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PREDICTIONS

2021 | 2022 | 2023

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TWENTY-ONE PREDICTIONS FOR 2021

--- WAS 2020 A CATALYST OR A CALAMITY FOR IDEAS ABOUT THE WORLD OF 2030?

For the last two-plus years, I have been fortunate to interview industry dignitaries, thinkers, entrepreneurs, and leaders for Forbes Insights in the podcast Futures in Focus about the forthcoming world of 2030. 95% of the interviews have been incredibly optimistic, with a cause. 2020 has been an acid test of their ideas, visions, and practices.

2020 could be seen as a catalyst for ideas like EV dominance by 2030. Just look at the market capitalization of Tesla. 2020 has violently accelerated the shift to digital retail. Again, look at the market capitalization of Amazon. 2020 has also led to very different ideas about work. That move to virtual did not just amplify Zoom's market capitalization but also Microsoft's market capital value. There are exact causes and effects and accelerants from 2020.

There have also been calamities. The travel industry (inside and outside of the US) was in the middle of a ten year high in 2019. Can you even remember the blockbuster movies of 2020? Yet early signs from WW84 (Wonder Woman 1984) and home watching have breathed life back into the idea of blockbusters going straight to pay per view. Remember how boxing has survived on pay per view before. The lesson here is that the future is not as predictable as we may like to think as necessity is the mother of invention for whole industries.

Here are the twenty-one predictions for 2021 headlines for the next three articles, where you will see more specific details and logic for each one.

TWENTY-ONE PREDICTIONS FOR 2021



Leadership now demands a 360-degree perspective, 365 days of the year. Change is a constant, and digital-first reigns. Live on this or die slowly in 2021.



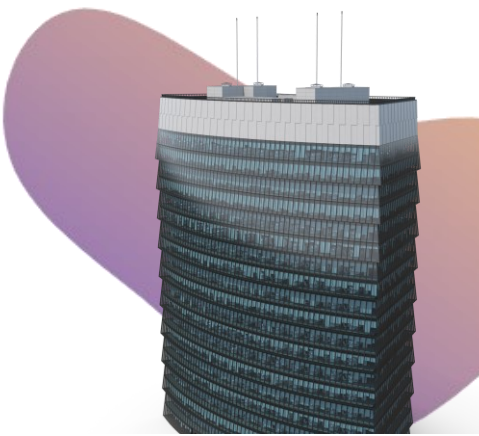
The debate about the future of work has barely started, but the argument might be missing the wood for the trees. In 2021 solve that challenge, and you will have a huge hiring advantage.



The urban retreat might not be permanent, but cities will change forever if we don't do something about it in 2021.



Personal relationships go to the extremes, and we are about to see that unfold in front of us in 2021 and beyond.



The role of a corporation in 2021 and beyond will be increasingly complex and exciting.



The housing crisis becomes a very obvious third rail with no clear solution in sight for 2021.

TWENTY-ONE PREDICTIONS FOR 2021



Does a fresh satellite view of the less polluted planet have a lasting positive effect on us, or do we go back to our old ways?



Preventative medicine may be here to stay at last. That could transform at long last in 2021.



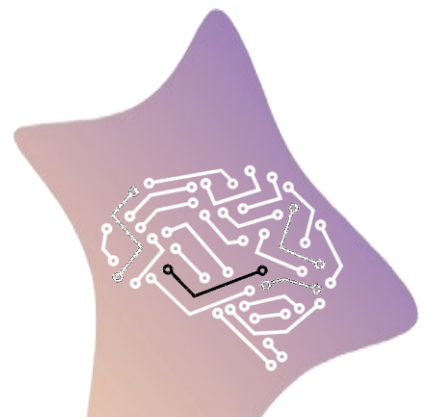
Will college ever be the same as before, or are we at a moment of reckoning for higher education in the US? We are about to find out if 2020 continues through 2021. Indeed change will have to come.



The future restaurants may be in the cloud or on trucks for a long time to come. 2021 will be the phoenix year for this.



Millennials may be the most financially and career-wise stunted segment from 2020. Recovery may look very different for them as they were meant to come into their own.

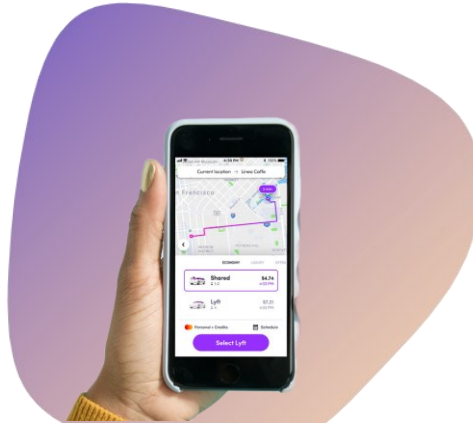


Digital transformation flips to intelligent systems, very fast. Faster and more prosperous than even the digital transformation of the last ten years.

TWENTY-ONE PREDICTIONS FOR 2021



In 2021 we all discover the splendors of the idea of Route 66 and the countryside around us. It might reignite the love of simple American road trips.



In 2021 the side Gig economy becomes personal sanity and the insurance policy for the future.



In 2021 we will all see the K recovery firsthand. It will make us have harder discussions about which part of the K we want to be part of a leadership plan.



Significant events will struggle to return in 2021, but some significant pressures will change the experiences for good, starting in 2021. Get ready for VR, 5G rich, and seat concierge services.



In 2021 the whole fitness experience moves virtual as the first choice. Mirror, mirror on the wall could be the new model for far more of us in 2021 than ever before.



The focus on sustaining and evolving work culture goes into hyperdrive in 2021 as historical goodwill runs out.

TWENTY-ONE PREDICTIONS FOR 2021



2021 will be a year choices' have to be made by leaders. 2020 was a year choice' were thrust upon us. We need to develop new digital frameworks at our core for 2021 for our people, customers, and strategic futures.



In 2021 more of us will be tracked in everything we do than ever before. Our ID will be mostly defined by digital presence than physical presence.

Re-read these fast and ask how each has and will affect how you build strategy and ideas in your organizations from now on, one prediction at a time. In the next three pieces, I will look at sets of seven predictions in more detail.

TWENTY-TWO PREDICTIONS FOR 2022

WHY THIS IS MALCOLM GLADWELL'S TIPPING POINT YEAR

From not caring about Facebook, to AI driving our worlds, automation taking over, crypto currency getting real, the EV reality we have all hoped for takes off welcome to the reality of 2022. But wait because there is so much more.

