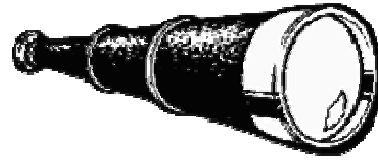




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FutureScoping:



emerging trends, new
ideas and general thought
stimulation

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For more information and other new
ideas visit www.futurescoping.com

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From:  iconoculture
Get Closer to the Consumer than ever before

PERSONALISED AFTER LIFE

Further deflecting "aging" stereotypes, Boomers are inventing novel ways to say goodbye, opting for final resting places that are groundbreaking, to say the least. Deep sea and deep space are two final destinations that are increasingly popular. Eternal Reefs mixes cremains into a concrete "reef ball" which is dropped into the ocean and seeded for ecosystem development. LifeGem reduces ashes to carbon, which are then heated and compressed into a diamond for individuals who want to be a family heirloom. The Eternal Ascent Society sends ashes up in helium balloons, while Space Services arranges for remains to go into orbit or into deep space. Beginning in 2010, Space Services will even arrange for a burial on the moon.

Thought: people want to do something memorable.

PRESCRIPTION VENDING

Access is about more than just a physical location. A controversial new bill will allow rural Hawaiian consumers to obtain prescription drugs via remote "vending machines". The technology reduces overhead and additional drug costs associated with a traditional pharmacy. Only selected medications will be offered, an off-site pharmacist will keep records, and a two-way sound and video monitoring device will act as the interface between patient and technician.

Thought: how could you increase access.

VIRTUAL FASHION

Stardoll has been a big hit with denizens of virtual environments, because the game enables users to dress up their avatars in an infinite spectrum of custom clothes. Virtual clothes and accessories are what makes creating an avatar interesting and fun after all. Now Stardoll is partnering with Spreadshirt to bring some of those user-created designs into the real world. The partnership is in an experimental stage, but it could potentially allow any user to generate a physical version of any virtual designs they like, find or design themselves.

Thought: make the virtual real.

GIFTS FROM BEYOND

Because wills and trusts often lack an intimate emotional element, My Hidden Legacy was created to offer more personal gifting choices for consumers facing end-of-life decisions. MHL works with the client to organize and manage meaningful onetime or recurring gifts for family and friends. The gifts can carry on traditions, like roses on an anniversary, or send loved ones on an exotic vacation. For relationship-oriented people facing end-of-life decisions, a legacy that includes personal and meaningful gifts beyond the traditional provisions of wills and trusts has a lot of personal appeal – a sense of fulfilment for the giver which help them cope with the idea of death.

Thought: leave a legacy behind.

From:  springwise

HOLIDAY HELP

More than just a time to renew body and spirit, for holiday makers at Ritz-Carlton hotels worldwide a vacation now also be a time to give back to the local community. The Give Back Getaways program gives guests the opportunity to volunteer their time to improve and assist the local community in which they are vacationing. In Cancun, for example, guests can get hands-on experience protecting mother sea turtles during nesting and helping them return safely to the sea. Visitors to Berlin, meanwhile, can roll up their sleeves and help spring clean-up facilities for children with serious illnesses. Experience, of course, is what it's all about, as the hotel goes beyond furnishing a purely functional place to stay to give guests a lasting, potentially transforming experience they'll remember forever.

Thought: provide the tools for transformation.

SECOND-HAND JEWELLERY

Most women have some: earrings, necklaces, rings or other jewellery given to them by an ex-boyfriend. Once treasured, the items become an irritating post-breakup reminder of a relationship gone bad. Fortunately, a new site offers a place to unload such relics from the past: ExBoyfriendJewelry.com. Along with basic details such as

description, condition and price for each item, users are asked to provide the story behind it, such as whether the breakup was a bad or amicable one. They are also asked to provide a rating, such as "Loved it but just can't stand to see it anymore" or "New boyfriend asking questions." For users who received something other than jewellery from their ex, there's also a category entitled "Gifts that should have been jewellery."

Thought: how to leave the past behind?

