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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](http://www.futurescoping.com)

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From: 

### **GROW YOUR OWN**

Can our cities keep consuming in the face of food shortages and higher prices? A solution could be for urban areas to grow their own. Think architecture - and entire urban landscapes - designed to fulfil our ever-growing need for food. Could we make our cities more sustainable - even self-sufficient - if the need to grow food locally was designed into every stage of building, from drawing board to decor? South East False Creek in Vancouver could be one of the world's first purpose-built sustainable communities, with growing food at the top of the list of priorities. Eighty acres of former industrial land south of the city centre is being developed as part of the plans for Vancouver's Winter Olympics in 2010. The city has pledged to create 2,010 new growing spaces to provide food for the Games - something that could be copied in London for 2012. The architecture and layout is designed to encourage both communal growing - in parks and other public spaces - and private cultivation, in gardens, on roof tops, and other similar places.

**Thought:** put production in the hands of the people.

### **TIDY UP AFTER YOURSELVES**

The UK's biggest litter clear-up is to get under way more than 50 years after the Keep Britain Tidy group first urged people to take their rubbish home. The campaigning group is organising thousands of litter picks across the country over the next month. And it is calling for a return to 50s values, when it says dropping litter was seen as unacceptable. Some 6,000 groups have signed up for the Big Tidy Up which aims to collect half-a-million bags of litter.

**Thought:** rediscover some old fashioned values.

### **HEALTH(Y) FARMS**

Living on a farm during pregnancy may help reduce the chance of the child developing asthma, eczema and even hayfever, say scientists. Researchers suggest that exposure to animals, and the bacteria they carry, may affect the foetus's immune system, halving the risk. Previous research suggested that living on a farm, with regular contact with animals, during the early years of life, could cut the risk of allergies. But this study goes further, suggesting that this protection could start building even before birth.

**Thought:** don't make things too clean and sterile.

### **TRAINED TO ENTERTAIN**

Butlins has teamed up with a university to train aspiring Redcoats in the Sussex coastal resort of Bognor, via a two-year course in musical theatre. Many stars made their career breakthroughs after starting at Butlins. And a Butlins spokeswoman said: "If we can develop some stars for the future through this programme then that can only be a good thing. Redcoats are renowned for going through tough training and by joining forces with the university we are showing our commitment to providing top quality entertainment."

**Thought:** offer premium training opportunities to build your brand.

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From: 

### **KIDS REC**

What's better than keeping the kids close to home? Getting them to stay there. So recognising that staying home is the new going out, concerned parents are enticing tweens and teens to stay in by reviving the rec room...with some au courant upgrades. The modern version may be unrecognizable to some, with stylish furnishings and luxe amenities like kitchenettes. Also, retailers are starting to target tweens and teens with cheap-n-chic rec-friendly furniture that makes it fashionable to hang out at home.

**Thought:** how can you make the most of staying in?

### **LIVING WITH YOUR (GRAND) PARENTS**

20somethings are making the most of their grandparents living longer. Building on the close relationships that they have with Boomer parents, they're equally comfortable sharing experiences and learning from their parents' parents...and also helping them in return. Facing a dire job market and escalating debt, some young adults are even

opting to room with a grandparent before launching on their own, learning values from the 'greatest generation' while keeping tabs as they age. In fact, a recent study from Oxford Uni revealed that involved grandparents during the teen years can actually enhance a child's wellbeing.

**Thought:** never forgot – the over 60s have value..

### **BOOZE FREEZE**

When times get tough, consumers seek comfort in nostalgia. Anything that taps into happy childhood memories has more appeal these days...albeit with a modern, adult twist. Which is maybe why restaurants, newspapers and cookbooks are latching on to a childhood treat, and giving it a grown-up spirit (literally) – alcoholic popsicles. Popsicles (frozen beer on a stick) are the coolest things in some bars. And what's perfect for combating a sultry summer's day — Margarita Popsicles obviously! And *Pops!*, a cookbook dedicated to all things ice-pop, devotes one whole chapter to boozy pops, including frozen versions of the martini, the mojito and the mai tai.

**Thought:** an adult twist to childish things.

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**From:**



### **EMERGENCY WARDROBE**

Guests at some top hotels may be able to pre-order toothpaste or books for delivery before they arrive, but that won't help solve fashion emergencies that can crop up during a stay. For crises of a more sartorial sort, Net-A-Porter now offers an "emergency wardrobe service" for guests at select Soho House members' clubs/hotels. Forgotten a pair of shoes? Embarrassing stain incurred at dinner? Guests need fear such adversity no more. Thanks to the brand-new initiative, they can now enjoy same-day delivery of items from Net-A-Porter's exclusive online collection of designer clothes, shoes, handbags and accessories. So who says luxury is dead? Through partnerships between like-minded companies, the premiumization possibilities are endless! And it's a great example of an online brand branching out into the offline world, getting physically closer to (new) customers without having to invest in expensive retail space.