There is an inherent danger in writing predictions within a month of the end of the year. Sudden shifts are not normal for the world. However, we are experiencing them at a rapid and almost un-predictable pattern. Covid's latest variation, the Omicron variant is going to be an extensively talked about by the time we all read this on December 31st, 2021. The delta variant feels like a distant historical event now. We can witness history or help change its' course. 2022 is a tipping point for stepping over that witness line to participating in sculpting that future.



If you have not read Malcolm Gladwell's book, *Tipping Point*, please do.

It's exceptional, fast, and thought provoking read. He talks about epidemics, the laws of the few, connectors, mavens, and the power of context to change, stickiness factors and the power of how we think and act. For most of the time, most of the time, we do not collectively live in what he calls an epidemic. He defines epidemics as events like the cabbage patch dolls, FUBU clothing or Michael Jackson. You can recognize the epidemics you might have experienced. They will vary and have short windows and tend to only affect sub- populations. He does not talk about real epidemic, he does not talk about epidemics that affect whole populations, the globe. It is too shocking for him to have thought about.

2022 is going to be a tipping point for every one of us, because the world we live in has all of Gladwell's characters from connecting events to maven events, massive context change, and stickiness factors everywhere. The tipping point is defined as the moment of critical mass, the threshold, and the boiling point. It is the point when everyday things reach epidemic proportions. These twenty-two predictions are combinations of each of these components. Recognize which ones are going to be epidemics you will experience.

01. 2022 IS THE TIPPING POINT TO MASS AUTOMATION

Labor shortages, cheap capital, and a desire to buy transformation with one sweeping move trigger it as a business core. The heading says it all really. A continued shortage of white-collar labor, retail and blue-collar labor forces the move to automation as a strategy and not just a process. In many businesses, we have reached the point where incrementalism in process changes will not deliver the growth outlook needed to deliver shareholder returns. Look at McDonalds with Siri, the self-serve scanners at amazon stores or even 100% digital ticket experiences at sporting events (even the Green Bay Packers). Name a company that does not have automation as an executive mandate for 2022. In 2022 automation will be a management strategy and a driver of decisions for a full range of investments from HR to marketing, software development, even services companies deliver. It will be as important a point of differentiation as any of Michael Porters five forces as far back as 1979. You can read the original [HBR piece here](#).



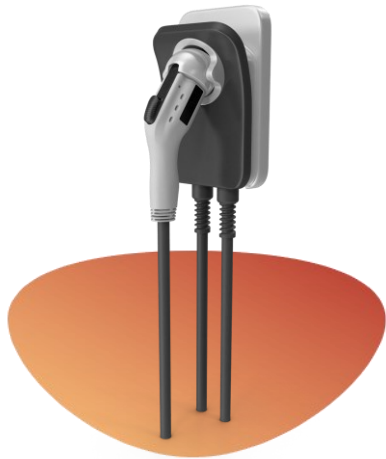
02. IN 2022 AI STARTS TO CONSCIOUSLY DIRECT OUR LIVES

We have had the shock of Covid-19 to force us to adjust to the need to build more automation, faster decisions for near instant delivery. Pick any industry, food retail, healthcare, the internet of things, 5G networks, software code development or cyber security software. Ai is going to sit at the heart of the logistics, operational models and even core processes in these industries as over 99% of tasks can be conditionally programmed around combinations of choices.

Look at how [Instinet](#) works in the financial markets with over 95% of all transactions and trades happening without human interactions. That means a vast amount of the stock market that we have our retirement accounts managed are managed by algorithms. There are now whole industries whose growth will be dependent on ai to do the base thinking for it, cyber secure, retail logistics, insurance risk modeling, software development as we all want to be software companies. In 2022 we will be surprisingly amazingly comfortable with this as we each get to see ai handle our medical records, make purchase decisions and run ever more complex and stressed supply chains with algorithms.

03. IN 2022, EV HITS THE TIPPING POINT AS THE NEW POSSIBLE NORM

We will not be driving combustion engineered vehicles in forty years' time. Nobody would dispute that fact. At some point the world must truly turn that way. [Ars technica](#) quote a study in July 2021 that over four in ten of us would seriously consider an EV for our next purchase. We tend to overestimate the speed of transformation; but underestimate the magnitude of the changes when they happen. I am betting that 2022 is that tipping point moment. We might be at that point of shift to underestimating the magnitude of change. Big fleets are going electric (hertz and tesla), major brands like ford, Toyota, Nissan, gm are advertising their EV offerings. Re-birthed companies (Volvo) will be 100% EV. EV has entered our collective psyche, our wallets our advertising and now it has momentum. The automotive industry is still struggling with this idea in the movie "the other guys," Will Ferrell is a police officer driving a [Prius](#).



By 2030 this becomes the car chase reality in Hollywood for the fast and furious twenty-four. But right now, EV's are becoming a more common platform not just for cars but autonomous vehicles systems all around us. In 2022 EV becomes inevitable. It is a case of how fast we get there.



04. IN 2022 WE WILL SEE THE FIRST MAJOR US PROFESSIONAL SPORTS BETTING SCANDAL SINCE 1919

Gambling has always been a part of American sport, since the white sox scandal of 2019. However, the convergence of readily available gambling markets, global betting, fantasy leagues and the ability to spot bet all make this moment where part of a game is thrown, the perfect storm. We have seen it with cricket and tennis. So why not in the us too? Our faith in the power of sport to represent a true level playing field is going to be questioned. It will not be the power of next generation stats that do this, but something as simple as the after-effects of gambling on the participants is going to make this a reality. It will not be brady, but somebody will be tempted to spot fix and they will get caught. In 2022 our faith in a level playing field will be questioned for professional American sports not called Jai Ajlai (remember it on Miami Vice).



05. IN 2022 THE SUBSCRIPTION ECONOMY IS HERE TO STAY. M.A.D. WINS

We do it with Hulu, Amazon, cable, etc. You name it. The power of the subscription model is mutually two ways for the consumer (easy, dial up and or dial down) or for the vendor (dial up or change the offering completely). The currency is happiness for both parties. Mutually assured delight (mad). Every business should do this, but it needs a radically unique way of doing business (logistics, service offerings, accounting). If you do not ask yourself how you become a subscription business in 2022 you will fail in 2023. See how easy it is to send products back to amazon or to dial up or dial down other subscription services. In 2020 I interviewed one of the industries leaders in this area, [Tien Tzuo](#) CEO of Zuora. This idea of subscribing to services and brands that delight may not be the common practices but given the ease to which you can dial up and don anything it is going to be the new norm and not the exception, because we expect instant one and instant off, instant delight and companies want new pathways to growth that their traditional thinking cannot get them. In 2022 the mad subscription economy becomes the buzzword for startups and company CEO's looking to drive dramatic growth models. It is where [digital transformation](#) becomes a true engine for victory, both consumer and company.

