

# KNOW WHAT'S NEXT

Strategies for  
Transforming Your  
Business & Future

by **Daniel Burrus**  
CEO of Burrus Research

- ▶ 25 Game-Changing Hard Trends That Will Create Both Disruption and Opportunity on a Global Level
- ▶ Forget Lean and Agile - It's Time to be Anticipatory
- ▶ Essential Secrets to Retaining Your Best Employees
- ▶ Disruptive Technologies That Will Impact Us The Most in the Next Decade
- ▶ The New Golden Rule of Business
- ▶ Big Data: Do You Have a Plan?
- ▶ The Internet of Things Far Bigger Than Anyone Realizes
- ▶ Strategic Plans Are Obsolete!
- ▶ The Science and Art of Every Profession
- ▶ Are You Collaborating or Cooperating? The Answer Will Increasingly Influence Your Success





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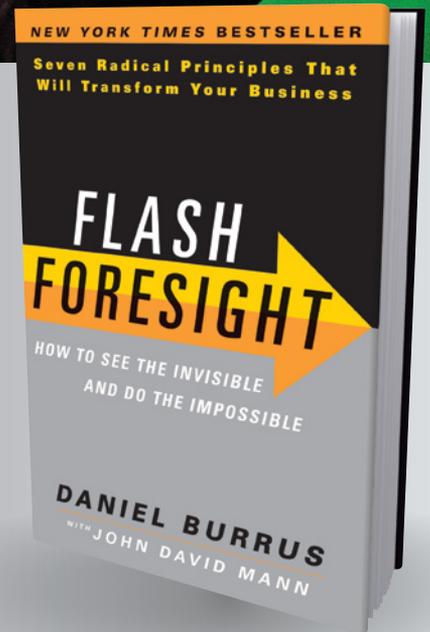
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# 25 Game-Changing HARD TRENDS

**THAT WILL CREATE BOTH DISRUPTION AND OPPORTUNITY ON A GLOBAL LEVEL IN 2015 AND BEYOND**

**N**o matter what industry you're in, your company can't survive without technology. From smartphones and tablets to mobile apps and cloud-based technology, there's a plethora of technological advancements not only to keep track of, but also to profit from. To stay competitive, your organization needs to anticipate the most significant technology trends that are shaping your business and changing your customer, and then develop innovative ways to use them to your advantage, both inside and outside of your organization. Remember, if it can be done, it will be done. If you don't use these technologies to create a competitive advantage, someone else will.

In the next five short years, the following game-changing technologies will transform every business process, including how we sell, market, communicate, collaborate, educate, train, innovate, and much more.

This is the 32nd year we have published our list of Hard Trends (trends that will happen), and if you have followed them over the years you have seen them as they first emerged. But now they have reached a new stage that you must pay attention to if you want to thrive in the future.

As you read through these Hard Trends, ask yourself if they will disrupt your current business model. Then ask yourself if you should be the disruptor rather than the disrupted.

## **1 BIG DATA GETS BIGGER AS THE USE OF HIGH-SPEED DATA ANALYTICS EXPANDS**

Big Data is a term used to describe the technologies and techniques that capture and utilize the exponentially increasing streams of data with the goal of bringing enterprise-wide visibility and insights to make rapid critical decisions. High-Speed Data Analytics using advanced cloud services will increasingly be used as a complement to existing

information management systems to identify actionable insights from the massive big data explosion. Big-Data-as-a-Service will emerge, as cloud providers offer midsize and smaller organizations access to much larger streams of relevant data they could not otherwise tap into.

## **2 CLOUD COMPUTING RAPIDLY EXPANDS WITH ADVANCED CLOUD SERVICES**

New variations on public, private, hybrid, and personal mobile clouds will be increasingly embraced by businesses of all sizes. This represents a major shift in how organizations obtain and maintain software, hardware, and computing capacity. Companies of all sizes are increasingly using the cloud and virtualized services as an enabler to cut costs in IT, human resources, and sales management functions.

## **3 VIRTUALIZATION OF HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE WILL INCREASINGLY REDEFINE IT**

Hardware-as-a-Service is increasingly joining Software-as-a-Service, creating what some have called "IT as a Service." In addition to the rapid growth of virtual storage, we will continue to see the virtualization of processing power. Mobile devices will be able to access supercomputer capabilities on a regular basis and apply them to transform processes such as purchasing and logistics.

## **4 ON-DEMAND SERVICES RAPIDLY BECOME THE NORM**

Thanks to rapid advances in cloud computing, advanced mobility, and the virtualization of processes and services, on-demand services are rapidly becoming the norm. The rapid growth of Collaboration-as-a-Service, Security-as-a-Service, Networking-as-a-Service, and many more are giving birth to Everything-as-a-Service.



Follow Daniel on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/DanielBurrus](http://www.twitter.com/DanielBurrus), where Daniel shares guiding principles and strategic insight on a daily basis.

## **5 WEARABLES AND APPLICATIONS GO MAINSTREAM**

Wearables will increasingly be used for both personal and business applications. Apple's smart watch joins products from Google, Samsung, Microsoft, and others in a battle for market share. This will further accelerate innovation and sales in other wearable technology creating new opportunities as well as challenges for organizations of all sizes.

## **6 CONSUMERIZATION OF IT RAPIDLY EXPANDS**

Over the past few years, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) caught many IT departments by surprise. It's now time to get in front of the next predictable trend, Wear Your Own Device (WYOD), and turn it into an advantage. As WYOD increases, consumers' appetite for something new will drive businesses to push the boundaries of innovation in this space. Instead of seeing WYOD as a problem, smart companies are turning it into a competitive advantage by consumerizing their applications, and by recommending safe and secure third-party hardware and software apps.

## **7 GAMIFICATION, SOCIALIZATION, AND PERSONALIZATION OF TRAINING AND EDUCATION**

Education and training will increasingly focus on accelerating learning by using advanced simulations and skill-based learning systems that are self-diagnostic, interactive, gamelike, and competitive. These innovations will focus on giving the user an immersive experience, thanks to a photorealistic 3D interface. By making the experience fun and personalized, learning will improve and the use will spread.

## **8 ONLINE LEARNING IS REDEFINED AND RAPIDLY GAINS MOMENTUM**

Taking courses and getting degrees online continue to accelerate. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have been embraced by highly recognized and traditional educational institutions, putting them in a position to challenge all educational systems by making location and tuition far less of a barrier to receiving the information, training, and knowledge people need in order to succeed in a rapidly changing world. Online courses, combined with Gamification systems, will change the face of global education.

