



Published by Emergent Futures Pty Ltd

## March 2011

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

Shortly there will be some changes to what we do with the scanning posts that we collect. All subscribers will continue to receive this newsletter as it has always been sent out and it will continue to contain business tips and links to what we are writing about as well as highlighted scanning posts. If all you do is read the newsletter you will see no difference. However from the next edition there will no longer be an extra links document uploaded to the website. If you have been downloading that document and looking at those links then they will all still be available at our [micro-blog site](#) which you can follow by joining Tumblr, or by just going to the site, or adding it via RSS to your news reader of choice. The content on the blog is searchable. From May we will be launching a premium scanning post service which will give you access to a searchable database of all of our public posts, plus scanning material that does not go on the blog site, reports and files that you can download, and regular longer articles on trend updates and foresight insights. This will be free for the first three months of subscription (separate to the newsletter) so that you can try out the site and look at the value it provides. After the first three months expires you will be required to pay an annual fee to maintain access.

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](#)

→ [Visit our website](#)

[Follow us on Twitter](#)

[Visit our Tumblelog](#)

## What we are writing about

### Thoughts on newsletters versus other ways

Our policy is to put the material out through as many channels as possible and let people choose their own method of accessing what we put up. What this means is that traditional methods of assessing linkages and followers are outdated because so much of what happens is fragmented now because users can choose rather than the producer choosing....

**Note: Since this was written on the 15th March we have an additional 86 followers and subscribers. Only one of those is a newsletter sign up. [Read More...](#)**

What is that future stuff all about?

**Paul Higgins: My response to some of the criticism of futurist Chris Sanderson in The Age last week. Published in the National Times and the Brisbane Times.** Let me say first of all that a lot of the criticism thrown at futurists is the fault of futurists themselves. This is in part due to poor communication of what we do, and secondly by the jumped up self-promotion of some so-called futurists who purport to tell people what will happen. The first thing that I say to someone who comes to me and says "we would like a vision of what the future of X industry will look like in 10 years" is: the only thing that I will guarantee you is that it will be

## What's Emerging?

wrong. This seems like a strange thing for a futurist to say but ignoring reality as not really a business model that I would like to follow..... [Read More...](#)

## Business Tips

PDFescape: An update to a free online tool

With Adobe Reader's new release, you can now add comments and share PDFs much easier. [Read More...](#)

Multitasking: This is your brain on media

A new report finds that multi-taskers are lousy at everything that is necessary for multi-tasking. **Paul Higgins: This is important to think about when reviewing your work habits and what you ask staff to do.** [Read More...](#)

Evernote GTD and more to get organized

**Paul Higgins: Those of you that have been following us for a while know that we are fans of Evernote and the Getting Things Done system. This great blog post combines the two of them and shows you how to organise Evernote Folders to increase your productivity, including how to email tasks into Evernote. I have instigated a slightly modified version for myself.** [Read More...](#)

Start-up tools

This is a list of tools for start up companies but even if you are not a start up some of them are worth looking at such as the search tools, logo sourcing sites, subscription and payment services, etc. [Read More...](#)

Get around the New York Times quota with this NYT Firehose Twitter list

One of the simplest loopholes in the New York Times' upcoming 20-story paywall restriction is that "readers who come to Times articles through links from search, blogs and social media like Facebook and Twitter will be able to read those articles, even if they have reached their monthly reading limit." To take advantage of the "from Twitter" aspect, Twitter user @FreeNYT has created this NYT list. It aggregates official NYT Twitter accounts into one list, and all the links therein become freebies under the new system. [Read More...](#)

Google offers help for U.S. nonprofits

U.S.-based nonprofit organizations can get discounts on advertising and Google Apps subscriptions as part of a new Google for Nonprofits program. [Read More...](#)

[↑ Top of the page](#)

## What's Emerging

How the newspaper business shrank 92% in a decade

So how did the newspapers lose the industry? With far more resources than any start-up, with century-old brand names, and with the foresight to predict what was happening to their business, how did the newspapers give away a \$10 billion revenue stream? Why didn't change their business model, their organizational structure and their people in order to capitalize on the coming Internet revolution? The answer is that they didn't want to. [Read More...](#)

The future of mobile gadgets

How many will we carry? What will they look like? What will they do? [Read More...](#)

A bionic eye comes to market

A retinal prosthesis gets clinical approval in Europe. [Read More...](#)

Stiglitz says Europe faces same 'lost half-decade' as Japan on budget cuts

Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz said the European Union may face a "lost half-decade" similar to that experienced by Japan as governments implement budget cuts that may undermine the economic recovery. [Read More...](#)

Elfoid: A pocket-size fetus-like robot might be your next cellphone

A pocket-size android shaped like a fetus might be your next cellphone. Meet Elfoid, a miniature

## What's Emerging?

anthropomorphic robot unveiled today in Japan that works like a cellphone but is designed to transmit not only voice but also "human presence." That's right. Next time you call your friends, you might be uploading yourself into this fetus body right into their pockets -- and their hands.