06. IN 2022 A DEADLY VIRUS MAKES US COLLECTIVELY MORE CONSCIOUS ABOUT KILLING THE PLANET, THANK YOU, GENERATION X AND Z

Generation z have to be embarrassed by how their parents have collectively responded to the issues of global warming. According to pew research it's their [number one concern](#). We see constant mentions of code red from politicians and scientists in late 2021. It will take a virus to remind us of how fragile we are as a species and in 2022 we will see a concerted effort from us to focus on solving this. Fifteen years ago I did research on the power of green to change [technology companies](#) brand value (Greenfactor). Seventy percent around the world said true green behaviors would boost their desire to work with a brand. Well in truth their behaviors have not matched their stated intent. When we look again at the data the younger generation then (in their late teens were 60% more likely to do something about it. Now with gens X, Y and Z becoming more dominant we might pay attention in 2022 to doing some real things for the environment.

It might be about embarrassing their parents and grandparents, but we need to start there to get real action to occur, and for it to handle quickly. Remember Boris Johnson saying at COP26 that there were no excuses for not handling climate change. In 2022 generation z will get angry about the world we are leaving them to handle and will force us to step up politically and practically. Greta Thunberg represents a generation of anger.

07. IN 2022 THE GRUBBY TRUTH ABOUT FACEBOOK BECOMES TRUE. WE STOP BLAMING IT FOR OUR OWN FRAILTIES

Traditional media giants are disliked because they become the story and not just tell the story. Hearst media, news international are good examples of this. They cannot deny what they do as it is printed on their paper or on their channels. Facebook or meta is a new challenge. Plausible deniability of their responsibility to filter fake and truth. It is really, really, tough to manage and we all realize this in 2022. Mark Zuckerberg can take a deep breath and keep smirking. Facebook does lose it is cool feeling just like other media or mediums and google and alphabet keeps on going because they understand the inherent risks behind owning digital media engines and what their new digital world responsibilities are. In 2022 name calling and finger pointing with Facebook declines as we realize our personal responsibilities to manage fake and true news at an individual level.



08. IN 2022 THE WORKFORCE GETS EVEN MORE REWARDED FOR ITS' SMARTS. THE GREAT RESIGNATION CHANGES SHAPE

in a world where data rules, digital everything is common and the near instant application of intelligence to business models becomes the norm, smarts in people will get far better rewarded at work than ever before. The ability to learn, apply and frankly get rewarded quickly by the company will be the norm because people can and will move jobs fast (it can be virtual) if they are not rewarded, near instantly. This is an inevitable result of decades where labor has seen fewer and fewer benefits and suddenly, a new window has opened because you don't need to move towns to take a great new job. In 2022 if as a leader you are not paying attention to rewarding the right behavior as it happens, you will lose your best people. Constant skill development becomes a practical necessity in 2022 for any leader because the consequence of not doing it will be felt faster than ever before. Just listen to the consulting industries greatest living guru [John Kotter](#) on this.



09.

IN 2022 THE IDEA THAT HUMANS MUST FEED AI POWER TO PROTECT THE COUNTRY BECOMES A STARK REALITY

In a recent interview for Forbes futures in focus with the Air force's first chief software officer Nicolas Chaillan he talked about the need to have hundreds of thousands of data scientists just in the DoD to counter the threat from China. Data is the new defense priority, yet we cannot find enough of them in the commercial world which pays three-time better salaries than the DoD will pay. This is a scary new reality that goes beyond an academic debate and one that affects the very heart and soul of our democracy. At what point in 2022 this becomes a public political debate is something we will not know till it happens, but the pressure and concerns are not going away. We need to find ways to convert people to this work as a defense priority in 2022. The great debate for national security in 2022 will be intelligence, cyber and skill shortage based.

10.

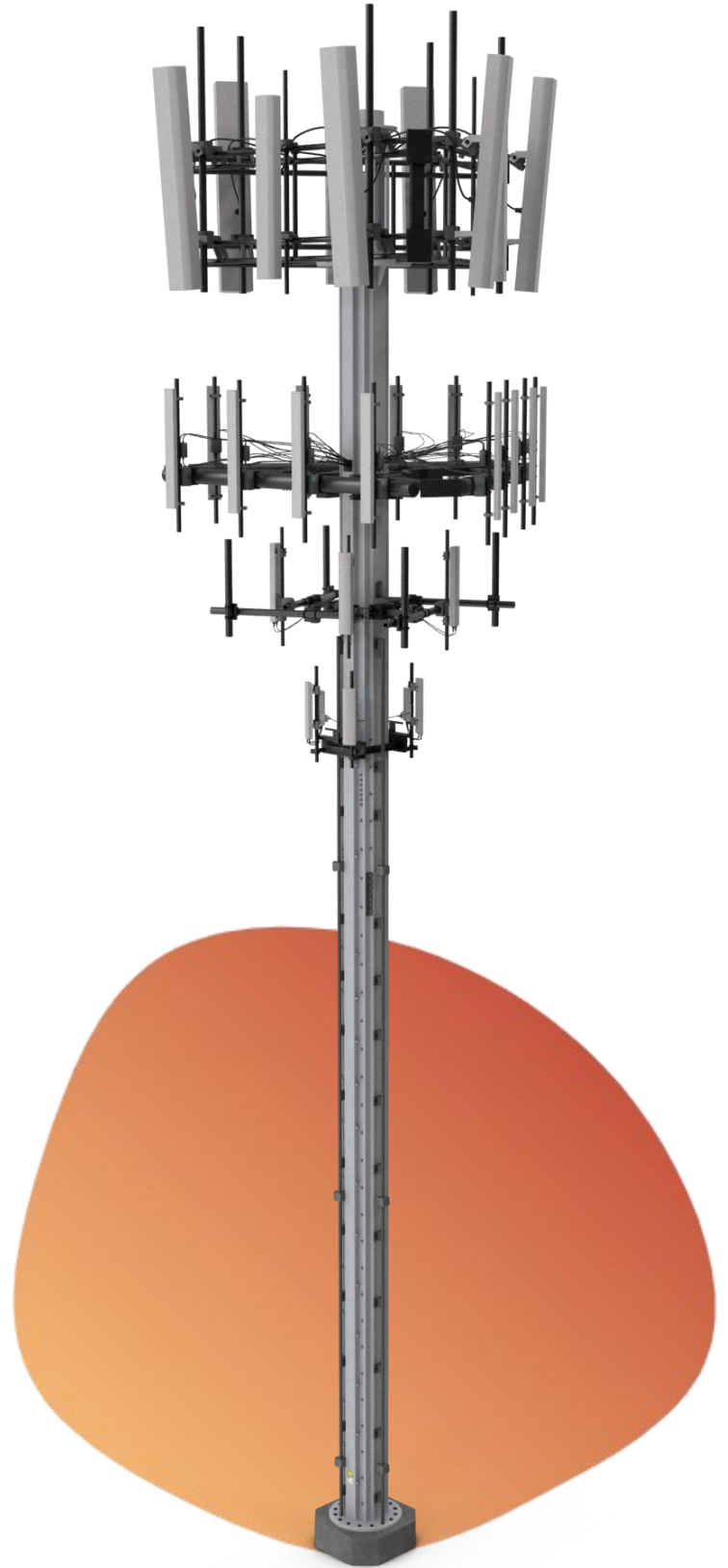
IN 2022 THE WORKFORCE GETS EVEN MORE REWARDED FOR ITS' SMARTS. THE GREAT RESIGNATION CHANGES SHAPE