## **9 AS USE OF EBOOKS, ENEWSPAPERS, EMAGAZINES, AND INTERACTIVE ETEXTBOOKS RAPIDLY GROWS, PAPER VERSIONS INCREASINGLY FUNCTION TO ATTRACT NEW READERS**

ePublications are finally passing the tipping point due to the abundance of smartphones and tablets that provide a full-color experience, plus publishers are providing apps that are starting to give us a better-than-paper experience by including cut, copy, paste, print, and multimedia capabilities. Interactive eTextbooks will finally take off thanks to easy-to-use software, freeing new publishers to create compelling and engaging content, and freeing students from a static, expensive, and literally heavy experience.

## **10 SOCIAL SEARCH AND ANALYTICS, ALONG WITH SOCIAL BUSINESS APPLICATIONS, WILL GROW RAPIDLY**

Social will take on a new level of urgency as organizations shift from the "informing" model of the Information Age to the "communicating and engaging" model of the Communication Age. Social Software for business will reach a new level of adoption with applications to enhance relationships, collaboration, networking, social validation, and more. Social Search and Social Analytics will increasingly be used by marketers and researchers to measure real-time sentiment of large groups of targeted people.

## **11 SMARTPHONE GROWTH DRIVES A MAJOR SHIFT IN GLOBAL COMPUTING**

The number of mobile phones with browsers will reach a global majority, making the smartphone our primary computer—a computer that is with us 24/7, signaling a profound shift in global computing. This new level of mobility and connectivity by massive populations around the world is increasingly allowing any size business to transform how it markets, sells, communicates, collaborates, educates, trains, and innovates using mobility. An enterprise mobility strategy that puts mobile first is rapidly becoming mandatory for organizations of any size, as we see mobile data, mobile media, mobile sales, mobile marketing, mobile commerce, mobile finance, mobile payments, mobile health, and many more areas explode.

**12 MOBILE APPS FOR BUSINESS PROCESSES GROW RAPIDLY**

As we increasingly transform business processes using mobility, we will see mobile apps for purchasing, supply chain, logistics, distribution, service, sales, maintenance, and more grow rapidly. There will be an increasing focus on Business App Stores within companies, giving users access to the personalized information they need on their mobile devices anytime and anywhere.

**13 3D DISPLAYS FOR SMARTPHONES AND TABLETS START TO APPEAR**

3D displays will move beyond large TVs and gaming to become part of our smartphones and tablets. This will drive a wide-scale consumer acceptance of 3D computing. This trend is just starting with handheld gaming systems and, thanks to the need to visualize ever-increasing amounts of rich data, we will see 3D data simulations for the enterprise grow rapidly for the military, medicine, fashion, architecture, and entertainment, to name a few.

**14 AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) APPS AND DEVICES START TO GROW**

Augmented Reality has been slow to start, but it will soon become more common as cities, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers add just-in-time information to our physical world. Simply aim your smartphone camera at a crowded street to find the stores that have the exact products you are looking for. Or, when you are in a store, use your phone's camera and AR app to quickly locate the products you need.

**15 SMART VIRTUAL ELECTRONIC ASSISTANTS GET BETTER AND MORE PERSONAL**

The use of smart eAssistants is accelerating and offering what is rapidly becoming a mobile electronic concierge available on any of your smart devices, including your phone, tablet, television, and car. Soon retailers will have a Siri-like sales assistant, and many will be using an e-Personal Health Assistant that taps into the real-time health data from your smart watch to predict potential problems and offer suggestions.

**16 MULTIPLE BIOMETRICS USED FOR SECURITY**

Next Gen Biometrics will be increasingly integrated into your smartphone, tablet, and other devices, which will play an increasing role in both identity management and security. Expect to see multiple biometrics that go beyond your thumb to include facial recognition and voice recognition, based on the level of security you need.

**17 MOBILE BANKING AND SMARTPHONE PAYMENTS TAKE OFF**

Mobile banking using smartphones as an eWallet is already being used in an increasing number of countries and is finally taking off on a larger scale in the US. This is thanks to an increasing number of phones with secure mobile banking apps, Near Field Communication (NFC) chips, Biometric Identification, and the use of tokens where no credit card or personal information is exchanged.

**18 VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS FOR BUSINESS INCREASE**

Visual communications takes video conferencing to a broader level thanks to free programs like Skype, FaceTime, and others for video communication on phones, tablets, and home televisions. Businesses of all sizes are rapidly embracing these programs as their main relationship-building and communications tools.

**19 ENHANCED LOCATION AWARENESS EMBRACED BY LARGE RETAIL**

Location awareness, which uses in-building systems, allows customers with smartphones to navigate stores and find what they are looking for fast. This combined with Geo-Social Marketing and Augmented Reality will drive the creation of more business-to-consumer apps.

**20 PERSONALIZED STREAMING ENTERTAINMENT INCREASINGLY CHALLENGES CABLE**

The increasing use of Internet Television (IPTV) and an increasing number of quality programs produced by streaming companies such as Netflix and Amazon will fuel a major shift in home viewing. Next-generation apps for your TV will allow you to further personalize the viewing experience. In addition to large HD and 4K Ultra HD TVs as our main viewing screen, tablets are increasingly becoming a viable replacement for the second and third TV in your home. This is the beginning of a major shift that will take place in living rooms globally.

**21 3D PRINTING (ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING) OF FINISHED GOODS TAKES ANOTHER STEP FORWARD**

Personalized Manufacturing of finished goods using 3D printing will grow exponentially. 3D printers build things by depositing a material—typically plastic or metal—layer by layer until the product is finished. Originally designed to print prototypes, they are increasingly being used to print final products such as jewelry, iPhone cases, shoes, car dashboards, parts for jet engines, prosthetic limbs,

human jawbones, and much more. 3D printing allows companies to manufacture one-of-a-kind or small runs of items quickly, locally, and with far fewer costs. We will begin to see Manufacturing-as-a-Service in which designers use CAD software to design a product and send it digitally to a 3D printing company who owns the industrial strength 3D printers, and who will then ship it to the customer.

## **22 MACHINE-TO-MACHINE (M2M) AND THE INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT) EXPAND RAPIDLY**

Machine-to-Machine communications—using chips, micro-sensors, and both wired and wireless networks—will join networked sensors to create a rapidly growing Internet of Things that shares real-time data, performs diagnostics, and makes virtual repairs, all without human intervention. By 2020, there will be well over 50 billion “things” talking to each other, performing tasks, and making decisions based on predefined guidelines, all using artificial intelligence. For example, smart cars will increasingly become aware of situational changes and respond. This trend will increase as cars get more connected to smart infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and other cars via embedded and networked sensors combined with other technologies such as GPS.

