

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

# What's Emerging?

The latest news and information ...

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## Mid October 2010

### Welcome to the Mid - October edition of What's Emerging.

We hope that you continue to find it both interesting and useful. Our apologies for not getting the Book Review we promised on to the website. It will be up there by the time you receive this newsletter. Thank you to those of our readers/followers that have been most complimentary on the newsletter and the new website layout.

Paul is riding in the 210km Round the Bay Ride this coming weekend. The ride is both an experience and a goal in itself but also raises money for the Smith Family and their programs for underprivileged children. So far Paul's team has raised over \$1000 in sponsorship but they can always do with some more. If you want to donate go [here](#). The Smith Family is aiming to raise \$1 million dollars for the day.

We are looking for a reputable charity involved in water projects to partner with in a new venture that will donate money to them. Can anyone who can recommend one please email paul at [paul@emergentfutures.com](mailto:paul@emergentfutures.com).

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: The Upside of Irrationality – The Unexpected Benefits of Defying Logic at Work and at Home by Dan Ariely

Those of you that have been receiving our newsletter for a while will know that we are big fans of Dan Ariely. You can see our review of his previous book Predictably Irrational on our website click [here](#). One of the most important ways to improve how we think about the future and how we act in the light of that thinking is to understand better how our biases and thinking processes work and skew our thoughts about what might happen. In this book Dan Ariely gives some great examples of these processes. [Read More...](#)

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### Business Tips

Skype for Android arrives; U.S. only gets Wi-Fi while the world gets 3G calling  
The app is much like the computer software and the iPhone app version. Users can make free Skype-to-Skype calls, call other phones either domestically or internationally at low rates, send and receive IMs between Skype users for free. [Read More...](#)

Netflix freedom and responsibility guide

This is a really interesting slide set looking at the system that Netflix has for its salaried employees. Miles better than the normal mission and value statements of most companies.

[Read More...](#)

How will you measure your life?

**Paul Higgins: We have published a lot of business tips in this newsletter. A lot of them about how to do things more easily or quickly. Sometimes we need to sit back and think about the why. This article by Clayton M Christensen (author of the Innovators Dilemma among others books) is about that subject and one of the best I have read.**

[Read More...](#)

Why NOT to do a Startup -- becuz yer Gonna FAIL. (Spend more time with your kids)

**Paul Higgins- I really liked this slide set from Dave McClure on the reasons not to (or to do) a startup. Including the right reasons.** [Read More...](#)

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## What's Emerging

15 futuristic gadgets Apple is working on

15 pictures and descriptions of possible future systems from Apple. [Read More...](#)

Future gazing with search data

For the past few years, computer scientists have touted Web-search data as a way to spot emerging trends--from changes in housing prices and unemployment numbers to the next box-office hit or the location of the next flu epidemic. But research released today gives a more nuanced view of what these data are good at predicting, and why. **Paul Higgins: We think that some of the techniques are useful but as with all tools we should understand their boundaries and where they work and where they don't. Therefore we are concerned about the rise of a fad of search and web based "prediction machines". In the end insight is the key, not reams of data and trends, which by their nature are historical.**

[Read More...](#)

92% of U.S. toddlers have online presence

According to a recent international survey of 2,200 mothers, 81% of children under the age of two currently have some form of online presence — ranging from photos uploaded and shared by their parents, to a full-fledged profile on a social networking site. [Read More...](#)

Web-based creativity: Can working in virtual communities be more effective than face-to-face cooperation?

As remote working and online interactions become more and more commonplace, there is growing evidence that working in virtual communities and using online tools together can be even more effective in some areas than face-to-face cooperation. [Read More...](#)

One-fifth of world's plants at risk of extinction

Researchers have sampled almost 4,000 species, and conclude that 22% should be classified as "threatened" - the same alarming rate as for mammals. A further 33% of species were too poorly understood to be assessed. [Read More...](#)

Berkeley Bionics reveals eLEGS exoskeleton, aims to help paraplegics walk in 2011

Initially, the device will be offered to rehabilitation centers for use under medical supervision, and can be adjusted to fit most people between 5'2" and 6'4" (and weighing 220 pounds or less) in a matter of minutes. [Read More...](#)

iPad adoption rate fastest ever, passing DVD player

Apple's iPad sold three million units in the first 80 days after its April release and its current sales rate is about 4.5 million units per quarter, according to Bernstein Research. This sales rate is blowing past the one million units the iPhone sold in its first quarter and the 350,000 units sold in the first year by the DVD player, the most quickly adopted non-phone electronic product. [Read More...](#)

Volvo working with Imperial College to create cars with bodies made from

## batteries

Electric cars, as well as other vehicles featuring renewable energy and eco-friendly statistics, may be the perfect fit for some out there, but for car manufacturers, there's still one problem: the size and weight of the battery therein. [Read More...](#)

## What makes us age?

In a study published in the Oct. 3, 2010, issue of Nature Structural and Molecular Biology, a team led by Jan Karlseder, Ph.D., at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies reports that as cells count down to senescence and telomeres wear down, their DNA undergoes massive changes in the way it is packaged. These changes likely trigger what we call "aging."

[Read More...](#)

## Nintendo slashes guidance: iPhone and Android gaming to continue stealing market share

Nintendo is going to have to fight a growing market of Apple iPhone/iPod touch/iPad and Google Android mobile games, which should continue to improve and continue to take market share. [Read More...](#)

## Rivers threatened around the world

Writing in Nature (vol 467, p 555), Charles Vorosmarty of the City College of New York and colleagues pull together a swathe of data on factors affecting water security, from dams that reduce river flow to the pollution and destruction of wetlands. They produce two maps showing the levels of threat to humans and to ecosystems that rely on rivers. The maps are virtually identical. [Read More...](#)

## Quantum leap towards computer of the future

An Australian-led team of scientists have taken a big step forward in the race to develop a quantum computer. In an article published in Nature, the researchers say they have cracked the second part of this puzzle, by creating a device that measures the spin state of a single electron in a single phosphorus atom inside a block of silicon. [Read More...](#)

## Bing Gordon: "Zynga Is Four Disruptions in One"

Bing Gordon, who founded gaming giant Electronic Arts prior to joining KPCB, recalled what made him think that Zynga would be a massive success. Gordon said that, years ago, he anticipated that there would be four disruptive trends in the game industry: social, analytics, an "APIable Internet" (app economy), and new payment methods. [Read More...](#)

## Netflix lets its staff take as much holiday as they want, whenever they want – and it works

Silicon Valley success story, Netflix, shows how a non-policy on holidays can provide the break you need. [Read More...](#)

## 8 must-see TED talks for IT pros

If you're pressed for time, here are eight amazing talks that every IT pro should watch for their insight into the future of computing. [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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