In [The Digital Helix](#) I interviewed a brilliant marketer in healthcare who told me that even patients wanted an Amazon like experience in their healthcare systems. That was 2017. It all sounded good and logical but clearly the systems were not shocked into real actions. It took until 2021 until all healthcare organizations recognized the practical realities of Covid-19 that they saw the power of shared records, near live sharing of data across systems (private and government) and with virtual healthcare as daily reality. The systems are now severely strained with over stressed human assets and a constant anxiety about another outbreak. Doing it marginally different is no longer a viable model. In 2022 healthcare leaders realize they must have to focus on digital transformation at a deep level or they will fail and fail in a very public way.

This means more consumer apps to connect into measurement and management, more automation between systems, near complete record sharing in near latency free time from lab tests to the desktop of medical experts. In 2022 healthcare becomes digital for the first actual time. It must.

11. IN 2022 5G GETS IT ACT TOGETHER FOR CONSUMERS AND BUSINESS, BUT IT WAS NOT ITS FAULT

Do you remember when the idea that 5G would explode was common? Most of us have not seen it as we ended up working from home for two years. In 2022 we get back to travel, commuting and going to events. Watch out because promise of 5G becomes very real for us as consumers as we look for have the type of bandwidth we got at home as we travel outside the home. Once you have it, once you experience it, you will not want anything else. The same will be true of business's looking to get campus like access to its' pockets of increasingly mobile workers. Again, it was not the fault of 5G, the world was not ready to experience it all. Think about where all this new infrastructure will explode in value from all this pent-up demand. Private 5G gets a hard kick start as companies look to mix and match humans and machines in factories, warehouses, transport systems. As we sort out supply chain issues, 5G becomes part of the formula. As we look to commute more, watching tv on the train or working as we commute and using zoom becomes more common. In 2022 5G delivers more than we expect, it is just a little late, but it had time to mature. The edge becomes real with 5G in 2022. [Listen to Verizon's leader, Srin Kalapala](#), on this and it was just a matter of time.



12. IN 2022 NON-SOVEREIGN CURRENCIES BECOME MORE THAN A CURIOSITY. ASK TOM BRADY

This is more a comment about the wider shifting sands of the global economy and a hardening of a lack of confidence what sovereign governments are doing for us. When [Tom Brady](#) does an advertisement for crypto exchange you know this has gotten serious. In 2022 the underlying conditions for crypto become very real. We are all living in virtual space, we should all be comfortable working in virtual currencies. Even Elon Musk is playing with us here. We are consuming in small slices (in game features) and major companies from AT&T, PayPal, Starbucks, Esty, etc. Are accepting it. If 2021 was the moment that crypto came out of the dark, plus it consumes a horrendous amount of electricity, greater than all of [Google](#), it also become part of the zeitgeist. Currencies work when they are more than a gamble and you can use it for everyday activities too. The Chinese government has banned it unless they do it. In 2022 crypto becomes very real as more and more companies accept it, can manage it through exchanges and increasingly see where it is going to go. New York's new mayor wants to be paid in [Bitcoin](#). Think about that as a new norm for 2022.

13. WELCOME TO THE FRACTIONAL ECONOMY. CONSUMERS INVENT NEW WAYS TO RUB SHOULDERS WITH CELEBRITY AND FAME, (NFTs AND WIMBLEDON)

We are all searching for meaning. The idea of touching celebrity or owning a tiny slice of it is not new. NFTs make this idea an unbelievably easy reality in 2022 for a lot more people. A tiny slice of anything extends the cryptocurrency idea to owning something. Imagine every athlete selling an NFTs on their Super Bowl winning jersey, the putter than won the masters, or an NFT of the racket that won Wimbledon. In 2022 this becomes a reality for tens of millions of people. The idea that many fractions are worth more than one whole is a new economic theme around partial ownership that allows people touch fame and rub shoulders with celebrity.

Get ready for the tiny fractional economy in 2022 for everything. It is simple. Imagine one million people each paying \$10 to say, "I own a part of Aaron Rogers super bowl jersey" Just imagine the possibilities of the NFT world. Even a [McDonald's](#) can be an NFT.

14.

IN 2022 FOR CONTENT CREATORS, IT IS ABOUT THE PORTFOLIO OF FUN. ONE TED LASSO IS NOT ENOUGH

We all threw ourselves into bingeing tv in 2020 and 2021. Would ted lasso have broken through our hearts and minds in a normal world? Not, but the patterns are shifting for us all as the idea of destination tv (outside the NFL) become less and less common. We can watch things where and when we want (thanks 5G). That changes the collective chemistry of sitting around a sofa and watching a movie or a re-run of friends or Frasier. This makes it hellish for content creators as ritual no longer drives consumption. We can pop off or pop back on at will. The smart move for studios stars and directors is to sell or create a portfolio of entertainment ideas. In effect creating a net of connected or similar content that attracts and sustains our fragile attentions, Marvel and Chuck Lorre have shown us the way. Pitch ten films or four ideas and not just one. In 2022 we will see a new set of content giants who deliver sets of content to trap and entertain us become real. Get ready for it.





15. IN 2022 THE RICHEST .1% WILL DISAPPOINT US EVEN MORE THAN BEFORE

Thomas Piketty's book, capital in the twenty first century was wrongly critiqued for arguing that wealth in equality right now is worse than ever before. It is not that is worse, it is just increasingly seen as incapable of helping change the world around them that has facilitated that wealth. From the environment to economic and academic opportunity this issue is amplified with an increasing lack of faith or belief they can govern us properly and help. Maybe it is unfair to converge our views of the ruling classes with the money creating classes but when we constantly see billionaires flying friends in for birthday parties on private jets you recognize that the .1% drive 15% of global carbon footprint you have to recognize that tone deaf is no longer excusable. In 2022 the .1% get constantly hammered in every form of media and by most of the 99.9% of the rest of the planet as they increasingly look to lack any noblesse oblige at a time where it is less and less cute to be obscenely wealthy and do nothing with it.