## **23 ADVANCED AUTOMATION AND INTELLIGENT ROBOTICS FIND WIDER USE**

Rapid advances in Machine Learning and AI, coupled with networked intelligent sensors, will create a giant leap forward after decades of promise and slow growth, thanks to exponential advances in processing power, digital storage, and bandwidth. Also, thanks to better sensors, increasing Machine Intelligence, and

Siri-like voice communications, robots will work with humans in new and productive ways.

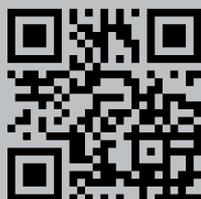
## **24 DRONES GO BEYOND FIRE, POLICE, SEARCH AND RESCUE**

The number of applications for drones will continue to expand rapidly. Drones have already proven to be of high value for search and rescue, and are rapidly being applied to many industries. For example, agriculture uses drones to check crops, fences, and cattle. Utility companies use them to look for downed power lines, and real estate agents use them for aerial photography. The explosion of hobby drones will drive innovation for both personal and industrial applications.

## **25 ENERGY STORAGE AND MICRO GRIDS INCREASE IN APPLICATION AND USE**

Energy storage starts to become a reality. As first-generation hybrid vehicles get too old for the marketplace, there will be millions of batteries that will still hold enough of a charge to be repurposed into inexpensive energy storage systems. In addition, companies such as Tesla will start to sell their smart battery systems to businesses and homes who generate some of their own power using solar, wind, or other systems. This will enable a national network of smaller and more secure smart Micro Grids. Looking a little further out, as electric and hybrid cars increase in numbers, they will increasingly be plugged in when not in use for the purposes of charging, storing, and using power.

**I suggest that you pick one or two and act now before your competitors do!**



ACCESS AND SHARE DANIEL'S  
TOP 25 TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN TRENDS:  
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10000  
8000  
6000  
4000

# Forget LEAN and AGILE

## IT'S TIME TO BE ANTICIPATORY

**W**e are all good at reacting and responding, putting out fires, and crisis management. In addition, organizations large and small have learned how to be lean and agile, and how to best execute a strategy at a high level.

However, despite these skills, General Motors still declared bankruptcy, Blockbuster closed its last store, and Blackberry quickly moved from leading to bleeding. And let's not forget Hewlett-Packard, Sony, Dell, and a host of other companies who failed to thrive despite their leaders and workers being constantly busy.

To thrive in this new age of hyperchange and growing uncertainty, it is now an imperative to learn a new competency—how to accurately anticipate the future.

That may seem impossible, but it's not. The future is there for you to see when you know where and how to look for it. And when you and your employees master this skill, you'll be able to create what I call an "anticipatory organization."

Based on three decades of research and applying the principles I've developed to organizations worldwide, I have developed a way of separating what I call Hard Trends from Soft Trends. Over the years I've written about this extensively in books and articles.

A Hard Trend is a projection based on measurable, tangible, and fully predictable facts, events, or objects. It's something that will happen: a future fact that cannot be changed. In contrast, a Soft Trend is a projection based on statistics that have the appearance of being tangible, fully predictable facts. It's something that might happen: a future maybe. Soft Trends can be changed, which means they provide a powerful vehicle to influence the future and can be capitalized on.

This distinction completely changes how individuals and organizations view and plan for the future. Understanding the difference between Hard and Soft Trends allows us to

know which parts of the future we can be right about. When you learn how to analyze trends in this way, you can accurately predict future disruptions, identify and solve problems before they happen, and practice what I call "everyday innovation." This enables you to solve challenges and problems faster and see opportunities that were impossible just a few years before. In other words, you become anticipatory rather than reactionary.

Employees of an anticipatory organization understand that those who can see the future most accurately will have the biggest advantage. They know that you cannot change the past, but you can shape the future based on the actions you take in the present. As such, they actively embrace the fact that many future disruptions, problems, and game-changing opportunities are predictable and represent unprecedented ways to gain advantage. They know that it's better to solve predictable problems before they happen, and that future problems often represent the biggest opportunities. Above all else, they are confident and empowered by having a shared view of the future based on Hard Trends and what I call the "science of certainty."

What is the science of certainty? Once you can separate Hard Trends from Soft Trends—once you can differentiate between the things you know will happen from the things that might happen—you can accurately define the certainties going forward. For example, we know that the iPhone 7, 8, and 9 will all have faster processing chips than those before them. We know that after 3G and 4G will come 5G and 6G in a predictable way. And we know that we are putting more and more in the cloud—that we're not going to discontinue using cloud computing.

Those are technical examples. Here are some non-technical ones: We know that Baby Boomers are not going to get younger. We know that governments are going to continue, all over the world, to issue future regulations. We know the cycles of nature, such as after winter comes spring.

DANIEL  
BURRUS

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In other words, there is so much we can see that it's absolutely possible to create certainties using the Hard Trend/Soft Trend model I've developed.

Why is this so important to business? Because strategy based on certainty (on Hard Trends) has low risk, while strategy based on uncertainty (on Soft Trends) has high risk. Also, when you have certainty, you have the confidence to say "yes," to move forward, to hire, to start

businesses. When you have uncertainty, it's like a giant roadblock. You're stuck and you don't move forward.

To succeed in business these days, simply being lean and agile is no longer enough. You and your team need to harness the ability to anticipate the future. In fact, I see this as being the most important missing competency that we've seen for decades. So learn how to anticipate today, before your competitors do.



“Daniel is one of the best speakers we have hired to date. He is energetic and keeps the audience engaged from start to finish. He has spoken to two different C-level audiences for us and both times has gotten rave reviews, which is not easy with this audience level. I would not hesitate to hire him in the future.”

—SANDY PIZZARUSSO, **DIRECTOR, OPEN SOLUTIONS**



# 3 Essential SECRETS

## TO RETAINING YOUR BEST EMPLOYEES

**Y**ou can't do it all alone. In order to succeed, it's essential to build exactly the kind of staff you want. But building your staff doesn't end at the hiring process. You've got to be able to foresee the challenges ahead. And when it comes to creating an amazing team, you can count on the fact that employee retention will be a challenge. Everyone wants to hire the best. How can you ensure that you'll retain your most valuable employees amid all the changes occurring within and outside of your organization?

All that trouble that your company put into searching and interviewing and hiring the best candidate for the position, all the resources spent on training that person and acclimating them to your business culture—it all goes right out the window if they leave. Money goes right out of your pocket and into your competitors' coffers the moment that employee decides that his or her value will be better appreciated somewhere else.

The good news is that you can retain valuable employees with the right combination of thoughtful communication and collaboration. You can't cut corners on this piece of the puzzle without the risk of losing the best talent and brains of your organization to your competitors.

And I can tell you this: most organizations are totally doing it wrong. They're hemorrhaging their top talent. Here's why — and here's how you can avoid doing it.