SOLAR PHONING

Mobile phones are connecting people around the globe like never before, but the simple fact remains that they don't work without electricity. In Uganda, which has one of the lowest levels of electricity in Africa, Motorola has launched an initiative to provide solar recharging stations that can be run by local, entrepreneurial women. The Motopower project has brought 55 solar-powered kiosks to Uganda that offer free mobile phone charging to local consumers. Each kiosk is charged by a 55-watt inverted solar panel and can charge up to 20 phones at a time. The women who run the kiosks, meanwhile, are also equipped to sell handsets and operator SIM cards, and to provide repair services. For local people without their own phones, the kiosks effectively function as a local "phone booth" for making occasional calls as well.

Thought: build your brand through social action.

GOLDEN PARTIES

As the weakening economy causes purse strings to tighten in many parts of the world, consumers are increasingly looking for new ways to earn some extra money. Enter My Gold Party, which facilitates Tupperware-style get-togethers that help guests sell their unused trinkets, cashing in on record gold prices. Previously in hard times, people have always been able to sell their spare jewellery in pawn shops, but by bringing the process out of the back alley and into the living room, My Gold Party legitimises and updates it with a social and entrepreneurial twist. They offer all the equipment you need to host parties in which guests can sell their gold, including a scale, karat tester and book of instructions. Party hosts then invite guests to bring gold coins, watches and jewellery to their party, where they assay and weigh each item to determine its current market worth. The party host pays guests for the items with cash or a cheque, then ships the gold to a refinery, at a rate hopefully higher than paid to the party guests. The gold is then melted down and reused.

Thought: realise the value of things people don't want.

ARCHIVING ARTWORK

Every family has a pile of their children's drawings somewhere. Since culling and saving the best isn't easy, two mum entrepreneurs have devised a neat solution: theART:archives. How it works? Parents send in their kids' drawings and theART:archives team professionally photographs each one and sends back a DVD catalogue that can be viewed on a computer screen or TV. The company's business model loosely resembles that of other cottage ventures that employ digital technology to reduce clutter. While millions of families own scanners and are tech-savvy enough to create DVD artwork collections on their own, many are likely to appreciate the time-saving convenience of a service that will handle the process for them.

Thought: digitise life.

COMMUNITY DECONSTRUCTION

Vacant, run-down buildings are usually viewed as a liability, with quick demolition seen as the only solution. A more eco-minded approach, however, is deconstruction, which allows for the salvage of the building's still-usable pieces. ReUse is a non-profit organization that specializes in just that, providing deconstruction services, community education, jobs and a store for salvaged parts. Through deconstruction—in which buildings are carefully taken apart rather than demolished in one blow—building materials including lumber, fixtures and architectural detail can be saved. These are then sold at their ReSource store, a local source for building materials and household items, DIY ideas, green education and community outreach, with proceeds from the sale of those items then get put back into the community.

Thought: what could you deconstruct and reuse?

SUBURBAN FARMS

As food prices climb and mainstream farming practices fall out of favour, there's growing incentive for consumers to farm their own food. Based on permaculture (the creation of perennial agricultural systems whose design mimics ecologies found in nature), Australian Permablitz is a group that brings sustainable, edible gardens to suburban neighbourhoods, via weekend "blitzes" in which groups of volunteers come together to transform a suburban yard into a food-producing organic garden. Before each blitz Permablitz coordinates design visits and organises the materials that

will need to be donated; post-blitz, it also conducts follow-up visits to check on the results. Along the way, the group hopes to share permaculture skills and build community networks.

Thought: facilitate immediate change.

From:  **GIZMODO**
THE GADGETS WEBSITE

DOWNLOAD RECORD

Mozilla, the company behind the groovy Firefox browser, has just created a new world software download record of over 5 million downloads in less than 24 hours, with more than 11,000 downloads per minute. The campaign to drive Firefox 3 downloads has been a resounding success for Mozilla, which now controls around 18% of the browser market. The US, unsurprisingly, is heading the charge with over 2 million downloads. The company blog says: *"It's been an awesome morning and afternoon here at Mozilla headquarters. We launched Firefox 3 this morning and immediately felt the love from millions of people all over the world joining us to set a Guinness World Record for most software downloaded in 24 hours"*.

Thought: get famous...break a record.