16. IN 2022 CEO'S START LIVING UP TO THEIR CORPORATE PROMISES

Corporate governance has been banged around very badly over the last three years, #BLM, #Metoo, issues with the environmental impact of what companies make and their role in societal impact (or general reticence to have one). Some interesting ideas around healthcare are out there with positive signs (Citi Bank, Amazon, and Berkshire Hathaway). They are few and far between and. Covid-19 may have given companies more breathing space to do something as people worked from home and most companies in the us looked to hire more people, not less in 2020 and 2021.

The idea of what work is and should be are being questioned everywhere. In 2022 CEO's and other leaders need to re balance their view of their people and their world. They are not there just for immediate profit but to genuinely live up to their mission statements. In 2022 a new breed of CEO's will not pay lip service to employees' needs, their missions or the responsibility thrust onto them by the times we live in. The idea of transparency for all holders of the company's equity (stock, jobs, customers, overall markets) will have an increasing and instant say on these CEO's. In 2022 we will have more CEO heroes than ever before because the world needs it, demands it and is ready for it.



17. DO YOU WANT A DEGREE WITH THOSE FRIES? IN 2022 GET USED TO A WHOLE NEW EMPLOYMENT MODEL SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES' AMBITIONS

Low-cost labor in the us has been badly mishandled for decades. Long hours, poor pay, extraordinarily little life training or work skills. Yes, you could become a manager and work your way through a long labyrinth of job titles. In truth this idea has marginal appeal to most people looking for diverse and developing opportunities in a world rapidly changing with technologies (software, the cloud, AI). In 2022 far more companies than amazon and McDonalds (hoorah to them) will get the new relationship of labor and employer around education and professional life development. Employees will expect this. Employees understand the trade-offs and it will be noticeably clear to customers from the passion employees doing this bring to their jobs. As a CEO ask yourself if in 2022 you are going to lead that approach of funding or supporting the ambitions of your people, or if you hang back and wait.

18. IN 2022 DARK FACTORIES BECOME A DISTINCT INEVITABILITY

There is no doubt that the idea of 24/7/365 factories run, supplied, and adjusted by machines is close to becoming a reality. These are not innovative ideas, but in 2022 there will be a collective recognition that labor shortages, adaptive manufacturing capabilities and customers demanding more and more customized experiences, integrated intelligent systems driven by digital feedback loops and re-programmable devices in the cloud means the near human free factory is inevitable in 2022. It will not be a promising idea. It will become a living reality. Imagine what the combinations of AI, automation and robotics start to deliver (together).

Imagine how we start to plan to work with a world where there is an 85% chance a factory worker has a co-bot assistant. In 2022 we will no longer have to just imagine this. Factories will be dark or will be co-bot dominated.

19. IN 2022 MARKETING BECOMES MOSTLY MACHINE AND SYSTEM DRIVEN. LOOK AT WHAT MACHINES CAN DO AT CHESS

Seriously customers are smarter than the companies they buy from. They see the reviews, hunt for what they want, or check up on claims marketing makes in near latency free time. If we believe in a world of customer centric choice and a world where the volume of spend on marketing resources is shrinking, then it is inevitable that we need more machines help to succeed. Most marketing activities are not esoteric, or brand building based. They are certainly relationship based, communications orientated, and demand focused. However, algorithms will increasingly show marketing what to do, when to do it and at a base, level how and where to do it.

This scares and excites me, but it is inevitable. Look at ai.artists.org for examples of where this can go. In 2022 a marketing algorithm will win a major marketing award (major one) for everything from creative to customer driven performance.

20. IN 2022 CHINA BECOMES A CLEAR PUBLIC THREAT (AI, FREE SPEECH, MISSILES, CYBER, SUPPLY CHAIN, ETC.)

There can be no hiding from the fact that China has a key role in the globe across a number of areas: cyber threats, economic strength (the largest automotive market in the world), natural resources purchasing, military investments and a lot more. The us and China make up 45% of the global economy on less than 15% of the world's population. In 2022 the tension will become un-bearable as the complexity of this tension extends itself to government policies, trade as well as company's abilities to work fluidly in both models.

In 2022 CEO's will need to make challenging decisions about how they handle China in the same way governments around the world will need to.