### **1 You get the behaviors you reward.**

Your organization is probably rewarding plenty of counterproductive behaviors in your employees without even realizing it. Does your company reward loyalty and the creation and sharing of truly new knowledge? Or does it reward knowledge hoarding and an every-man-for-himself attitude and routinely make a big deal about achievements that aren't truly meaningful advances in wisdom, but instead just puffed-up chances to showboat?

If you want employees who innovate vigorously and who stay with you for the long haul, you need to reward their hard-won wisdom by teaching them to see the importance

of their contribution to building a shared knowledge base. As I've said before: You get the behavior you reward, so you have to put in place a rewards system for sharing knowledge — which is, after all, your most crucial asset. Keep at the top of your mind that there are many significant ways to reward people, and not all of them involve compensation.

### **2 It's not just the money, it's the purpose.**

It's common to think that the fattest salaries will do the best job of retaining talented employees. That's just not so. Money is important, but humans don't live on bread alone.

Your top employees need a sense of being validated, seen, and recognized for their work. They also need to feel vividly that their efforts are making an impact in your organization. How do you let your employees see and feel and experience the positive effects of their work? In a world where many of us work in intangibles like ideas and information, it's absolutely key to provide people with the feedback letting them know that they've made a difference.

In order to really reward your employees, you need to not only pay them competitive salaries, you need to also align them with your sense of purpose and show them tangible signs that their efforts help to drive that purpose forward.

### **3 Relate to your employees — from your Futureview® to theirs.**

Most organizations make the mistake of relating to their employees on the basis of the shortsighted demands of the present moment and from past habits. This is a fast way to nip innovation in the bud among even the most talented and committed staff members.

In order to succeed, you need to communicate and collaborate with your staff from your Futureview.

I coined the term Futureview over 30 years ago to refer to the vivid mental picture we each hold of our future existence. This is not the same thing as a goal, plan,

ambition, or aspiration. Your Futureview is not what you hope for or are trying to create — it is the picture you actually hold, for better or for worse, of what you expect and believe about your future.

Most people are not fully aware of what their Futureview is. You have one — everyone has a Futureview — but often without realizing it or examining what it looks like. Being unaware of it does not mean it doesn't control you; it most certainly does.

You have to become aware of your own Futureview because it puts a tremendously powerful strategic tool in your hands. It hands you the control of your own future. Your Futureview determines which actions you'll take in the present, and which you'll avoid taking. Different Futureviews create different realities.

Therefore, as an executive, are you managing the Futureview of your employees, regardless of current economic conditions? There are people working in your company right now who are already online or on the phone looking for another job. Why? Because of their Futureview as it pertains to working for your company. There are also people who are planning on staying. Why? Because the Futureview of working for your company factors into their Futureview.

To have the best chance of retaining your most essential employees, you need to get clear on what your own Futureview is, and communicate and collaborate with your staff to make sure theirs aligns with yours. With the proper application of these principles, you and your staff can look forward to a productive and rewarding future together.



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# Disruptive TECHNOLOGIES

## THAT WILL IMPACT US THE MOST IN THE NEXT DECADE

**A**s a technology futurist and innovation expert, I'm often asked, "Which technologies do you think will have the biggest impact on humankind over the next decade?"

When answering this question, it's important to note that many things will not change in the future, including basic human behavior and a host of things like our desire to walk on a beach, take vacations, play games, see our children smile, and many more. But, many things about our life will be literally transformed, way beyond the early days of smartphones, mobile apps, and the cloud we are experiencing today.

For example, we are in the early stages of a mobile, social, virtual, and visual revolution that will transform how we live, work, and play. It is an evolutionary revolution since all disruptive technologies that have already impacted us were there to see ahead of time. Thanks to what I call the Three Digital Accelerators of processing power, digital storage, and digital bandwidth, the disruptive technologies have been evolving exponentially at a measurable clip for decades. And, thanks to the power of exponential change, they have moved into the revolutionary phase.

Looking forward, there are many technologies I'm excited about that are all part of the mobile, social, virtual, and visual revolution. Machine 2 Machine (M2M) communications and the Internet of Things (IoT) will soon impact every business sector and touch all of our lives. Few realize the full significance of this as a way to dramatically increase efficiencies as well as a way to create new products and services.

Another example would be the next breakthrough in additive manufacturing (3D manufacturing), which has already gone beyond rapid prototyping to manufacture finished personalized products from jet engine parts and bicycle frames to titanium jawbones for humans. A new level will be reached when 3D printers can use different types of materials as they print finished products, and this is close at hand now.

Finally, our main personal computer is already our smartphone, and it is getting much smarter. We already tap into supercomputers in the cloud with our smartphone, giving us supercomputers with advanced multimedia capabilities and unlimited storage that fits in our hand. Knowing this, it's important to understand that computers like desktops, laptops, ultrabooks, and tablets will not disappear in the future. How can I be so sure? A good example would be the fact that mainframes are not obsolete; instead, we are using them differently than we did 10, 20, 30, or even 40 years ago. Most people who have a smartphone and a tablet still use their laptop; they are simply using it for different things and using it less. If desktop and laptop manufacturers continue to innovate instead of compete with smartphone and tablets, they will create a demand and have a future. (Notice that I started the last sentence with the word "if.")

What future technologies do you think will have the biggest impact on your industry or profession? What are you doing to prepare for the technology disruptions before they appear?



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# The New GOLDEN RULE

## OF BUSINESS

**T**he old Golden Rule of business was to find out what your customers wanted and to give it to them. Today, if you ask your customers what they want and you give it to them, you'd miss a huge opportunity. Their answers will never give you more than a fraction of the true potential. In addition, the answers they provide are the same answers they are telling your competitors when they ask. In other words, you and your competitors will take your customers' answers and develop similar solutions that will result in high competition with low margins.

Our capabilities are changing far too rapidly for this old rule to be useful. Customers today don't know what is technically possible because change is so fast. The things they might really want are things they don't yet know are possible. For example, customers did not know they wanted an iPod, iPhone, or iPad until Apple gave it to them. The elderly were not asking for an iShoe that would help prevent them from falling. They had no idea such a thing was possible.

To survive and thrive, look at your customers' visible future. Look at their Hard Trends that will happen. Look at what you're certain about regarding their future. See what problems they are going to have and solve them before they happen so that by the time they're just starting to experience the problem, you already have the solution.

Technology-driven transformation will not wait, pause, or stand aside while you think about it. Blur—streak—gone! There are two critical truths about business in this new era that you cannot afford to ignore. We might call them corollaries to the Golden Rule:

- 1 If it can be done, it will be done.
- 2 If you don't do it, someone else will.

This is going to happen in every field.

