nanotechnology applications such as next-generation molecular machines and be used to move "cargo", like drugs. [Read More...](#)

The disintegration of Pakistan accelerates

The assassination of Shahbaz Bhatti, Pakistan's Minister for Minorities and the national government's last outspoken advocate of religious tolerance, was a pivotal event in Pakistan's history. It was carried out, it appears, with the consent of Pakistan's intelligence service and the blessing of Pakistan's military. [Read More...](#)

Looking to do more social good, IDEO launches a non-profit arm

As a non-profit, IDEO.org, which will officially launch in the fall, will be in a better position to get grants from foundations whose rules make working with for-profit companies difficult.

[Read More...](#)

How can robots get our attention?

How can a robot use subtle cues to attract a human's notice and tell when it has captured it?

In a preliminary study, researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology have found that they can program a robot to understand when it gains a human's attention and when it falls short.

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[Top of the page](#)

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