[Read More...](#)

### Growing a new urethra

Five young men given urethra grafts engineered from their own cells are doing well six years later, according to a study published this week in the Lancet. The boys' own urethras had been severely damaged by illness or accidents. [Read More...](#)

### Are the world's megacities too big?

Are the world's megacities becoming a sprawling, overfed, and uncontrollable mass that needs to be restrained for the good of society and the environment? This column suggests that policies aimed at reducing the dispersion in city sizes will hardly improve the wellbeing of the people who live there. If anything, in some developing countries, such as China, large cities may actually be too small. [Read More...](#)

### This is just the start

Future historians will long puzzle over how the self-immolation of a Tunisian street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, in protest over the confiscation of his fruit stand, managed to trigger popular uprisings across the Arab/Muslim world. We know the big causes — tyranny, rising food prices, youth unemployment and social media. But since being in Egypt, I've been putting together my own back-of-the-envelope guess list of what I'd call the "not-so-obvious forces" that fed this mass revolt. ***Paul Higgins: A really interesting piece by Thomas Friedman in the New York Times on some less obvious causes of the dissatisfaction and uprisings in the Middle East including Google Earth.*** [Read More...](#)

### Academy endorses navy concerns on warming, arctic and law of the sea

The Navy, which has long seen security issues intensifying in a warming world, commissioned a study by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences to provide an independent assessment... Here are the top findings, followed by a summary of the full report.

[Read More...](#)

### 80% of children under age 5 use the internet [STATS]

Nearly 80% of children between the ages of 0 and 5 use the Internet on at least a weekly basis in the United States, according to a report released Monday from education non-profit organizations Joan Ganz Cooney Center and Sesame Workshop. [Read More...](#)

### Pepsi reveals world's first 100% plant-based bottle

PepsiCo unveiled a breakthrough in bottle technology with the announcement of the world's first petroleum-free plastic bottle in an effort to further reduce its carbon footprint by piloting production of the new bottle in 2012. The snack and soft drinks company will use raw materials such as switch grass, pine bark and corn husks, and has identified methods to create a molecular structure that is identical to polyethylene terephthalate, or PET. [Read More...](#)

### New 'frozen smoke' may improve robotic surgery, energy storage

A spongy substance that could be mistaken for packing material has the nanotechnology world buzzing. University of Central Florida Associate Professor Lei Zhai and postdoctoral associate Jianhua Zou have engineered the world's lightest carbon material in such a way that it could be used to detect pollutants and toxic substances, improve robotic surgery techniques and store energy more efficiently. [Read More...](#)

### Microsoft's vision of the future (parody)

A very clever use of Microsoft Advertising to send them up. [Read More...](#)

### New blood analysis chip could lead to disease diagnosis in minutes

A major milestone in microfluidics could soon lead to stand-alone, self-powered chips that can diagnose diseases within minutes. The device, developed by an international team of researchers from the University of California, Berkeley, Dublin City University in Ireland and Universidad de Valparaíso Chile, is able to process whole blood samples without the use of external tubing and extra components. [Read More...](#)

### Hans Rosling and the magic washing machine

What was the greatest invention of the industrial revolution? Hans Rosling makes the case for the washing machine. With newly designed graphics from Gapminder, Rosling shows us the

magic that pops up when economic growth and electricity turn a boring wash day into an intellectual day of reading. [Read More...](#)

### Five years of Twitter: The top tweets so far

Take a look at some of the most notable tweets below, which recall important moments in the growing social network's history. Each of these tweets brought a new dynamic to Twitter, creating unforgettable memories in 140 characters or less. [Read More...](#)



[Top of the page](#)



## More Links

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



[Top of the page](#)

Address: Level 27 | 101 Collins Street | Melbourne | VIC 3000  
Phone: +61 3 9018 7917 | Fax: +61 3 9012 3580 | [emergentfutures.com](http://emergentfutures.com)

[Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Modify My Profile](#) | [Privacy](#) | [Contact Us](#)  
© Copyright 2010 Emergent Futures Pty Ltd. All rights reserved. ABN 39 105 730 407