- If the Big Three automakers don't make the cars people will both want and need in the future, Toyota will. And if Toyota doesn't do it, Tesla or someone else will.
- If the Big Four record labels weren't moving fast enough to embrace MP3 technology and the dematerialization of recorded music, Apple was only too happy to step in.
- Blockbuster didn't move fast enough to make the home video rental business virtual, so Netflix did.
- In the last presidential election, Mitt Romney didn't grasp the potential of social media fundraising and web-based voter interaction; Barack Obama's people did.
- If the major television networks don't embrace interactive, personalized, high-bandwidth IPTV, then someone else will. And a few years from now, perhaps the major television networks will not be ABC, NBC, CBS, and Fox, but YouTube, Netflix, Vimeo, or someone else.

Always ask your customers what they want, but remember that they will always underanswer. Therefore, it is far better to follow my new Golden Rule of Business: Give your customers the ability to do what they can't currently do, but would want to...if they knew it was possible.



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# BIG DATA

## DO YOU HAVE A PLAN?

**B**ig data analytics is changing every industry. It's a Hard Trend, and its spread is inevitable—the question is: how are you succeeding or failing at positioning your business to take advantage of it?

Let's put it in simple terms. Big data refers to the use of very large amounts of raw data by businesses, ideally to create products and services that meet customer needs better than ever before.

Big data is amazing because it allows us to extract trends from giant data sets. For example, with big data analytics, we can find things that remain invisible when we look at 100 people or 1,000 people but then become glaringly evident when we look at millions of people or millions of data sets. This improvement in insight and scale helps change the recognized data patterns and opens the door to new growth.

A lot of people admire how Google, Amazon, and Facebook have shoved competitors to the side with their powerful models that are driven by their ability to collect and exploit data. And for good reason. Research shows that companies that integrate big data and analytics into their organizations demonstrate productivity rates and profitability that are 5%-6% higher than those of their competitors.

Keeping all that good stuff in mind, let's be careful to distinguish the hype about big data ("It will solve everything!") from the truth.

### The Challenge of Big Data

How do you convert raw information into knowledge that can actually lead to significant action? Data on its own does nothing.

I won't lie. At the moment, when it comes to big data, literacy at the C-suite level has been lacking. Recall that most big data tools are designed for data scientists, not managers. Which is why you need to choose the tools and services that ensure your leaders can easily access and understand the data. But in the long term, companies should have a plan to increase big data literacy across the board.

And once you've collected the data, what then? The days of rounding up some figures and throwing them on a colorful graph are over. A giant gap exists between what businesses

actually need to make great decisions and what big data technology by itself can enable companies to do. Companies have to interpret the data in thoughtful, strategic ways so that it can be leveraged to move business forward.

It isn't enough to just collect and aggregate. Your organization needs to have a plan for integrating and actually acting on the bounty of information that big data brings.

### Getting the Big Data Gold: Go for the Need

Perhaps the biggest mistake that companies make with big data is...what's the technical term I'm searching for? Well, they basically just stare at the datasource and then kind of ask what it can do for them.

You as the leader must decide on a desired business impact. What's the endgame? Data sourcing should be the final, not the first, consideration in your game plan. Otherwise, you may be staring blankly for a long time.

Begin by asking what data you would need in order to make better decisions and improve service for your clients and customers.

For example, Kabbage, a start-up that supplies working capital to online businesses asked itself what data it required in order to make faster, better decisions. It realized it needed data about the loan worthiness of businesses, and that it could get that data from unconventional sources. So now Kabbage accelerates the time it takes for it to underwrite loans by asking merchants to share their Facebook interactions. This data then gets processed and interpreted, and it allows Kabbage to make quick decisions about what online businesses are worth their investment.

### In Conclusion

A lot of factors go into creating a successful plan for using big data to take your business to the next level. And it all comes down to how much work you're willing to do, because big data is a Hard Trend. It isn't going anywhere. It has changed the playing field forever. But the data is only as useful as your strategy — and ability — to leverage it.

**Sooner or later you're going to have to jump into the pool of big data. Will you sink or swim?**

# The INTERNET of THINGS

## FAR BIGGER THAN ANYONE REALIZES

**W**hen people talk about “the next big thing,” they’re never thinking big enough. It’s not a lack of imagination; it’s a lack of observation. I’ve maintained that the future is always within sight, and you don’t need to imagine what’s already there.

### ► Case in point: The buzz surrounding the Internet of Things.

What’s the buzz? The Internet of Things revolves around increased machine-to-machine communication; it’s built on cloud computing and networks of data-gathering sensors; it’s mobile, virtual, and instantaneous connection; and they say it’s going to make everything in our lives from streetlights to seaports “smart.”

But here’s what I mean when I say people don’t think big enough. So much of the chatter has been focused on machine-to-machine communication (M2M): devices talking to like devices. But a machine is an instrument, it’s a tool, it’s something that’s physically doing something. When we talk about making machines “smart,” we’re not referring strictly to M2M. We’re talking about sensors.

A sensor is not a machine. It doesn’t do anything in the same sense that a machine does. It measures, it evaluates; in short, it gathers data. The Internet of Things really comes together with the connection of sensors and machines. That is to say, the real value that the Internet of Things creates is at the intersection of gathering data and leveraging it. All the information gathered by all the sensors in the world isn’t worth very much if there isn’t an infrastructure in place to analyze it in real time.

Cloud-based applications are the key to using leveraged data. The Internet of Things doesn’t function without cloud-based applications to interpret and transmit the data coming from all these sensors. The cloud is what enables the apps to go to work for you anytime, anywhere.

Let’s look at one example. In 2007, a bridge collapsed in Minnesota, killing many people, because of steel plates that were inadequate to handle the bridge’s load. When we rebuild bridges, we can use smart cement: cement equipped with sensors to monitor stresses, cracks, and warpages. This

is cement that alerts us to fix problems before they cause a catastrophe. And these technologies aren’t limited to the bridge’s structure.

If there’s ice on the bridge, the same sensors in the concrete will detect it and communicate the information via the wireless Internet to your car. Once your car knows there’s a hazard ahead, it will instruct the driver to slow down, and if the driver doesn’t, then the car will slow down for him. This is just one of the ways that sensor-to-machine and machine-to-machine communication can take place. Sensors on the bridge connect to machines in the car: we turn information into action.

You might start to see the implications here. What can you achieve when a smart car and a smart city grid start talking to each other? We’re going to have traffic flow optimization, because instead of just having stoplights on fixed timers, we’ll have smart stoplights that can respond to changes in traffic flow. Traffic and street conditions will be communicated to drivers, rerouting them around areas that are congested, snowed in, or tied up in construction.

So now we have sensors monitoring and tracking all sorts of data; we have cloud-based apps translating that data into useful intelligence and transmitting it to machines on the ground, enabling mobile, real-time responses. And thus bridges become smart bridges, and cars smart cars. And soon, we have smart cities, and...