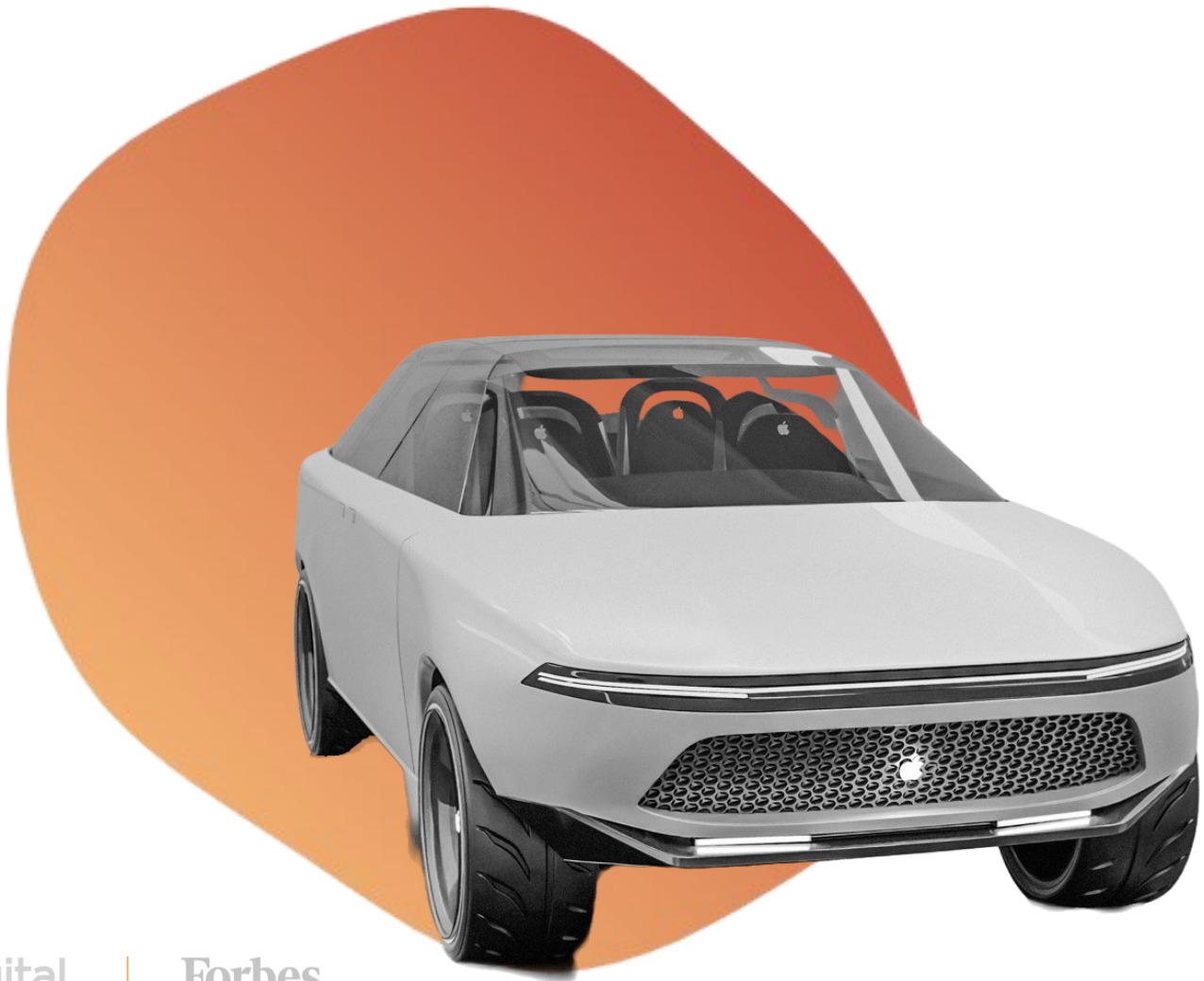


21.

IN 2022, THE CAR IS DEAD, LONG LIVE THE AUTOMOTIVE REVOLUTION

I love cars. I love the experience of driving and the sense of independence and honestly the status or coolness they can simply too. Well, I am no longer the mainstream. However, the automotive industry is going to radically change how it considers itself as being valuable. Heard of Rivian? Backed by amazon and a market cap on launch over \$70BN? A hot company delivering specific trucks, SUV; s and an industrial automotive product. These EV's are the epitome of re-invention of a 130-year-old industry. We have all been obsessed with the idea of level five autonomy. That is a long way off, (sorry).

However, autonomous vehicles in warehouses, campus environments, hospitals, truck trains, rail systems are going to go where we need them in the tens of millions. [Thirty-three million autonomous vehicles](#) will be on the road by 2040. In 2022 we realize that we have had to narrow a focus on the automotive industries exciting future. Much of what they build might only partly be driven by human beings. That becomes a common acceptance in 2022 as we experience and see autonomous vehicles in various aspects of our lives.



22. IN 2022 A LOT OF VASTLY DIFFERENT THINGS WILL HAPPEN WE HAVE NO IDEA ABOUT

It might be a chicken way to finish this set of predictions. Worlds after major crisis see dramatic un-predictable things happen. They are often mixed with the predictable (the twenty-one above). For example, our eating habits.

Maybe we are [open to eating insects](#).

Maybe we are going to [handle homelessness](#).

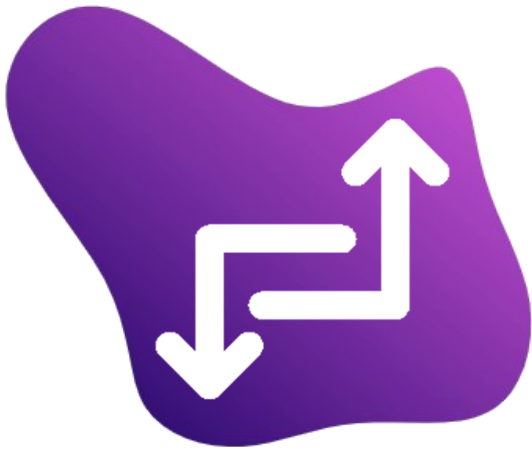
You can fill in the gap yourselves. Thank you for reading and find my podcast and other stories here on [LinkedIn](#).

TWENTY-THREE PREDICTIONS FOR 2023

GLOBALIZATION, ELON, PROFITEERING AND BOOMERS.
CHINA, THE CLOUD, SELF-HEALTH AND KANYE.
RE-GENERATIVE AI, UKRAINE, TAY TAY, AND
THE DALLAS COWBOYS. ALL OF THAT AND MORE
IN MY 23 PREDICTIONS FOR 2023.

Making predictions is an inherently high-risk activity. Predictions for [2021](#) are [here](#). I would grade them as B-. The predictions for [2022](#) are [here](#) and a B+ grade on these feels more appropriate because [Gladwell's Tipping Point model](#) was the right framework.

It's easy to be right about the obvious stuff in our lives. For example, we know supply chain chaos is going to continue in 2023 because it has not changed in 2022. In a poll I did on LinkedIn, people predicted supply chain issues would continue to and past 2023 and that was in early 2022 (65%). Nothing has really changed. Inflation too has been an easily predicted outcome because of a combination of overheated demand in a range of markets, global situations (including a war in Ukraine) and a continuation of an extremely hot labor market that is breaking traditional Phillips curve economic theory.



Another obvious one. The world is getting hotter. That does not always mean less rain, but it does mean larger weather pattern shifts like monsoon like downpours and shifting seasonal norms. It might not feel like a substantial change, but the planet is overly sensitive to these shifts and will behave differently because of it, (monsoons, tornadoes, long drought conditions, etc.). There are consequences of this we have yet to measures, but we know they are coming.

Blockchain is here to stay, crypto is a short run implosion of greed, like the Tulip Mania of the mid 16th Century. We don't trade Tulip bulbs that furiously now, but the mania truly sparked the futures market and effectively the stock market movement that drove capitalism. Crypto and its easiness is a signal for how market dynamics are going shift to include fractions of data (not just NFTs) as markets in themselves. Ten years from now the idea of Blockchain will be in everything we do. We just had our Tulip Mania melt down. However, it is not the end of crypto, just a different future of the core technology behind it.

Let's talk Covid once and once only because we should. Covid happened, and we can either learn a lot from it, or not. We can and should no longer blame the coming problems or conflicts of 2023 on it specifically. Yes, we can learn from it, Covid was the brute force punch in the (place your chosen body part here). I personally feel there is enough burnout from analyzing it; so, I will do my best to leave the Covid crunch out of many of the prediction outliers listed in 2023, you'll thank me in 2024.

The theme for 2023 predictions is more about the underlying changes we are seeing in society, government, technology, business models, geopolitics, and the planet and less about some of the superficial pieces that might be more noise than true signals.