**Thought:** make the virtual real.

### **WINE PLAY**

Encouraging people to organize their own wine tasting parties, Holland's 4xProeven (Tastingx4) combines a board game with a four-pack of wine. The concept is simple: four small (0.375 litre) bottles of red wine are packaged in a carton that folds out to a board. Four blank stickers are included to hide the bottles' labels. A leaflet explains the basic elements of wine tasting: look, smell, taste and compare. It also describes the four single grape varieties included in the game. Players shuffle the bottles and start tasting. By comparing a wine's taste to the four descriptions, the objective is to guess which is Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir and Shiraz.

**Thought:** could you play with your product?

### **MAKE IT YOURSELF**

Last summer, SANS (a small New York fashion label)—launched an intriguingly simple shirt known as the Square Shirt. It made the rounds on fashion and design blogs, and subsequently sold out. The label has moved on to new collections, and no longer sells readymade Square Shirts. Instead, they've released the pattern so that customers can make their own. The straightforward pattern means that anyone who can use a sewing machine can fabricate one. After buying and downloading the digital pattern, customers print, cut and sew their own. SANS, which is known for creating cool clothes from organic materials, suggests using a worn garment or remnant piece of fabric. The pattern is priced at \$6, which includes an original SANS label to add that branded finishing touch. All of which appeals, of course, to the growing number of consumers who like to make things, and also gives anyone a chance to own something that might have previously been priced out of reach (\$ 85, and in limited edition runs).

**Thought:** don't discontinue...recycle as DIY.

### **ELECTRO-VENDING**

Electronics retailer Best Buy has installed vending machines at 8 major US airports. It's a pilot program for the company's new Best Buy Express kiosks: large vending machines carrying all sorts of electrical devices that are likely to appeal to customers on the go. Prices are similar to those in Best Buy stores, but are targeted at travellers in search of last-minute gifts, as well as those who need a replacement for a gadget or accessory they forgot to pack or lost along

the way. The convenience factor is an obvious draw for travellers in a hurry, especially at airports with limited shopping options. But the branding on a vending machine by a well-known retailer is also a clear visual signal, instantly recognizable by consumers, which is a real advantage at busy and cluttered airports.

**Thought:** what and where could you vend.

### **BANKING BY SHOEBOX**

Realizing that many of its wealthy clients lack the time or patience to deal with their personal finances, Amsterdam-based private bank Insinger de Beaufort has launched a new service that takes finances back to basics: a shoebox. After sitting down with their private banker to discuss financial planning, Insinger's clients are sent a big 'shoebox' by courier every month. They drop anything admin-related into the box: bills to be paid, bank statements, receipts, tax returns etc. At the end of the month, Insinger picks up the box, and processes its contents. Clients are sent a complete overview of actions and transactions within three business days, after which the bank takes care of the follow-up. Every quarter, clients are sent a financial report, detailing spending categories, asset growth, etc, and once a year, they meet with their private banker to evaluate new developments and adjust their financial planning as needed. The concept is of course entirely focused on convenience, saving (valuable) clients the time and hassle of dealing with the minutiae of their personal finances. While other banks provide their high-end clients with similar add-on services, the shoebox approach is undeniably elegant in its no-tech simplicity.

**Thought:** simplify life.

### **TASTE LAB RESTAURANT**

Geschmackslabor, German for Flavour Lab, is a new restaurant located in Bremerhaven. The 'lab' part of the name doesn't refer to molecular gastronomy or food served in test tubes. Experimentation at the restaurant is all about letting customers add flavour to their meals. Dishes are served ready-to-eat, but diners are encouraged to enhance them by adding one or more of twenty custom-made seasoning oils on offer. The seasonings are all based on very pure olive oil, which is infused with flavours ranging from Arabica coffee and rosemary to papaya and coconut. The menu suggests which seasonings go well with which dishes, but the whole point is for customers to experiment and find their own delicious combinations. The restaurant supplies plenty of bread for trying out different oils before adding them to food, allowing customers to sample a full range of spicy, sour, salty, sweet and bitter. Adding olive oil to prepared food may not appeal to every consumer, but this DIY approach to 'finishing' a dish definitely adds a new level of experience to eating out. It's an adventurous, taste-focused alternative to the usual ketchups and hot sauces.