### ► Okay. What are the advantages here? What are the savings? What industries can this be applied to?

Here’s what I mean when I say people never think big enough. This isn’t just about money savings. It’s not about bridges, and it’s not about cities. This is a huge and fundamental shift. When we start making things intelligent, it’s going to be a major engine for creating new products and new services.

Of all the technology trends that are taking place right now, perhaps the biggest one is the Internet of Things; it’s the one that’s going to give us the most disruption as well as the most opportunity over the next five years.



# Strategic PLANS

## ARE OBSOLETE!

Strategic planning is extremely important, but the way we plan, and the plan we create, do not provide the dynamic roadmap everyone in the organization needs in order to shape the best future possible.

Today's traditional strategic plan is a static plan. The plan exists as a document, either digital or printed, that is published in some way, shared with key employees, and then put in a file cabinet or digital folder.

On the other hand, a dynamic strategic plan has change built into it, it's in motion, and it provides a highly relevant and usable roadmap to everyone in the organization. A dynamic plan goes beyond one-way informing and also communicates the plan in a two-way, ongoing dialogue to everyone in the enterprise. A version is also shared with strategic partners. It's a living, breathing, and evolving entity that everyone engages in and supports. Think of it like this:

- ▶ **A dynamic strategic plan communicates rather than informs. It's a two-way dialogue between the company leaders and the employees.**
- ▶ **A dynamic strategic plan reaches beyond the company walls and goes out to strategic partners. After all, how are your strategic partners going to help you if they don't know what you're trying to do?**
- ▶ **A dynamic strategic plan evolves. It elicits dialogue and input from others. It can be continually refined and improved. This is in contrast to a static strategic plan, which is sent out to employees with the expectation that they'll adapt to the plan rather than the plan adapting to them and the market.**

Why are these three points so important? Because with a typical static strategic plan, people may not have time to

read the plan, they may not agree with the plan, and they may not take action on it. In addition, they may find major flaws in the plan but have no means to provide risk-free feedback regarding their concerns.

However, with a dynamic strategic plan, you're communicating with people and you get feedback. You're not telling people the plan after the fact. Rather, you're showing them the plan and asking for their help with identifying potential challenges. The goal is to solve the problems before they occur.

Following are some additional hallmarks of a dynamic strategic plan:

- **BREAK IT DOWN.** Remember that big lists rarely get done. Therefore, it's important to highlight and break down the plan into its elemental strategic imperatives. And if you have more than five, you have too many. The magic number is three. Why break a long plan down into basic elements? Because you want everyone in the organization to know the basic elements. If they don't know them, you won't accomplish them. If people have to look them up, they won't. However, if it's broken down into short elements, it'll stay top of mind. When it's top of mind every day, people will know what the strategic imperatives are and will be more likely to attain them. Having the plan broken down into its basic elements is like having a guide that leads your organization to the future.
- **TELL STORIES.** Bring the words of your company's strategic plan to life by turning it into story form so that it becomes visual for people. Have the plan paint a picture in every employee's mind's eye so they can see what this plan will do and where the company is going. Visuals are powerful. If you've never seen what  $E=mc^2$  means—the visual of it—then you still don't understand

Einstein's theory of relativity. However, those who see it in a visual story format understand it. For many organizations, a strategic plan can be complex and often just as hard to understand as the theory of relativity. Therefore, take the complexity in your plan and simplify it; boil it down to what it means to the employees and the company, and help everyone see it in their mind's eye. Some companies have gone as far as hiring a graphic artist to paint a mural that depicts the plan. They put the mural in the lunchroom or in the entryway to the building. It becomes a visual that depicts the plan, including the outcome. Talk about getting a story ingrained in people's minds!

- **GO MULTIMEDIA.** While your dynamic strategic plan could be a document, it could also be a video that people watch...and it could be an audio they listen to... and it could be a picture they look at...and it could be any combination of things. Remember that people learn in different ways. Some people prefer to read a book, while others prefer to listen to a book in audio form. The people who prefer to read the book wonder why anyone would listen to a book. And those who prefer to listen to a book wonder why anyone would purchase a printed book. Since we all learn in different ways, it only makes sense to put the strategic plan out in various formats. If you put the strategic plan out in one format, then you're only engaging one learning style within an organization that has multiple styles. In fact, in a world where multimedia is easy and the tools are relatively free, there's no excuse for not getting the strategic plan in multiple formats.
- **GET SOCIAL.** Social media is an ideal way to make a strategic plan dynamic. There are internal secure versions of various social media platforms, such as Twitter and Facebook. Simply do a Google search to find them. The key word to remember is "social." It's about

creating engagement and involvement. For example, as employees execute the plan, you can be tweeting success stories, accomplishments, and roadblocks—all in an effort to gain feedback and ideas. Additionally, you can be using online collaborative tools to work with the different groups that are executing the plan so everyone can see where the other parties are in need of help. Unfortunately, most organizations still have silos and fiefdoms. A dynamic strategic plan tends to break them down and get everyone headed in the same direction.

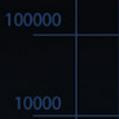
## Gain Engagement

The bottom line is that truly successful and innovative companies will have a strategic plan that is in motion. They'll have a dynamic document that can be added to, massaged, and refined with graphics, video, and audio. They'll have an internal, multimedia website and app versus a static and informing one. In short, they'll have something that's dynamic and moving. That's simply impossible to do without technology.

So the key for leaders is this: You need to engage people with your plans rather than inform them of your plans. But because most executives don't know what is now technically possible, they'll never ask for a dynamic strategic plan. Therefore, it is important to get your CIO involved to help create and drive the ideas and show the organization what's possible. In fact, the only way to do a dynamic plan is with strategic vision and technology.

With the rapid pace of change, the traditional static planning system is a dinosaur. Most people do it only because they have to. Now is the time to redefine what a strategic plan is—for the organization, for the employees, and for the limitless opportunities such a plan affords everyone involved.

## What type of plan do you have?



# The Science and ART

## OF EVERY PROFESSION

Every profession has both a science and an art. The science can be taught, and people can be equally good at the science of any profession. The key to differentiate yourself in your profession is to develop the art side, not just the science side.

For example, I was at a photography workshop a few years ago, and I met people who had all of the latest equipment—cameras, lenses, tripods, everything—and they knew the science of photography very well. Many of them were on an equal footing with their knowledge of the equipment, yet their ability to take stunning photographs varied quite a bit. In other words, there is an art side to being able to capture that amazing picture.