For every prediction in this list there were another ten, in fact maybe 442 that I could have made. That's bonus prediction 24 if you want to cut to the chase. So here we go:

01. FRICTION FREE GLOBALIZATION SEES AN OVERHAUL OF ITS PLAYBOOK IN 4TH DOWN TERRITORY

Sorry for the awful NFL analogy, but nobody in their right minds thinks globalized, free market trade is healthy right now. In 2023 there is a clear understanding that you need to navigate the new rules for trade, and it will be based on the interactions of five variables. Plotting these waypoints is going to get very tough.

1. Does a company or region have a very differentiated product or capability that is tough to replicate (for example TSMC).
2. Are there regional or market standards that mean that companies will need to invest more than before to get into them, (European energy markets).
3. Are regions insisting on local production only (typically Brazil and China and increasingly India)?
4. Are geopolitics changing the risk profile for being able to work with something and somewhere, for example the failed Nvidia and ARM acquisition in the UK (by a US company).

Even the most traditional market interactions are going to be threatened in 2023 as we discover the new shapes and rules of global capitalism. In 2023 the idea of friction free globalization being in concussion protocol becomes real. Companies need to invest very differently (sensitive, new investment parameters) to thrive in this new world as it is not the same game as before. Here Covid has made us more focused on an inward perspective (house, community, country) and less focused on the global landscape.





02. ELON MUSK GETS SOCIAL MEDIA HEALTHY BY BEING THE SYMBOL FOR ITS POTENTIAL CRAZINESS

He is about as out there as you might expect. It's part of his personality and the engine that has us returning to space (commercially), the advent of a great EV revolution and now he has had to buy and manage Twitter. His craziness will expose how much we each need to take our own pathways to truth in social media. Lies and hatred aside, the platform has immensely positive power. He will need to show that advertisers who are going to run from Twitter faster than Usain Bolt can sprint if it becomes dominated by hate, craziness and lies. No CMO wants to be associated with that. Elon it's time to recognize the goodness of social in 2023. Start with Twitter. Between starting to write this and the end of this prediction Musk asked the twitter verse if he should remain as the CEO. It's a scary idea that the nature of a company's management gets decided (in theory) by a vote from non-owners. Think what this could mean for the idea of corporate governance in 2023. Scary or exciting?

03. BACK TO OFFICE PLANS ARE SIDETRACKED WITH THE REALIZATION OF A LARGER ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL ECOSYSTEM AT PLAY

For two and half years most of us worked from home. It has changed how we think about the office, the idea of working in collaborative spaces and even work. BTO (back to the office) is still a thorny subject, but it has triggered whole innovative ideas like closing the office for periods of time to save energy costs. Just look at [PWC in the UK](#) as they close the office for two weeks in December. Covid 19 did in fact open this whole new debate in old thinking areas that would never have occurred before. Think about this. Friday is one of the least offices attended days for companies. Imagine that by the end of 2023 companies close the office on Friday and save energy till Monday. That could cut three days of energy bills including the weekend. We have also seen extensive experiments with the idea of four-day work weeks in [Britain](#). *Guess what, there was no loss in productivity.*

In 2023 the debate about back to office radically shifts with new logic (energy), new ideas like at home Friday's and a four-day week ide. Get ready for a revolution in how we think about work. Think about work very differently in 2023, not just in or out of the office. Covid has rocked the very traditions of the daily work commute in ways we still have not fully computed. It's now a moving object so companies need to move to where is likely to be and be prepared to adapt and invest heavily to learn.



04. 2023 IS THE YEAR OF CLOUD INDIGESTION, AND IT HURTS

Can a cloud give you indigestion? Obviously not, but the costs of cloud infrastructure become alarmingly high unless companies are doing things differently. It's a very expensive lift and replace for hardware and tradition unless you are doing things radically differently. [McKinsey believes there is a \\$1 TR upside to get this right. That's 5% of the whole US economy.](#) In 2023 there are enough companies that have indigestion with these costs that they have to really understand why they are moving so much the cloud. Transformation driven by Cloud adoption and not just migrating workloads is going to be the right discussion for the C-Suite in 2023. Hardware still wins if all you want is price performance.

Clouds can truly transform your business if you make it happen in the right way in 2023. 2023 marks the end of the shift and lift model for cloud success. Clouds need to add way more to continue to grow in importance. We all massively accelerated the migration to clouds during the Covid times. Zoom is the best example but think about how much of your IT infrastructure went there too. Covid pushed so much so fast into the cloud that we need to now focus on how the cloud can make work or life better. That is the debate for 2023 and winners here (cloud native working) will crush it in 2023.

05. PROFITEERING IS HERE TO STAY UNTIL WE THE PEOPLE STOP IT.

Yes, shipping container costs are way down from [\\$20,000](#) to [\\$10,000](#), half the cost, so is the [cost of lumber](#) by over two thirds. Have you seen a reduction in your weekly shopping chart? The answer to that is an absolute no. With inflation at seven-point seven percent something else is really driving this. [Gas prices are on](#) a typical, bumpy trend line. [Labor costs are up 15%](#) (or a net of 7.5% with inflation). We know average car costs for [new vehicles](#) is up some 10% or more for obvious supply chain issues. The feeling here is that there is profit taking from companies and industries here that is sustaining inflationary pressures for us all. At some point in [2023 as inflation slows down](#) it will be interesting to see who starts to use price discounts to drive market share. Consumers will see these patterns and start shopping around more, so watch out for pricing wars in late 2023. We are already seeing a slowing down of measured inflation rates in mid-December. When will your weekly food bill shrink too?

In 2023 you will experience a lot of moments where you ask, "why is this still so expensive?" Profiteering or the fear of it will shift brand preferences too, so do not take advantage of a pricing power position for too long. Covid made us sensitive to availability (now and everything being shipped right now). It might have also made us more comfortable with price volatility.



06. MONOLITHIC CARE SYSTEM THANKS TO SMART-TECH. IT STARTS ON YOUR WRIST

If you wear an Apple Watch, then you are one of 100M who had them by 2020 and you can add 30M just in 2021. Telling the time is a lot cheaper than an Apple Watch, it's the act of managing one's life through the watch that is vital. There are far more than just Apple watches out there. Just look at a friend, a colleague's wrist and count how many times you see a digital measuring device on it. I wrote about this in 2017's *The Digital Helix*. Your personal Covid-19 vaccination data, now sit on your wrist, and now how you get to measure your body's key metrics for female cycle tracking, sleep and much more. In 2023 the wrist becomes your number one way we pre-emptively manage our healthcare. It's a vital moment for us where we live, measure, adjust and learn and it all sits on our wrist as the norm.