From:  **FAST COMPANY**

FOREIGN HEALTH CARE

The phrase "medical tourism" was once used to describe early retirees jetting to Bangkok or Bangalore for a little work before recuperating on the beach. Now, as many as half a million Americans streamed abroad each year in search of affordable healthcare: up to 90% off the going rates in the United States. They're fleeing a system that is by far the most expensive in the world and growing more so by the hour, with diminishing returns in quality of care. If your options are paying \$60,000 in the States or going East and paying \$6,000, that's the difference between putting it on your credit card or going into bankruptcy. A journey to India or Thailand is hardly a descent into some third-world medical hell either. These are world-class hospitals whose administrators have spent the past 15 years acquiring state-of-the-art technology and wooing local doctors who'd gone abroad to come home. Outpatient clinics are even more stylish than the bar at five-star hotels.

Thought: what could you do overseas.

From:  **JOSH RUBIN: COOL HUNTING**
Stuff from the intersection of design, culture and technology

INTELLIGENT FIRST AID

Making first aid guidance easier than ever, The Intelligent First Aid Kit improves on the standard box of mystery tubes and ointments. The award-winning new product comes not only equipped with individually wrapped packs of medical supplies but with step-by-step audio instructions on how to treat a range of injuries. The idea is simple: combine the necessary supplies with audio technology. The result is comprehensive yet extremely accessible. Designed by medical and educational experts to help people with little to no first aid training, every feature and function seems as if the makers thought it through. In addition to the audio aid, colour-coding and illustrations help differentiate packages and outline responses to more common ailments, especially handy when time is important

Thought: make help a standard feature.

From:  **PSFK**

HOW PEOPLE HERD

A new study has revealed some interesting properties of human movement by tracking mobile phone use. The study used data collected from 100,000 randomly selected individuals in an undisclosed European country; every time a user

received or made a call or SMS, the mobile base station used was recorded to determine approximate location. The results indicated that the majority of people travel a relatively short distance, somewhere between 5km-10km a day on a regular basis, and tended to re-visit the same spots over and over again.

Thought: people are creatures of habit – exploit this.

BIKE TRANSPORTER

IKEA is rolling out a handy service at their Danish stores. Partnering with bicycle manufacturer Velorbis and the Freetrailer service, they plan to offer low cost rentals of bikes and trailers to shoppers. IKEA of Denmark did a study that revealed 20% of their customers travelled to the store by bike, which prompted the offering.

Thought: harness valuable niche behaviour.

PETROL PRICE FIXING

Mygallons.com is a new service that lets you purchase gasoline at the current rate, and lock in that price for future fill ups. For example: you prepay for 100 gallons at \$4.10 a gallon, and every time you buy (until the 100 gallons run out) you pay that rate - even if prices go up. The system uses a debit card that's accepted at 95% of petrol stations in the US. Price is calculated based on an average for your region, and you also get credits if price paid is significantly cheaper than this. The only potential downside is the unlikely event of prices going down.

Thought: offer long term benefits to lock people in.

WEED FUEL

Kudzu is an extremely fast growing plant, usually considered a weed, that can grow up to two inches a day. A native plant of China, it was first introduced to the USA in 1876, and planted extensively in southern states to prevent soil erosion. Fast forward, and Kudzu is now growing out of control and messing up the local ecosystems. The good news is that the Kudzu plant is a great raw material to make ethanol. The roots are the size of sweet potatoes and contain all the right elements to produce the (currently) corn crop hogging fuel.

Thought: turn what people don't want into something they do.

From: 

THE VALUE OF FAST

Google is placing a value on fast. It is now adding load time as a factor in how it applies quality scores to keywords. The reasons: *"first, users have the best experience when they don't have to wait a long time for landing pages to load. Interstitial pages, multiple redirects, excessively slow servers, and other things that can increase load times only keep you from getting what you want. Second, users are more likely to abandon landing pages that load slowly, can hurt conversion rates."*

Thought: milliseconds matter and there's a price to pay for being too slow XXX.

From: 

MOBILE AIRLINE SAVINGS

The world's 3.2 billion mobile phones could be transformed into indispensable air travel tools within five years, according to a report from IT specialist SITA. The report reveals that if used as passenger tracking devices, handsets could save cash-strapped airlines up to £300 million by reducing flight delays. Mobile phones have the potential to hold boarding passes, baggage tracking information and payment data making travel paperless and location independent. There is also the future possibility that they can be used to store visa and biometric information. If the current growth rate continues, there will be five billion mobile customers by 2011 and functionality on mobile devices will be increasingly sophisticated. For the air transport industry this opens the door to a new way of doing business as mobile phones are currently used by 90 per cent of airline passengers.