The same is true with any profession, whether you are in sales, IT, customer service, or even medicine. After all, if healing was only a science, it wouldn't matter who your doctor was. But you and I both know it does matter who your doctor is, and it's not because of the science; it's because of the art. It's about what the individual brings to their medical practice—their uniqueness, their problem-solving ability, their diagnostic capabilities, and their way of solving problems in real time when they're working on you.

Here's a case in point: A number of years ago, one of my brothers was having a problem with a pain in his leg that wouldn't go away. He went to an orthopedic surgeon. After an exam, the surgeon diagnosed the problem and decided that my brother needed surgery to repair it.

So my brother did what we all should do: He got a second opinion. This second doctor didn't make a diagnosis, but recommended exploratory surgery. I suggested to my brother that he get one more opinion.

He then went to a third orthopedic surgeon. This doctor looked at my brother and asked, "Do you always wear your belt at the same height on your pants? Or does it vary?"

My brother replied, "No, I always wear my belt at this height every day."

"Do you always wear a leather belt?" the doctor continued.

"Yes, I always wear a leather belt," my brother replied.

The doctor said, "Why don't you try a squishy belt that flexes? Just see if that works. If the problem persists, then come back."

My brother tried a squishy belt, and it wasn't very long before the problem went away completely.

Apparently, the problem was that a nerve was being cut off by the belt. Fortunately, this third doctor had mastered the art of medicine. He knew to go beyond the science and notice the subtleties of each patient...and to take that into account before making a diagnosis.

Which of those doctors would you rather have? I don't know about you, but I want the squishy belt guy. I want the doctor who is more creative, who is looking at the bigger picture, who is thinking outside of the box. I want a doctor who has developed both the science and the art of his profession.

Again, every profession has an art and a science. So as we start another year, it's important to ask yourself a number of questions, including:

- Am I learning and maximizing the science side of my profession?
- Am I taking the classes I need to take?
- Am I updating and upgrading myself?
- Am I getting training on all the new tools and capabilities that will help me do my job better?

But don't stop there. Continue with the art-focused questions:

- Am I reading about creativity and problem solving?
- Am I making sure that I'm not too quick to judge?
- Have I found a mentor who is sharing his or her knowledge and wisdom with me?

- Am I working on the art side of my profession, or am I just working on the science side?

When you focus on both the art and the science of your profession, you'll find yourself at the top of your profession and have great success and prosperity for years to come.

## What is the science and the art of your profession?

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# Are You COLLABORATING or COOPERATING?

**THE ANSWER WILL INCREASINGLY INFLUENCE YOUR SUCCESS**

**T**hanks to rapid, game-changing innovations, the future is changing so fast that it has never been more important to work together with all business partners and customers to co-create a positive and profitable future together. The key to successfully co-creating is a strong focus on collaboration.

As I travel around the world, I work with leaders in a wide variety of industries. I see auto manufacturers who say they are collaborating with parts manufacturers, distributors, and dealers. I see medical device manufacturers who say they are collaborating with distributors, hospitals, and insurance companies. And while almost all of them “say” they are collaborating, if you look at what they are really doing, they’re just cooperating. Pick any industry and you will find a similar story.

Cooperating is a much lower level activity than collaborating. Knowing the difference can make all the difference in the results you get with your business partners.

You cooperate because you have to; you collaborate because you want to. Cooperation is based on a scarcity mind-set; it’s about protecting and defending your piece of the pie. Collaboration is based on an abundance mind-set, working together to create a bigger pie for all.

Collaboration is as different from cooperation as the word transformation is from change. When you and I cooperate, we work separately and make accommodations for each other. When we collaborate, we are not simply making room for each other’s creations; we are co-creating the future together.

Collaboration is a function of genuine communication. The facilitated communication environment of the Internet

becomes a productive cycle that amplifies itself: communication fuels collaboration, which fuels more communication, which fuels more collaboration.

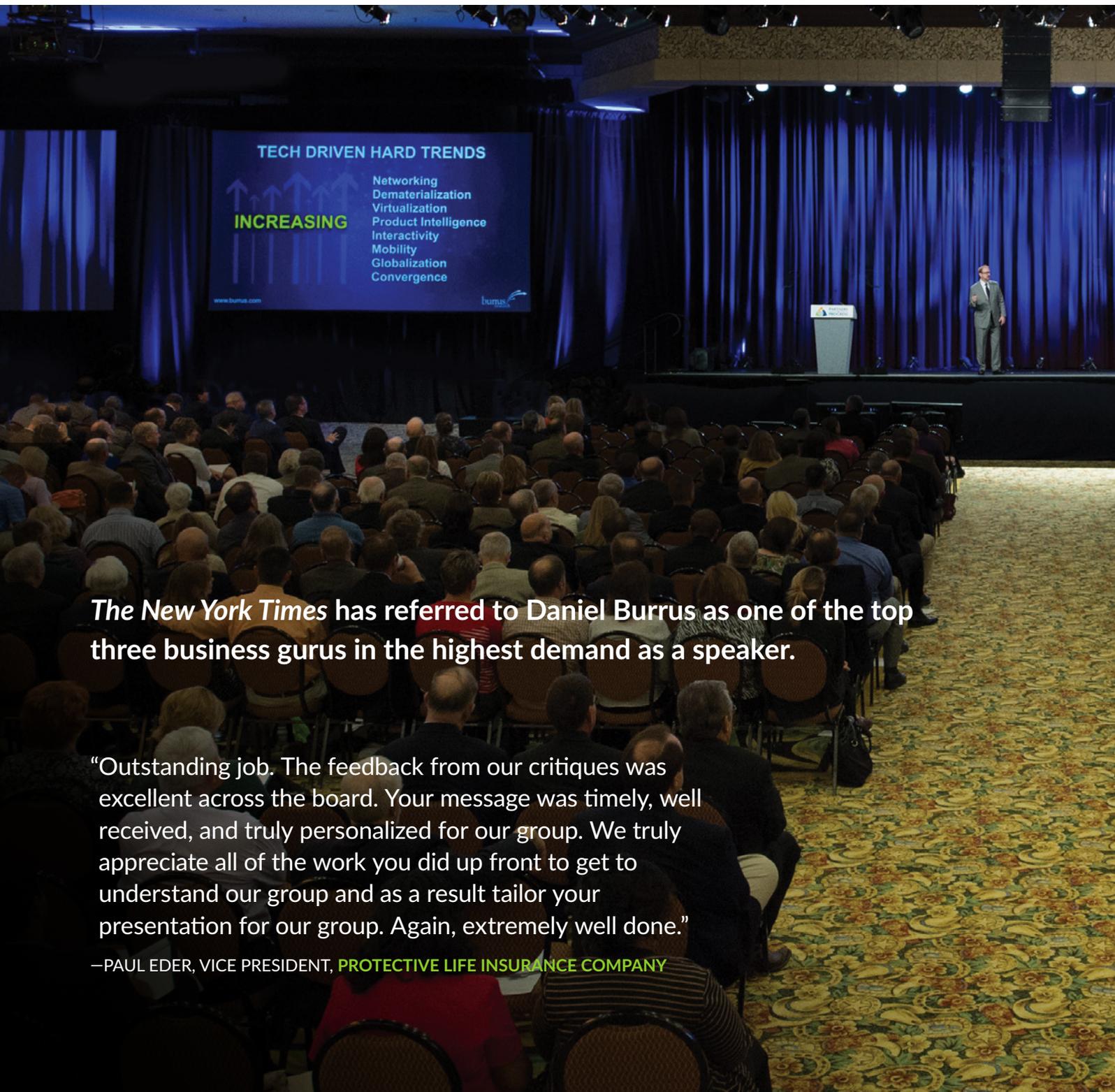
The open nature of the Internet, based as it is on standard protocols, has played a crucial role in enabling this shift to an abundance-oriented economy, as it allows any computer or other Net-enabled device, regardless of operating system, to participate in the global conversation. Likewise, a key to the growth of abundance power, in any industry or sector, is going to be the speed with which we can agree on universally shared standards. Universally accepted standards accelerate the adoption of new communication technologies and pathways, which in turn speeds growth and facilitates further collaboration.

