

What's Emerging?

The latest news and information ...

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

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Welcome to the end of November edition of What's Emerging

This month Paul reviews what he says is close to the best book on ideas and innovation he has ever read. You can read the article under our "What are we writing about" section. There will only be one more edition of What's Emerging for the year – in the middle of December. Just a reminder that Paul is raising money for [Kids Under Cover](#) which does fantastic work in Australia helping preventing kids at risk from becoming homeless. If you would like to support this great cause go to our [home](#) page and click on the fund raising widget. Paul will match your donation.

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: Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation by Steven Johnson

Right from the start I would say this is close to the best book on innovation and idea generation that I have ever read. The book begins essentially with the idea of the adjacent possible but before that states some remarkable statistics. Firstly there is a law that relates body mass of animals to their metabolism – that there is a very strong negative logarithmic correlation between the two that also seems to mean that the heartbeats per lifetime are about the same. Larger animals have slower metabolisms and heart rates. A similar sort of power law seems to occur with cities but it is a positive correlation – a city that is ten times the size of another city is on average 17 times more innovative. [Read More...](#)

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■ Business Tips

Risk and failure!!!!

This reminded me of the interview I did with Michael Short in the Zone at the Age. Dilbert nails it far more succinctly but if you are interested in the longer version you can go [here](#).

[Read More...](#)

Best business books 2010

Strategy and Business review of the best business books of 2010 (requires registration).

[Read More...](#)

The myth of multitasking

If you think your multitasking skills are improving your productivity, think again. Consistent with other multitasking research, a new working paper by Decio Coviello, Andrea Ichino and Nicola Persico analyzes a sample of Italian judges with different caseloads and finds that "task juggling decreases the performance of workers. [Read More...](#)

Futurists versus experts - Who should you listen to - Answer is both

In his new book, Focus, author Leo Babauta of productivity blog Zen Habits talks about finding simplicity in what he calls the Age of Distraction. Here, Babauta offers a crash course on starting your workday with focus. This is a post that Paul wrote in reply to a Tweet which said @WorldFutureSoc @TEDxMelbourne keen to listen to futurists as long as they're experts in a field, not just opinionated speculators. [Read More...](#)

What's more risky? Staying on the sofa, climbing on a bike or getting in the car?

Dutch researchers have done an interesting analysis of the likely benefits and harms – for individuals and society more broadly – of encouraging a shift from cars to bicycles for short daily trips. Amongst other things, they conclude that the beneficial effect of increased physical activity due to cycling resulted in about 9 times more gains in life-years than the losses in life years due to increased inhaled air pollution doses and traffic accidents. [Read More...](#)

The Morrow Project and futurism at Intel

Intel Germany's Morrow Project ("Uber Morgen") has commissioned four writers — Douglas Rushkoff, Ray Hammond, Scarlett Thomas and Markus Heitz — to produce science fictional pieces on the future that the company can use in its own planning. Intel has also released free ebooks and podcasts of the works in German and English. Worth a look. [Read More...](#)

What's Emerging

Google CEO: Android update "could replace credit cards"

At the Web 2.0 Summit in San Francisco, Schmidt said Android 2.3 (code-named Gingerbread) will combine location services with "tap-and-pay" functionality. [Read More...](#)

The UN to open source global crises in real-time

Global Pulse, the UN agency devoted to monitoring "the impact of compound crises on vulnerable populations" is turning to real-time data and open-source development to stay on top of challenges. [Read More...](#)

Diminished reality

Augmented Reality developers aim to tag, identify, enhance and provide information on everything around us. By contrast, the field of Diminished Reality is the study and research into tools that remove parts of the world around us. It has lots of practical uses that might surprise you. [Read More...](#)

Growing up digital, wired for distraction

As others have stated this New York Times piece is actually a well balanced view on this issue rather than just a scaremongering article. As Fred Wilson has said: "The technology amplifies whoever you are". [Read More...](#)

LEED buildings top 1 billion square feet globally

The U.S. Green Building Council said that the total footprint of commercial projects certified under its LEED green rating system surpassed one billion square feet this month. [Read More...](#)

Unfreezing Arctic assets

A bloc of countries above the 45th parallel is poised to dominate the next century. Welcome to the New North. [Read More...](#)

City car

The CityCar electric automobile, developed and prototyped by Smart Cities, is designed to meet the demand for enclosed personal mobility – with weather protection, climate control and comfort, secure storage, and crash protection – in the cleanest and most economical way possible. [Read More...](#)

A clean shirt everyday

The Washing Machine for the closet. It uses a combination of humidity, ionization, ozone (O3) and air pressure to destroy bacteria and remove stains. All you do is hang up your shirts, turn it on and within minutes, the waterless system provides you with shirts worthy of a dry cleaner's award. [Read More...](#)

Engineered bacteria fill cracks in broken concrete

Nine students at Newcastle University in the U.K. engineered a microbe to swim down fine cracks in concrete. Once many microbes reach the bottom — clumping together — they differentiate. [Read More...](#)

Big help mob

Big Help Mob is a 100-strong rent-a-crowd of ordinary people. They get together to do superhuman acts of awesomeness for non-profits and communities in Perth. One day it's planting 10 000 trees in a few hours, the next it's renovating a community centre or cleaning up a place that's been forgotten and trashed. [Read More...](#)

India microcredit faces collapse from defaults

India's rapidly growing private microcredit industry faces imminent collapse as almost all borrowers in one of India's largest states have stopped repaying their loans, egged on by politicians who accuse the industry of earning outside profits on the backs of the poor. [Read More...](#)

Greek debt crisis worse than expected

New figures from the European Union show that the Greek economy is in a far worse state than previously thought. [Read More...](#)

The next Lady Gaga could be a Japanese holographic singing idol

Hatsune is a product of Japan's popular Vocaloid software scene in which fans can create their own songs for fictional characters to sing. The twist here is that Crypton took things to the next level by making the character into a hologram and actually putting their avatar on tour, playing to huge enthusiastic audiences. [Read More...](#)

Internet and mobile web use on the increase

The Australian Communications and Media Authority says it has seen an explosion in people using the mobile internet, with 2.4 million accessing it in June, up from 1.6 million in 2009. [Read More...](#)

World's first all-robotic surgery performed in Canada

Specialists from McGill University used the DaVinci surgical robot — which, as you might suspect, lets surgeons work from remote locations — alongside an anaesthesia robot nicknamed "McSleepy" (itself the world's first robot for the task) to perform the surgery on a prostatectomy patient at Montreal General Hospital. [Read More...](#)

Amazon patents bad gift defense system: "gift conversions"

Do you dread getting fruitcake or socks from a certain relative every Christmas? Amazon.com may be working on a solution. The online retailer just received a patent for a bad gift defense system that intercepts gifts you don't want and instead sends you something that you actually do want. [Read More...](#)

The 50 best inventions of 2010

Flying cars! Jet packs! Lasers that zap malaria-carrying mosquitoes! Here are the year's biggest (and coolest) breakthroughs in science, technology and the arts from TIME. [Read More...](#)



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More Links

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Address: Level 27 | 101 Collins Street | Melbourne | VIC 3000
Phone: +61 3 9018 7917 | Fax: +61 3 9012 3580 | emergentfutures.com

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