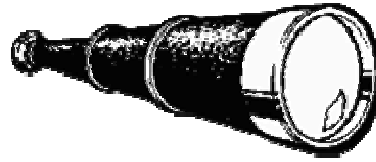




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# FutureScoping:



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:** 

#### **STAY CALM**

People who are more laid back are less likely to develop dementia in old age, a study has suggested. Elderly people who were calm and relaxed had a 50% lower risk of developing dementia during the six years of the study. There are 700,000 people with dementia in the UK. That number is expected to rise to over one million by 2025. The study of people aged 78 and over found that people who were socially inactive but calm and relaxed had a 50% lower risk of developing dementia compared with people who were socially isolated and prone to distress. The dementia risk was also 50% lower for people who were outgoing and calm compared to those who were outgoing and prone to distress.

**Thought:** reduce the stress.

#### **MICRO-MOTORS**

Miniaturisation of motors has not kept pace with that of electronics. But researchers have long envisioned that trends of miniaturisation would lead to tiny medical robots that could get around easily in the body. The problem until now has been that conventional electric motors do not perform well when they are scaled down in size; as they approach millimetre dimensions, they barely have the power to overcome the resistance in their bearings. This has been the significant bottleneck in the development of microtechnology. Now, though, research reported in the Journal of Micromechanics and Microengineering has demonstrated a motor about twice the size of a human hair, with the power fly mini robots around inside the body

**Thought:** how small could you make things.

#### **PHONES R 2 COMPLEX**

The complexity of modern mobile phones is leaving users frustrated and angry, research suggests. Over 60% think setting up a new handset is as challenging as moving bank accounts. While 85% reported being frustrated by the difficulty of getting a new phone up and working. Of the 4,000 people questioned, 95% said they would try more new services if phones were easier to set up. Users were frustrated by having to call an operator or look online for help, with bad experiences turning people off trying to get more from their phone. Some 61% of those questioned said they stopped using an application if they could not get it working straight away. Manufacturers say setting up a new phone should take only 15 minutes, but many were spending an hour or more to get the handset to do what they wanted.

**Thought:** people reject complicated.

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**From:** 

#### **iFUN WITH YOUR PHONE**

Social Gaming Network has launched a software application for the iPhone that transforms it into a videogame controller with Nintendo Wii-like powers. Consumers simply install iFun on their device of choice via iTunes and then go to SGN's website to get gaming pronto. The games are hosted on a separate computer screen, with the iPhone functioning as the joystick. *iGolf* is the first title for the new platform, and, like the iFun app itself, costs nothing. SGN hopes gamers get hooked on digital golfing highs and will pay up for access to *iGolf's* Silver and Premium options.

**Thought:** develop interactive applications.

#### **BABY SITTING PARTIES**

Once getting a sitter was as simple as calling a friend's teenage daughter. But in today's danger-fraught world, parents demand rigorous reviews. They're also looking for sitters to stimulate the kids, not just park them in front of the screen. Which is why finding a reliable babysitter can be tough. Like speed-dating, Sitter Soirees streamline the process with sessions that bring parents and sitters together at informal gatherings ques. Potential sitters are recruited from local colleges and employment websites. The dozen or so who make the cut boast impressive creds, from special-needs experience to bilingual fluency. Parents pay to attend the Soirees, some with toddlers in tow, providing the opportunity to chat casually with candidates — and compare them with one another. Once a match is made, sitters charge their standard rate.

**Thought:** provide tools that aid difficult decision making.

## GREEN DREAMS

Remember when everyone started claiming to be “all natural” and “organic?” If buzzwords get contagious on a corporate level, consumers start to question the real deal. But true do-gooders deliver from top to bottom. Self-proclaimed as the first hotel with a “conscience,” every detail of San Francisco’s Good Hotel takes this into account: from location to room design, it is meant to instigate good social and eco-behaviour. For example, in addition to eco-friendly materials, guest rooms feature bathroom sinks that recycle water (guests flush with water they’ve first used to wash with). The hotel is located within walking distance of attractions and one block from public transportation, but a green parking area includes free parking for hybrid cars. Setting a Good example, hotel employees are rewarded for charity work and guests can easily access charitable opportunities via lobby phones.

**Thought:** live out your principles 100%.

## PRINT YOUR OWN MONEY

Two Milwaukee neighbourhoods are considering making their own currency. Residents of Riverwest and East Side met in early December 2008 to plan how and when they might roll out their dough. Other cities around the globe already have similar systems. Ithaca, New York, has its own money derived from doing community work and spendable at any business within city limits. Lancaster, England, and Geneva, Switzerland, have local currencies as well. Centralised still run the global economy, but at the local level, some communities are seeing the value of local systems of transaction. The perfectly legal tender is intended to help local businesses and build civic identity. It is the equivalent of real U.S. tender, and might be offered at a favourable exchange rate.

