

# What's Emerging?

The latest news and information ...

We help you think about the future so you can act today ...

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## February 2011

### Welcome to the end of February edition of What's Emerging

As we put this newsletter together rescuers are scouring the rubble in Christchurch, New Zealand for survivors from the earthquake. The last couple of years seems to have visited an unprecedented level of natural and man-made disasters on the Australia and New Zealand region between bushfires, floods, earthquakes and mine disasters. Our thoughts go out to families that have lost loved ones or are still uncertain as to their fate.

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

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## What we are writing about

### Book Review: What Technology Wants by Kevin Kelly

The scope of this book by Kevin Kelly is enormous as he covers the development of technology back from the big bang at the start of the universe. His theory being that all of what constitutes our technology flows from the nature of energy and matter and how we have evolved. Therefore this book is not for the fainthearted but if you are really interested in how technology affects our world, our thinking, and how it may evolve and change and you are prepared to spend the time and effort then you will be richly rewarded. [Read More...](#)

### A place for NGOs to share & learn from failures

Launched last month by Engineers Without Borders Canada, Toronto-based Admitting Failure is intended to be "a collaboration between like-minded NGOs, governments, donors and those in the private sector," in the site's own words. Those involved with charitable development groups can visit the site to submit their own stories of plans gone wrong, or they can browse through the stories submitted by others, rating and commenting upon them along the way. For our comment go to the [blog](#). [Read More...](#)

### Does America's Fightback Start with Chicago?

James Warren has written an interesting piece over at The Atlantic on the election of Rahm Emmanuel as the Mayor of Chicago and the challenges that he faces. On a broader level the reinvigoration of the cities all over the USA could be a major part of the solution to what is clearly a broken political and teetering economic system. [Read More...](#)

Obama faults spy agencies' performance in gauging Mideast unrest, officials say

One former American official said that in recent weeks Mr. Obama urged intelligence officials to ensure that spy agencies were devoting as much effort to "long-term analysis" as they were to carrying out operations against Al Qaeda, including the C.I.A.'s bombing campaign using armed drone aircraft. For our comment go to the [blog](#). [Read More...](#)

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## ■ Business Tips

### Forget "brand conversations" on social networks

Rushkoff thinks branding is irrelevant in the age of the social network. He compares social networks to the original bazaars and marketplaces of the past. .... He says that people weren't interested in "branding" then - they were interested in exchanging factual (or supposedly factual) information. [Read More...](#)

### The scale every business needs now

Great post by Umair Haque on questions of scale comparing the 20th and the 21st century including: "Twenty-first Century scale is about ambition, not stuff. So here's a killer question to kick off 2010: Does your ambition scale?" [Read More...](#)

### Free email marketing for non-profits

Graphic Mail (which we use for our email newsletter) is offering free email newsletter credits of 10,000 a month for registered not for profits. [Read More...](#)

### PocketMod

PocketMod is a website and freeware program that helps make 8-paged mini-booklets and organizers out of a single sheet of paper. [Read More...](#)

### Let your smartphone write bibliographies for you

Quick Cite, lets you use the camera on an iOS or Android smartphone to scan a barcode and have the app email you a properly-formatted entry (in MLA, APA, Chicago, or IEEE formats). [Read More...](#)

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## ■ What's Emerging

### Earth could be 'unrecognizable' by 2050

With a predicted population of 9 billion, food production and competition for resources could change the face of our planet. [Read More...](#)

### New York City to put QR codes on all building permits by 2013

New York City's Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg has announced the use of Quick Response codes (a smartphone-readable barcode) on building permits, to provide New Yorkers with easy access to information related to buildings and construction sites throughout the city. [Read More...](#)

### Strokes striking younger Americans, study says

Strokes are rising dramatically among young and middle-aged Americans while dropping in older people, a sign that the obesity epidemic may be starting to shift the age burden of the disease. [Read More...](#)

### Robots to get their own internet

European scientists have embarked on a project to let robots share and store what they discover about the world. Called RoboEarth it will be a place that robots can upload data to when they master a task, and ask for help in carrying out new ones. [Read More...](#)

### Print me a Stradivarius

How a new manufacturing technology will change the world . [Read More...](#)

### Continuous deployment

At Etsy, they push out code about 25 times per day. It has worked out very well for Etsy and has led to faster cycles, improved morale, and a more stable and reliable web service. [Read More...](#)

## Looking ahead: Scenarios

Shell energy scenarios to 2050 Well worth a critical look. [Read More...](#)

### China to convert phone booths to wifi hotspots

With mobile phones nearing 100% market penetration, the Chinese government appears determined to transform the country's widespread telephone booths into wifi hotspots.

[Read More...](#)

### Building and managing an intelligent city

Accenture argues for the need to develop intelligent cities that use sophisticated open technology platforms to deliver higher-quality services more consistently to citizens and businesses at reduced cost—and that can adapt to risks like climate change, growing populations and aging infrastructures. [Read More...](#)

### AeroVironment develops world's first fully operational life-size hummingbird-like unmanned aircraft for DARPA

AeroVironment, Inc. has announced it has accomplished a technical milestone never before achieved — controlled precision hovering and fast-forward flight of a two-wing, flapping wing aircraft that carries its own energy source, and uses only the flapping wings for propulsion and control. [Read More...](#)

### Android phone gets driver out of a ticket

College student Sahas Katta was able to beat his speeding ticket in traffic court using...drumroll please...his Android smartphone, and a handy app. [Read More...](#)

### Cellphone use tied to changes in brain activity

Researchers from the National Institutes of Health have found that less than an hour of cellphone use can speed up brain activity in the area closest to the phone antenna, raising new questions about the health effects of low levels of radiation emitted from cellphones.

[Read More...](#)

### More of world's crops are genetically engineered

The amount of land devoted to genetically engineered crops grew 10% last year, and 7% in the year before, as farmers in major grain and soy exporting countries such as Brazil and Argentina continued to adopt the new seeds. [Read More...](#)

### PepsiCo aims to revive sunflower production in Mexico

Beverage giant PepsiCo has announced a public-private partnership with Inter-American Development Bank to kickstart sunflower production in Mexico, with the intention of creating a sustainable market for the flower. [Read More...](#)

### Special report issue 37 - sharing risk: Financing Australia's disaster resilience

This paper argues that it's time to start thinking strategically about how we can reduce future losses from natural disasters and aid victims in their recovery efforts. We should be asking fundamental questions about how private insurance and government assistance can be better leveraged to help communities recover. [Read More...](#)

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## More Links

We have many more links than we can fit in the newsletter - this month's 'Additional Links' are available on our [website](#).

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