**Thought:** let users customise their experience.

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**From:** 

### **DESIGNER ARMY KIT**

The military has always served as an incubator of groundbreaking technology and wild inventions. At the same time, private enterprise is uniquely equipped to hone expertise in very narrow fields. Nike, for example, continues to one-up itself with new and improved fabric development and shoe design - something the military probably doesn't have the time or resources to accomplish. So it's not that surprising to see a collaboration between Nike and the US Military, the former supplying the latter with boots designed specifically for the Special Forces. The boots are super lightweight and have the Nike Free sole and extra-long laces to serve as makeshift tourniquets. Because if there's one person who can truly personify the Just Do It! slogan of Nike, it's a Special Forces agent.

**Thought:** find extreme users to test and hone your product.

### **PARENTAL MONITORING**

You know something is wrong if parents are loosing it excessively when their children go to summer camp. Usually homesickness is the issue. Kids miss their familiar surrounding and want to go home, but the tables have been turned. More parents are beginning to develop "kidsickness". These aren't your garden variety parents either. Kidsickness is striking the species known as Helicopter Parents. The ones that are overly involved in their kids life, being overprotective and helping out just a little too much. With the source of all their activity taken away, they go into a kind of kid withdrawal. Compensating by checking the camps website obsessively for updates on the little one's lives.

**Thought:** keep families in contact.

### **PAPER SHAMPOO**

Straight out of a science fiction novel comes a product that seems strange, but makes so much sense - paper shampoo. Similar in concept to breath strips, these small pieces of paper like material are impregnated with hair cleaner that dissolves upon contact with water. Ultra compact packaging makes it easy to pack and reduces the environmental footprint. Being a solid material also makes these great for travellers dealing with TSA's strict liquid limitations. Shaving paper and laundry detergent paper are also available.

**Thought:** solid, liquid, gas...change the state of your product.

### **GOLF CART CARS**

Dozens of communities across the US have recently passed ordinances allowing golf carts to share the road with cars. The electric powered carts are turning into a viable transportation alternative for people feeling the strain of expensive gasoline. Some have even created dedicated cart lanes. Because with top speeds of approximately 20 mph and a very informal safety system, these tiny vehicles are only appropriate on roads with lower speed limits.

**Thought:** import parallel products and technology from other markets.

### **MICRO SALES ADD UP**

Forbes has a story about amateur photographers who are making decent money posting their personal pictures for sale on stock photography sites. iStockphoto and Shutterstock are two sites that allow users to upload and sell photos for low prices. The artists make about 25 cents a download, but it adds up. One man interviewed for the article has made \$2000 on a snapshot of his wife. A very interesting model, showing how you can make a living selling lots of little pieces of media (that you may be making anyway). This same system could be used for music loops and beats, stock video, sound effects, clip art. The micro job possibilities are endless.

**Thought:** don't ignore the niches.

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**From:** 

### **IRRESPONSIBILITY OF DISPOSABILITY**

There comes a point in the life cycle of every technology that a disposable low-cost version can be created. This usually gives consumer access to be a piece of technology with rudimentary and basic functionality. For example, the kings of disposability, Bic, have just announced they're bringing out a disposable mobile phone. Well, they aren't exactly making the phone, they are just licensing their brand name, suggesting that their brand of disposability has cache and relevance. Bic built its brand out of disposability first with pens and then with razors. And at the time, the advances in plastic technology and production meant these products made sense. But fast forward to 2008, and disposability no longer looks like the smart business model it once did. Should Bic continue to play the same game? Is the brand even relevant? Does it need to re-think how it can play a responsible role by making its products modular and re-usable and using more recycled plastics ?

**Thought:** is your core purpose still appropriate?

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**From:**  COOLBUSINESSIDEAS

### **NEVER FORGET**

The Memento Memory LifeBook is a well designed and effective scientific mobile gadget that serves as a solution to people who suffer from dementia. The wearable device aids communication and memory as well as helping keep track of objects and day-to-day agendas. The product facilitates the memorizing of events and helps those who suffer from dementia live their lives as efficiently and regularly as possible, by maximizing their cognitive abilities and enhancing their self-reliability. It assists with contact maintenance, upkeep of daily tasks, keeps track of agendas, medication dosages, and more. It also has an 'intelligent' camera that automatically takes photos of your day, including the people you meet. Due to the increasing numbers of dementia patients and the costs of medical aid, this break-through device poses as a wise answer.

**Thought:** what has your consumer forgotten?

## SHORT TERM SLEEPING

Following the trend for power napping, a hotel in Barcelona – the Hilton Diagonal Mar – has set aside 40 of its 433 rooms for anyone who'd like to take a siesta. Customers get a barbecue lunch thrown in, and a guest room from 1–5 PM, plus access to the hotel's gym and rooftop pool. As luxury hotels in Catalonia battle low occupancy rates due to overcapacity, the Diagonal Mar has the added problem of relying on business travellers, a market which slows down in summer. The plan is for the hotel's napping angle to help recoup some of its costs. And it's definitely a more creative approach to boosting occupancy than simply slashing room rates.