**Thought:** develop new systems of exchange.

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**From:**



## SNAIL MAIL FOR FACEBOOK

While it may seem that all the world is communicating online, the fact remains that there are exceptions. And a new Facebook application provides a way for those online to communicate seamlessly with the offline world. Facebook users can already send real flowers and candy to their virtual friends, and now Peggy Mail allows them to send postcards through snail mail. The application was inspired by a real-life but offline grandmother who found it increasingly difficult to stay in the loop with the younger and wired members of her family. To use the service, Facebook users need only download the Peggy Mail application and enter their message and the recipient’s address. Peggy Mail then prints and delivers the postcard along with a pre-addressed, pre-stamped postcard for reply. The service is available only within the UK and Ireland, and is free during its beta period. As indicated by its tagline—“Send real nice messages even Gran can get”—the concept aims to connect generations that use different modes of communication.

**Thought:** Make it easy for consumers to bridge the virtual and the real.

## CREATIVE ACCOMMODATION

A new venture from Swedish clothing brand Elvine offers select creative types nothing less than a free place to stay. Creators Inn provides a fully equipped room with a balcony overlooking the city of Gothenburg, and just a 10 minute walk from the city centre. Working with local independent organizers, Elvine’s aim is to use the room to host visiting artists and creatives at no charge and with no strings attached. Foreign visitors are given priority, but anyone can apply by making a case for using the room. So far, artist, songwriter and blogger Momus and soul musician Jomo are among the guests who have been accommodated. Elvine describes this as CSR - Creative Social Responsibility. By offering visiting creators free accommodation, they hope to remind people of a lovely little thing called hospitality, making the visiting creators happy and Gothenburg a more interesting city because of their presence.

**Thought:** inspire creativity.

## LOOK BUT DON’T BUY

The pop-up retail trend has been around for years, but Teen Vogue magazine is bringing its own twist to the concept with a space that doesn’t sell a thing. Instead, visitors will be able to try on items from the racks of clothes on display, receive advice from stylists and sample products from the perfume bar or make-up station. A welcome addition for retailers, stylists will lead visitors to stores that stock successfully sampled items. Products from the publication’s advertisers are also on display. Moving beyond pop-up retail, Teen Vogue’s initiatives are part of the brand butler trend. Rather than bombarding audiences with one-way advertising, it offers readers a generous service that also benefits

both advertisers and neighbouring stores. Freeing itself from the pressure to sell, this provides teens with a relaxed oasis from hectic shopping spaces whilst influencing opinion and boosting loyalty towards its own brand.

**Thought:** trial don't sell.

### MOOD NAVIGATION

Guidebooks and recommendations are all very well, but there's very little point in discovering a new activity, restaurant or shop if you're not in the right headspace to enjoy it. Enter I Feel London (and other places), a site that lets users search for things to do based on their mood. The 'I Feel' sites bring a new spin to Google Maps. There's a map for each one of nine moods, covering such feelings as naughty, hungover, girly, sophisticated and broke. Andy Whitlock, I Feel's London-based founder, has kick-started each map by populating it with a handful of activities, with future contributions to be made by anyone who requests an invite. Whitlock is tapping into the zeitgeist: map-based concepts are popping up everywhere. Why? Geography is about everything that is (literally) close to consumers, and it's a universally familiar method of organizing, finding and tracking relevant information on objects, events and people. And now that superior geographical information is accessible on-the-go the sky is the limit.

**Thought:** show people the way to go.

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**From:** 

### WATER FROM THIN AIR

Water, Water, everywhere; nor any drop to drink. The plight of the Ancient Mariner is about to be alleviated thanks to a firm of eco-inventors from Canada who claim to have found the solution to the world's worsening water shortages by drawing the liquid of life from an unlimited and untapped source - the air. Element Four has developed a machine that it hopes will become the first mainstream household appliance to have been invented since the microwave. Their creation, the WaterMill, uses the electricity of about three light bulbs to condense moisture from the air and purify it into clean drinking water. From the outside, the mill looks like a giant golf ball that has been chopped in half: it is about 3ft in diameter, made of white plastic, and is attached to the wall. It works by drawing air through filters to remove dust and particles, then cooling it to just below the temperature at which dew forms. The condensed water is passed through a self-sterilising chamber that uses microbe-busting UV light to eradicate any possibility of Legionnaires' disease or other infections. Finally, it is filtered and passed through a pipe to the owner's fridge or kitchen tap. The obvious question to the proposition that household water demands can be met by drawing it from the air is: are you crazy? To which the machine's inventor and Element Four's founder, Jonathan Ritchey, replies: 'Just wait and see. The demand for water is off the chart. People are looking for freedom from water distribution systems that are shaky and increasingly unreliable.'