After 9/11, we saw the American intelligence community scramble frantically to create some kind of collaborative environment, where the CIA, FBI, NSA, and dozens of other intelligence agencies could begin to communicate with one another. Up until then, they had felt relatively safe and secure operating each in their own little information fiefdoms, where they could communicate with themselves but not with one another. Indeed, they saw themselves as being in hot competition with one another, and therefore it actually served (so they thought) their interests to be fairly opaque to one another. It was a classic scarcity-economy scenario. Since then, communications have improved and they are better at collaboration than before 9/11. Although, true collaboration is still a goal versus an accomplishment.

As I mentioned earlier, a similar situation still exists within the health care community. There has been a lot of cooperation between competing players in the industry, but not true collaboration. It’s still protect and defend,

fiefdoms and egos, legacy thinking—all the things that keep abundance from happening. The only way forward is to stop cooperating and start collaborating, bringing together all the major players—the insurance companies, hospitals, medical supply houses, and everyone else involved in every aspect of health care delivery—to work together to reinvent health care itself.

**The same could be true for any industry.  
By working together to create a bigger pie for all,  
we can discover new opportunities and grow  
economies that benefit everyone.**



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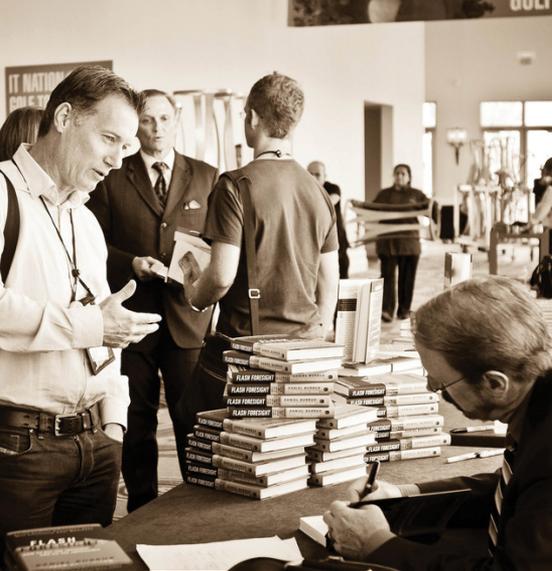
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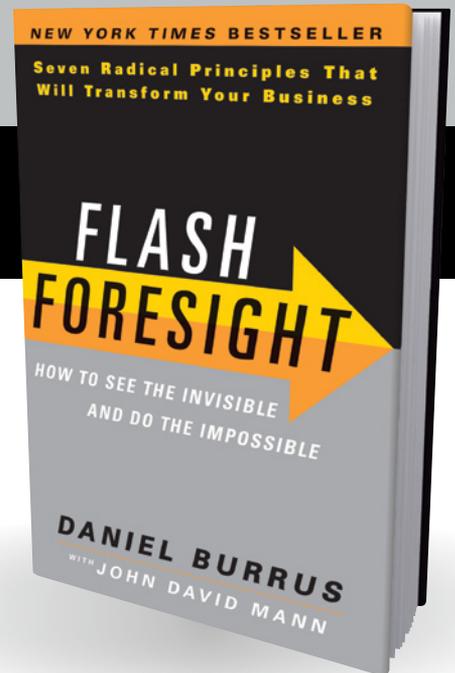
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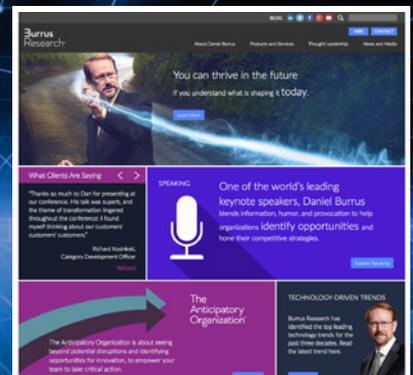
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# ABOUT

## DANIEL BURRUS

Daniel Burrus is considered one of the World's Leading Futurists on Global Trends and Innovation. **The New York Times** has referred to him as one of the top three business gurus in the highest demand as a speaker.

He is a strategic advisor to executives from Fortune 500 companies, helping them to develop game-changing strategies based on his proven methodologies for capitalizing on technology innovations and their future impact. His client list includes companies such as Microsoft, GE, American Express, Google, Toshiba, Procter & Gamble, Honda, and IBM.

He is also a featured writer on the topics of innovation, change, and the future for **CNBC**, **Huffington Post**, and **Wired Magazine** to name a few.

He has been the featured subject of several **PBS** television specials and has appeared on programs such as **CNN**, **Fox Business**, and **Bloomberg**, and is quoted in a variety of publications, including **The Wall Street Journal**, **Financial Times**, **Fortune**, and **Forbes**.

He has founded six businesses, four of which were national leaders in the United States in the first year. He is the CEO of Burrus Research, a research and consulting firm that monitors global advancements in technology-driven trends to help clients profit from technological, social, and business forces that are converging to create enormous, untapped opportunities.

His accurate predictions date back to the early 1980s, when he became the first and only futurist to accurately identify the 20 technologies that would become the driving force of business and economic change for decades to come. Since then, he has continued to establish a worldwide reputation for his exceptional record of predicting the future of technology-driven change and its direct impact on the business world.

He is the author of six books, including *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* bestseller **Flash Foresight: How to See the Invisible and Do the Impossible**, as well as the international bestseller **Technotrends**.

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