**Thought:** think short term product usage.

## HEALTHY PREGNANCIES

A French company has developed a new line of food products for pregnant women. Dubbed Luna, the range consists of eight products made with organic ingredients, all aimed at ensuring women get the nutrients they need for a healthy pregnancy. Included are honey & sesame biscuits that are rich in iron, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus and fibre; and a herbal infusion that promotes healthy circulation. While the benefits of dietary supplements continue to be contested by those who insist that a well-balanced and varied diet contain all the nutrients people need, nutraceuticals (also known as functional food) are big business. Surprisingly, no other brands seem to target pregnant women directly in this way, so it seems like a smart move.

**Thought:** specialise for a lucrative niche, don't generalise for everyone.

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**From:**  **CONTAGIOUS**

## PENGUIN DATING

This exciting and sweet collaboration between cyber cupids Match.com and literary publishers Penguin is eye catching for a number of reasons. Books and dating might seem like an odd combination, but it makes so much sense. Dubbed a space where 'where book lovers meet', the site allows visitors to set up a profile and connect to other users much like regular dating sites – although rather than 'big boobs, flirtatious, leggy, blonde' expect to see 'Austen, Dean, Tolstoy' etc in a collision between 21st century romance and good old fashioned literature loving. Penguin's Digital Marketing Director Anna Rafferty said: 'Sometimes a book means so much more; at Penguin we believe that the books we cherish and read over and over, those that we feel a deep emotional connection with, say something defining about us and the type of people we are. 'What are you reading / what did you last read / who's your favourite author?' are all standard first date questions, and what better way to find your life partner than over a shared love for Lawrence or a passion for Pynchon?'. This is another great piece of work, and once again Penguin has revealed a surprising amount of digital savvy. While other brands are still grappling with the revolution, occasionally dipping their toes in the social networking pool or making weak attempts at virals, Penguin have more than established their new marketing credentials. If we were talking about a Games manufacturer or a tech giant this would all be standard practice, but this is a publishing company that launched in 1935 and still loves and lives in print. Penguin's willingness to experiment with and embrace the mediums that have many times been predicted to ruin them makes the demise of the printed word seem increasingly unlikely.

**Thought:** embrace your enemy.

# Worth a look:

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

Why our inner chimpanzee likes hoarding things

- [http://www.economist.com/science/displayStory.cfm?source=hptextfeature&story\\_id=11579107](http://www.economist.com/science/displayStory.cfm?source=hptextfeature&story_id=11579107)

Establishing habits to deliver social change

- <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/13/business/13habit.html?ex=1373601600&en=e3072a7b2bc8ebf4&ei=5124&partner=permalink&exprod=permalink>

Making the right impressions in social spaces

- <http://www.slideshare.net/gregverdino/social-graces?src=embed>

How stock photography predicts social trends

- <http://www.slate.com/id/2195237/pagenum/all/>

How to succeed in the world of social media

- <http://www.slideshare.net/mzkagan/what-the-fk-social-media?src=embed>

Positive people create positive brand experiences

- <http://thebrandbuilder.wordpress.com/2008/07/11/why-positive-people-create-positive-brand-experiences/>

The rise of guerilla gardening

- <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/08/magazine/08guerrilla-t.html>

The randomness and illogicality of financial markets

- [http://neilperkin.typepad.com/only\\_dead\\_fish/2008/07/financial-flock.html](http://neilperkin.typepad.com/only_dead_fish/2008/07/financial-flock.html)

Could the new 'new thing' be something old?

- [http://discussionleader.hbsp.com/davenport/2008/07/can\\_the\\_new\\_new\\_thing\\_be\\_somet\\_1.html](http://discussionleader.hbsp.com/davenport/2008/07/can_the_new_new_thing_be_somet_1.html)

Why 30somethings are living in denial about their future

- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jul/19/longtermcare.socialcare?gusrc=rss&feed=fromtheguardian>

The power of story telling

- <http://www.presentationzen.com/presentationzen/2008/07/robert-mckee-on-the-power-of-story.html>

How to build an online community

- <http://www.beeline.com/files/TribalizationStudyrelease.pdf>

Making happiness your business model

- <http://www.slideshare.net/missrogue/happiness-as-your-business-model-414463?src=embed>

Paul Feldwick on why a model of advertising based around rational argument, functional propositions and single-minded messages is flawed

- <http://www.thinkbox.tv/server/show/nav.1015>

Taking play seriously

- <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/02/17/magazine/17play.html?ex=1361941200&en=035c75a4cf0e385f&ei=5124&partner=permalink&exprod=permalink>