



Published by Emergent Futures Pty Ltd

## Mid February 2012

### Welcome to the Mid February Edition of What's Emerging

Due to work and travel commitments in February and early March we have condensed the newsletters into three editions for February and March. Therefore this newsletter is a little late and the next newsletter will be out on about the 10th March and then the end of March edition will come at the normal time.

Paul is off to the USA early next week to attend the Arizona State University "Emerge Conference". This is a two day invitation only conference combining world famous science fiction writers, futurists and the students at the University looking at future landscapes, followed by a day of public involvement and celebration with a Digital Culture Festival. Paul will write a report on this exciting event for the next newsletter.

As always we hope that you find the newsletter both interesting and useful.

Cheers

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

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### ■ What we are writing about

Paul Presented to a CEO Institute Group On February 21 on "Future Thinking for Practical Strategy". You can see the presentation at [Future Thinking for Practical Strategy](#). As always our presentations are designed to be looked at in conjunction with the speaker at the time but looking at the presentation will give you an insight into the content. We are available to present a similar but modified version to groups or individual organisations who are wondering what they should do about strategy in a rapidly changing networked world and want to make a start in thinking about an approach. All our standard presentations are built as a basic framework where examples that are relevant to the audience can be inserted.

Paul has written comments on several blog pieces on our Tumblr blog in the last few week including:

"How many more Social-Networking accounts does one need?"

<http://emergentfutures.tumblr.com/post/17971485001/how-many-more-social-networking-accounts-does-one>

What's the point of posting the same stuff on five, six, seven different sites?"

IPad killing printer use, paper sales

<http://emergentfutures.tumblr.com/post/17872179302/ipad-killing-printer-use-paper-sales-survey>

Morgan Stanley surveyed 700 tablet users in the U.S and found that 46 percent of them had reduced their printer use.

Thoughts on human behaviour, the nature of risk, and its exploitation by companies

<http://emergentfutures.tumblr.com/post/17795837992/thoughts-on-human-behaviour-the-nature-of-risk-and>

Paul's thoughts on car rental companies and their exploitation of our emotional response to risk.

## Business Tips

Designing effective online customer communities

This note outlines several major considerations for designing effective online customer communities for open innovation: [Read More...](#)

10 ways to get the most out of Evernote

We love Evernote – here are some tips from tech Republic on how to use it. [Read More...](#)

Charity toolbox: 100+ NonProfit-specific tech tools (categorized)

A great collection of possible tools for not for profit organisations. [Read More...](#)



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## What's Emerging

Skype is killing long distance, one minute at a time

The Internet is a great deflator, squeezing out the middlemen and lowering prices. The shifting fortunes of Wall Street brokers and travel agents are good examples. However, the Internet's deflationary impact is on full display in the international long-distance market, where Skype has started to take away any and all growth from the phone companies. [Read More...](#)

Salmon DNA used in data storage device

Scientists from National Tsing Hua University in Taiwan and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology in Germany have created a "write-once-read-many-times" (WORM) memory device, that combines electrodes, silver nanoparticles, and salmon DNA. [Read More...](#)

How does our brain know what is a face and what's not?

Objects that resemble faces are everywhere. Whether it's New Hampshire's erstwhile granite "Old Man of the Mountain," or Jesus' face on a tortilla, our brains are adept at locating images that look like faces. However, the normal human brain is almost never fooled into thinking such objects actually are human faces. [Read More...](#)

Britain's high-speed rail given green light

Britain's government on Tuesday approved the construction of a high-speed rail network linking London with cities in central and northern England from 2026 at a cost of almost 33 billion pounds (\$49.4 billion). [Read More...](#)

Study links Skyscrapers to financial crashes

An "unhealthy correlation" exists between the construction of skyscrapers and financial crashes, according to a new report from investment bank Barclays Capital. [Read More...](#)

Twitter revealed epidemic two weeks before health officials [study]

A new report shows that Twitter provided an early account of the 2010 cholera outbreak in Haiti. According to the study published in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, Internet news and social media were faster transmitters of information in tracking the cholera epidemic in Haiti than health officials. [Read More...](#)

Cleaner, cheaper liquid fuel from coal

SRI International is developing a process that combines coal and natural gas to produce liquid transportation fuels that are substantially cleaner and cheaper to make than existing synthetic fuels. [Read More...](#)

A Planet for every star

Researchers have concluded that each star in the Milky Way galaxy likely has at least one planet orbiting it, meaning that our galaxy has at least 100 billion planets to its name. [Read More...](#)

## Magic bullets

The XM25, as the new gun is known, weighs about 6kg (13lb) and fires a 25mm round. The trick is that instead of having to be aimed directly at the target, this round need only be aimed at a place in proximity to it. Once there, it explodes—just like Shrapnel's original artillery shells—and the fragments kill the enemy. [Read More...](#)

## Amazon Kindle owners are "borrowing" nearly 300,000 electronic books a month

According to the company, customers borrowed nearly 300,000 (295,000 to be exact) KDP Select titles in December alone, and KDP Select has helped grow the total library selection. With the \$500,000 December fund, KDP authors have earned \$1.70 per borrow. [Read More...](#)

## Google TV's biggest competitor looks awfully familiar

Google TV picked up some steam at this year's CES, with Vizio, Sony and LG announcing new devices for the smart TV platform. But as Google is paving the way to take the platform mainstream, a new, potentially powerful competitor is starting to emerge. No, it's not Apple's long-rumored TV set but Google's own open-source Android operating system, which is used by CE manufacturers and pay-TV operators alike to introduce new devices and services that come with Android apps but without Google's blessing. [Read More...](#)

## iPhone and Android growing like crazy. downloads up 83%, phone activation up 142% from last year

Mobile markets love Christmas. Smart phone activations go through the roof, and app downloads explode once the holiday season rolls around. Yet while sales boom at the end of every year, 2011's holiday sales went off like an atomic bomb. [Read More...](#)

## China's urban population exceeds rural for first time ever

"Just over 680 million now live in cities – 51.27 per cent of China's entire population of nearly 1.35 billion. Most have moved during two decades of boom in search of economic opportunities, and the historic mass migration from fields to office and apartment blocks ends the country's centuries-long agrarian status. [Read More...](#)

## Is higher income inequality associated with lower intergenerational mobility?

It's striking just how closely related inequality and mobility are. And it's political dynamite. Why? If income inequality in one generation can be linked to unequal opportunity in the next, then income inequality can't just be dismissed as the politics of envy. [Read More...](#)

## Northwestern, IBM collaborate on business analytics courses – Analytic Bridge

Northwestern University and IBM are collaborating on new business and technology curricula to help students gain the latest skills in business analytics. The new courses of study, Masters of Science degree programs with analytics concentrations in the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science and the School of Continuing Studies, will better prepare students and current professionals who are seeking new analytics skills for today's competitive job market.

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