**Thought:** what does water as a scarce resource mean.

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**From:** 

### FLY BY THE MINUTE

In yet another novel attempt to inject some life into the struggling airline industry, South African Airtime Airlines is preparing to launch iFly Airtime, a pay-as-you-fly system that allows passengers to purchase "flying minutes". Flights are valued at a set number of "flying minutes," regardless of any potential flight delays. For example, a one-way flight between Durban and Johannesburg will cost 75 minutes of airtime, the hook being that the "flying minutes" for sale fluctuate in price depending on larger industry factors, prompting those in search of the best deal to engage with the airline's site more often.

**Thought:** find different ways to define the 'units' you sell.

**From:** PSFK

### **WEAR YOUR IDENTITY**

ShotCodes does wonders for offline advertising (and stalking) by allowing you to scan the identity of passers by. The latest venture from Netherlands-based apparel company W-41 gives users the ability to 'carry their websites with them' using their barcoded logo apparel; each logo entirely unique to its owner. People can photograph your logo with their camera phone and use the free ShotCode mobile application to access the wearer's Linked In, Facebook, or Myspace.

**Thought:** provide virtual-real interaction.

### **CROWD MADE MOVIES**

Massify has created an online model that enables filmmakers, actors and audiences to collaborate in making films.

And now the community fueled site is preparing to release its first project, a horror movie titled Perkins 14. The step-by-step process that saw the film through from pitch to production began with a contest inviting participants to submit their ideas to the community for consideration. Once the public had voted on their favorite, the democratic creation was underway. From there on out, many of the film's important decisions, from who to invite to the casting call and what the movie posters should look like were determined in much the same way. Though we can't speak to the quality of the end result, this fledging effort represents a transformation of the traditional paradigm that sees our entertainment being foisted on us from above. At the very least, this grassroots notion of film creation and consumption should get some in Hollywood and elsewhere to rethink the conventional ways that movies and other media are developed.

**Thought:** let the people decide.

### **XBOX MUMS**

The Xbox 360 is utilizing a marketing strategy that is reminiscent of the Tupperware parties of old. And despite the radical change in product, the target audience is the same. Microsoft recently invited 1,000 women from around the country to host events as a way of showcasing many of the Xbox's web-based games and services to their family and friends. Hostesses received an Xbox party pack of freebies that included microwaveable popcorn, Xbox trivia game *Scene It?*, an Xbox universal media remote control, a three-month subscription to Xbox Live, and 1,600 Xbox Live points. The idea behind these parties is simple - a product endorsement coming from a person you know and trust in a pressure free environment (nothing is actually being sold) will go a lot further towards making a sale than any amount of advertising. The company behind this revival is the aptly named House Party, a viral marketing firm that specializes in linking enthusiastic consumers or "brand advocates" with interested brands.

**Thought:** sell direct to your consumers.

### **ANTI-ENERGY DRINK**

At the same time as one drink category with a dubious reputation is on the wain- drinks that combine alcohol and caffeine are being discontinued or reformulated - a new line with similar image issues rises to take its place. Lead by Drank, a purple-tinged carbonated beverage that combines the natural calming qualities of Melatonin, Valerian Root and Rose Hips, the so-called "relaxation" or "anti-energy drink" category has been born. Although it contains ingredients normally found in a health food store next to the healing crystals, who it's being marketed to might surprise you. Wishing to capture a youthful audience, the brand plays up its hip-hop roots with a slogan promising to "Slow Your Roll", alongside promotional efforts that include distributing free samples from a Hummer and placing the product in a recent rap video. And while these associations might appear rather innocuous on the surface, given Drank's obvious similarities to dangerous street concoctions with names like "purple drank" and "sizzurp" that combine cough syrup and soda, the company's tactics are more than a little troubling.

**Thought:** add a dose of street edge.

### **DIGITALEGO**

Globally loved toymaker LEGO has joined forces with Digital Blue to create a line of classic brick-themed electronic products for kids including digital cameras, MP3 players, walkie talkies and USB drives, as well as Boom boxes and alarm clock radios that feature over-sized LEGO elements. Due out this summer in both the U.S and Europe, the range looks as though it could be fresh out of a kit box. Unfortunately it is only a design theme and the products do not come apart, although enabling kids to build - and rebuild - their own gadgets would be the ultimate in customization, as well as offering a fantastic learning tool.