Thought: how are you going mobile.

From:  COOLBUSINESSIDEAS

DANCE CHARGING

Orange is tapping into the energy party-goers expend dancing, and putting it to work powering up mobile phones. The Orange Dance Charge, developed with renewable energy firm Gotwind weighs just 180 grams and is about the same size as a pack of cards. The unit comes encased in a black elastic neoprene strap that gets attached over the wearer's bicep with Velcro, much the way a runner's arm-mounted MP3 player does. As users move their arms along with the music, a specially designed system of weights and magnets creates an electrical current that gets stored as charge in a reserve battery. That energy can then be used to recharge a mobile phone. Reportedly, Orange tested the Dance Charge out at Glastonbury by employing a "Dance Charging Man" who was on duty to dance (for free) with those in need of some recharging.

Thought: generate your own 'energy'.

LIMITED EDITION LINGERIE

Planned scarcity is a well-known tactic for enhancing a product's appeal, and Edition12 is taking that strategy to the max with its new collection of strictly limited-edition lingerie. On the 12th of each month at midnight, the newest piece from its collection will debut. Each design is reproduced for sale in only 120 pieces, and it's on sale for just a month. The sets are then made to order, with a unique number.

Thought: planned scarcity = status for consumers.

From: 

FAKE ENGINE NOISE

Hybrids and all electric cars offer much more than just fuel economy in an age of skyrocketing prices. They are quiet and help reduce noise pollution. Yet, these cars are stealthy, which can be unsafe as people may not hear them coming. Anyone from distracted pedestrians, small children and the blind could be at risk. So much so, that a bill going thru US congress will soon require a minimum sound level for hybrid and electric cars. Which is why 2 Stanford University students have come up with the concept of integrating sound systems that play fake engine noises for these near-silent vehicles.

Thought: are there unexpected downsides to your product benefits?

GROW YOUR OWN SKIN

Not happy with his old tattoos, singer and producer Pharrell Williams wants to get fresh new skin. Literally! In his quest for a cleaner body image to go with his new 'mature' persona, the super talented rapper and hip hop producer is trying an innovative procedure that grows new natural skin in the lab. The new skin is then stitched OVER his old one. It's basically like getting a skin graft, but you're not taking skin from another part of your body. New skin is actually grown for you. First you give a sample of your skin, which can then be replicated. Once that's been done, they sew it on - and it's seamless. Naturally, such a procedure is pretty pricey. Not that it matters when you are a superstar.

Thought: get back to the pure and simple.

Worth a look:

(A COMPENDIUM OF INTERESTING MISCELLANY TO WATCH AND LISTEN TO)

An introduction to Transformation Design

- <http://leemaschmeyer.googlepages.com/OnLifeSupport.pdf>

Digital penetration in the UK

- <http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/leadership/0,1045,sid%253D176972,00.html>

A New Model for News: Studying the Deep Structure of Young-Adult News Consumption

- <http://www.ap.org/newmodel.pdf>

The art of *lexpionage*: sleuthing of new words and phrases as they start to appear

- <http://www.wordspy.com/>

Is Google making us stupid?

- <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200807/google>

How we read online

- <http://www.slate.com/id/2193552/>

Achieving microfame

- <http://nymag.com/news/media/47958/>

Public attitudes to climate change: concerned but unconvinced?

- http://www.ipsos-mori.com/_assets/pdfs/public%20attitudes%20to%20climate%20change%20-%20for%20website%20-%20final.pdf

How social media is changing the face of media, marketing and advertising forever

- <http://www.slideshare.net/neilperkin/whats-next-in-media>

Ways of seeing: the art of data

- http://farisyakob.typepad.com/blog/files/ways_of_seeing.pdf

Television habits according to Alcatel-Lucent

- <http://www.alcatel-lucentlab.com/research/documents/Lab.13.TelevisionHabits.Results.Feb.08.pdf>

From sentient to responsive cities

- http://www.girardin.org/fabien/presentations/girardin_icing08_sentient_to_responsive.pdf

The economy vs. the environment

- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jul/01/climatechange.carbonemissions>

A macroeconomic primer for design and sustainability

- http://www.core77.com/blog/featured_items/its_the_economy_stupid_a_macroecomic_primer_for_designers_and_sustainability_by_robert_blinn_10263.asp