

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

What's Emerging?

The latest news and information ...

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

By accident there is a bit of a theme on connectedness, 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

LibreOffice the last word in open source software

Overall, LibreOffice is well worth a look if you're seeking a way to avoid giving Bill Gates more money. **Paul Higgins: Of course there are other alternatives such as Google Docs and Zoho but they are cloud based.** [Read More...](#)

9 web apps for gathering customer feedback

The following tools are designed to help your business solicit feedback via the web and connect with your customers in more meaningful ways. [Read More...](#)

Playing war games to win

They can be a powerful business tool—but only if you get the design right. [Read More...](#)

[↑ Top of the page](#)

What's Emerging

Social networking's newest friend: Genomics

The first large-scale study to combine genome sequencing and social-network analysis solves a mysterious TB outbreak. [Read More...](#)

Bedside ultrasound becomes a reality

Clinicians have often referred to ultrasound technology as the "stethoscope of the future," predicting that as the equipment shrinks in size, it will one day be as common at the bedside as that trusty tool around every physician's neck. According to a new report in The New England Journal of Medicine, that day has arrived. [Read More...](#)

Darpa's Cheetah-Bot designed to chase human prey

Perhaps you thought the four-legged BigDog robot wasn't eerily lifelike enough. That'll change soon. BigDog's makers are working on a new quadruped that moves faster than any human and is agile enough to "chase and evade." [Read More...](#)

USDA predicts no relief from rising food prices

According to The Financial Times 2,000 delegates heard Joseph Glauber, USDA's chief economist, say that the grains markets' tightness will likely extend into 2012. [Read More...](#)

Will distributed solar drive utilities into bankruptcy?

Electric utilities today look a lot like newspapers in 2000: Too much debt in an industry primed for disruption. [Read More...](#)

Web firms set the pace for innovation in other industries, IFTF report says

The Future of Lightweight Innovation report identifies some of the disruptive technologies such as 3-d printing and desktop biotech, that will help unleash lightweight innovation in other industries, and offers four techniques that organizations can use to reinvent R&D. [Read More...](#)

Report finds connected devices, not phones, leading the explosion in mobile wireless

The shape of the subscription market is changing quite dramatically, with connected devices outpacing the growth of paid and prepaid subscriptions quite dramatically. Connected devices - tablets, e-readers, and so on - are now 7% of subscriptions. [Read More...](#)

The second-best-selling book in America costs \$0.99

Ebook sales now determine whether a title cracks the bestseller list. With a pricing model pioneered by apps. [Read More...](#)

DARPA's 5 radical plans for military medicine

The Pentagon's blue-sky research arm, DARPA, released its budget for the next fiscal year recently, revealing a dizzying range of plans for futuristic military science and tech. Perhaps the most dizzying stuff off all: the agency's efforts to heal wounded troops from even the most serious injuries. [Read More...](#)

Scientists revive old, fading memories

For the first time, working in rats, researchers have enhanced weak, old memories by tweaking an enzyme in the brain. The findings not only deepen understanding of how memory works, but offer new hope for the development of treatments for Alzheimer's and other memory-destroying diseases. [Read More...](#)

Best inventions of 2010 from Time magazine

Here are some of 2010's biggest (and coolest) breakthroughs in science, technology and the arts. [Read More...](#)

Number of the week: Workers not benefiting from productivity gains

0.3% — Increase in U.S. hourly wages, adjusted for inflation, since the economic recovery began. The labor market may be improving, but U.S. workers have yet to share much in the productivity and profits they've helped generate during the recovery. [Read More...](#)

Infographic of the day: The next 25 years in emerging tech

There are two layers of data at work here. The first is obvious:But the second layer of data is where the real futurism lies. The various nodes and technologies are arranged so that ones further off lie on toward the outside of the chart; ones that already exist or almost exist lie closer to the centre. [Read More...](#)

How Facebook plans to bust up the SMS profit cartel

In acquiring Beluga, Mark Zuckerberg has set Facebook's sights on cell companies' most overpriced service: text messaging. [Read More...](#)

10 megatrends affecting corporate IT through 2020

Computerworld's Julia King launched the agenda for the Premier 100 IT Leaders Conference with a discussion of "five big changes on the horizon" for IT chiefs. [Read More...](#)

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](#)

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