**Thought:** brand fans love branded stuff.

**From:** 

#### **WET FREE FABRIC**

If you were to soak even your best raincoat underwater for two months it would be wet though at the end of the experience. But a new waterproof material developed by Swiss chemists would be as dry as the day it went in. The fabric, made from polyester fibres coated with millions of tiny silicone filaments, is the most water-repellent clothing-appropriate material ever created. Drops of water stay as spherical balls on top of the fabric, and a sheet of the material need only be tilted by 2 degrees from horizontal for them to roll off like marbles. A jet of water bounces off the fabric without leaving a trace. The secret to this incredible water resistance is the layer of silicone nanofilaments, which are highly chemically hydrophobic. The combination of the hydrophobic surface chemistry and the nanostructure of the coating results in the super-hydrophobic effect. The water comes to rest on the top of the nanofilaments like a fakir sitting on a bed of nails. A similar combination of water-repelling substances and tiny nanostructures is responsible for many natural examples of extreme water resistance, such as the surface of Lotus leaves. The silicone nanofilaments also trap a layer of air between them, to create a permanent air layer. Similar layers - known as plastrons - are used by some insects and spiders to breathe underwater. This fine layer of air ensures that water never comes into contact with the polyester fabric. It can be submerged in water for two months and still remain dry to the touch.

**Thought:** take inspiration from nature.

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**From:**  COOLBUSINESSIDEAS

#### **HOURLY BACHELOR PAD**

In Manila, motels cheekily dub themselves collectively as the “instant hospitality” or “drive-in hotel” industry. Standard practices include offering two hour room rates, vehemently guaranteeing absolute privacy and openly advertising newly launched theme rooms typically inspired by some of the most requested fantasy scenarios (e.g. The Oval Office, the X-Men’s Danger Room, and apparently that cave in Matrix Reloaded). Now, two of the city’s largest motel franchises are moving towards rooms that de-emphasize the bed setting and instead focus more on drinks, multiple flat screens, video games and surround sound. They are in effect creating full-scale bachelor pads for the masses. The fast turnover time model is applied here to make comprehensive private parties more price accessible.

**Thought:** deliver high value experiences on an affordable budget.

#### **BIKE POWER**

Imagine never having to plug your cellphone into the wall again! Well now you can just plug it into your bike, thanks to the Watts Maker charger. The system consists of a small kinetic generator that provides power to your mobile phone while you take a ride. It takes about 90 minutes to go from dead to fully charged, and produces energy as long as the wheels keep turning. The Watts Maker works upon the same principle as the old dynamo bike lights - energy is created by the revolution of the wheel, so even if the bike is coasting it will still be sending power into your phone.

**Thought:** find new ideas in old technology.

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**From:** 

#### **SUPERBUG KILLA**

Interesting news shows a promising new use for an old material. Recent studies have shown copper to have amazing anti-germ properties. In a trial at Selly Oak hospital in Birmingham, it was found that copper plumbing fixtures and toilet seats helped kill off deadly super bugs like MRSA and C difficile. The ten-week trial found copper items had up to 95% fewer bugs on their surface whenever tested. Professor Tom Elliott, lead researcher and a consultant microbiologist at the hospital, said: “The findings of 90 to 95 per cent killing of those organisms, even after a busy day on a medical ward with items being touched by numerous people, is remarkable.

**Thought:** killer apps can come from unexpected sources.

# Worth a look:

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

What young people are getting up to digitally

- <http://bit.ly/xfZEy>

Luxury in an eco-conscious world

- <http://bit.ly/VxiG3>

What quality and luxury mean in a recession

- <http://bit.ly/OSHPD>

The way we live: the changing regionality of Britain

- <http://bit.ly/q5wdH>

HSBC Climate Confidence Monitor

- <http://bit.ly/1FWVT>

The age of mass intelligence

- <http://bit.ly/mBJVS>

There is a disconnect between what brands want and most agencies deliver

- <http://bit.ly/18Df4S>

Seth Godin on Tribes

- <http://bit.ly/C5Bux>

Social networks and happiness

- <http://bit.ly/z8zmK>

Happiness Is Infectious

- <http://bit.ly/3X17r>

Graffiti and litter lead to more street crime

- <http://bit.ly/GCAJV>

The intersection between sex and cyberspace

- <http://bit.ly/NF05j>

Who is most like to succeed according to Gladwell

- <http://bit.ly/goquQ>

Now online is as real as real life

- <http://bit.ly/INR14>

Fighting cultural agrophobia (or underestimating the benefits and overestimating the dangers of openness)

- <http://bit.ly/8mWod>

When we watch videos online

- <http://bit.ly/lc6uy>

How kids learn business skills from texting

- <http://bit.ly/fPrNX>

The future of the internet: how the experts see it

- <http://bit.ly/iTXeQ>

The importance of advertising in a recession

- <http://bit.ly/de69g>