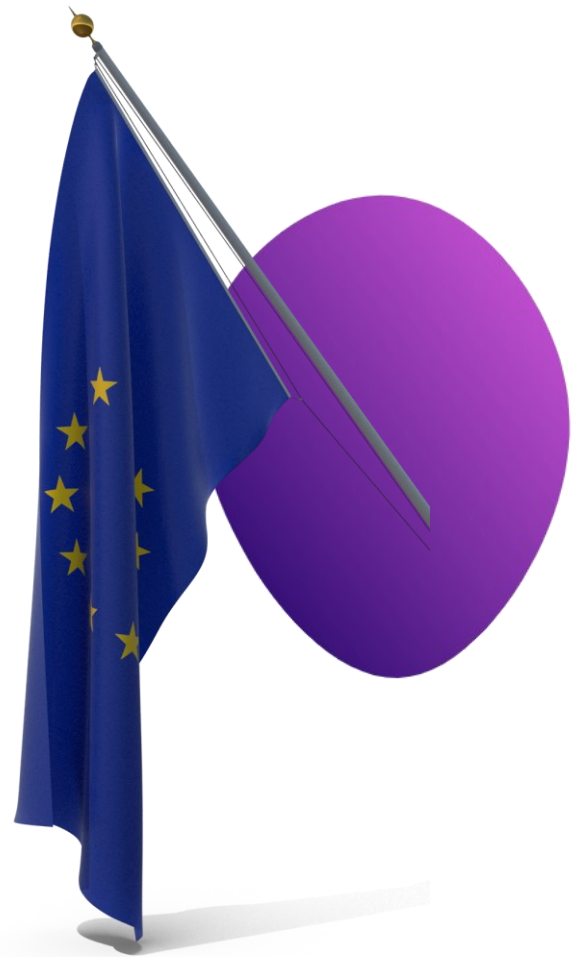
In 2023 it's more than likely your doctor looks at the data on your wrist more than your medical records if something goes wrong. Remote medicine as the norm, because of Covid will infuse levels of remote monitoring and interactions with the medical profession we have never seen before. It will start with the device

07. IN 2023 EV IS MORE REAL FOR CONSUMERS THAN THE GOVERNMENT

It's often argued that government legislation lags the market, just look at Microsoft and the DOJ investigations of the 1990's or the current tensions with personal data or social media platforms. Well for the automotive industry and the government mandate of 2035 and zero internal combustion units that is the latest example. Research with [Cambia Information Group](#) I wrote about with a cool [EV adoption infographic](#). US consumers are way, way ahead of the US Governments. In fact, by 2025 over half of US consumers will consider an EV for their next car. In 2023 the US government needs to massively accelerate the infrastructure to make the 2035 mandate be delivered ten years ahead of schedule. Far more recharging stations will come online. Far more education about why EV is the best solution, etc. Get ready for EV first in every car ad for the Superbowl, and hopefully government programs to match. This should not be going this slowly so write to your Senators.

2023 is the year the government in the US (at least) realizes it aimed far too low in the EV transition vision. It's a shame too. Covid may have cut back on all our driving tendencies, but it may have also given us pause to think about what the future of driving should be, versus just continuing the past. Covid maybe the best thing that ever happened to the future of the automotive industry.

08. THE EUROPEAN UNION'S COLLECTIVE ECONOMIES ARE IN IN SERIOUS DIFFICULTY, AND WE HAVE TO WONDER IF THE DREAM IS WOUNDED MORE THAN WE THOUGHT. (UKRAINE, THE UK)



Size is not necessarily enough to protect against the battering of an economic storm. The EU is larger in populace than the US, but no economist is predicting it will recover as fast as the US from the economic challenges we are facing right now. Now ask economists if the UK is going to do better than the EU and the singular answer from any economist is no. Something is deeply wrong in the EU, and something is horribly wrong in the UK right now. It does not take a professional economist to see that. Minimal growth rates, deep inflationary challenges, the constant threat of labor strikes, radical governments, and disastrous currency exchange rates' (good if you are American). The EU promised to be a single market where labor, capital and products moved as smoothly as they moved in the US, with just 75 million more people, steeped in incredibly rich cultural history and innovation. It is not delivering well against this promise because it is exceedingly difficult to create friction free with different languages, cultural principles, and business histories.

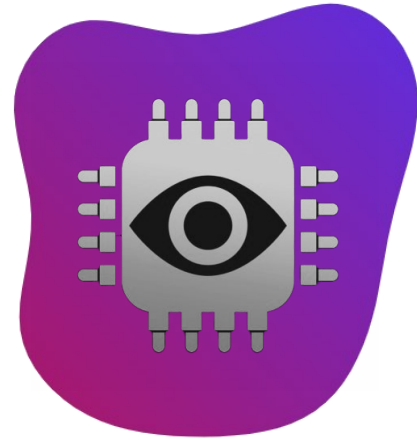
In 2023 the European Union is gravely wounded economically not just by the war in Ukraine but by a continuing inability to use its scale to drive market dominance. The UK becomes a damaged economy because it is small, and isolated from other markets. Friction free and size matter. In the UK it delayed the magnitude of negative economic consequences from Brexit. It will hit the UK extremely hard in 2023.

09. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CAN GET YOUR COMPANY OUT OF AN ECONOMIC RECESSION IF PROPERLY IMPLEMENTED

It used to be a very touchy subject, because the lack of it represented at best sub conscious bias in action, or at worst a blatant disregard for the inherent economic power from [diversity and inclusion](#). However, 2023 is, or has to be a big year for momentum for this it's the norm all the way through the organization. Company Boards are horribly un-diverse and extremely poor at inclusivity. I interviewed a leading advocate for the new board model ([Colette LaForce](#)) in [Forbes](#). I would listen to it if you were serious about really living this diversity need. We live in an incredibly diverse world, just look around you. Your workforce, your ideas and your business model should look the same, or better. Think of a simple piece of math's from McKinsey.

“Our 2019 analysis finds that companies in the top quartile of gender diversity on executive teams were 25 percent more likely to experience above-average profitability than peer companies in the fourth quartile. This is up from 21 percent in 2017 and 15 percent in 2014.”

In a period of slow economic growth and profit pressures, D&I may be your number one strategic weapon if you take it seriously at all levels, board, leadership, departmental. Not just in people but with ideas, insights and perspectives. In a software-centric world this will matter more than ever before as we are all equal as opportunities. 2023 will be the year D&I winners are far more common than uncommon. Look for their stories in 2023 should be easier as we hire remotely. How you look, who you are, should not be a factor. Covid has widened our eyes to what we should be doing when we hire.



10. THE NEXT PHASE OF AI COMPANIES IS WITH ART AND NOT GO. GENERATIVE AI IS THE TIPPING POINT IN 2023

The promise of AI was around before Asimov wrote about it. It inherently has been seen as a replacement for human thinking and complex calculations, simulations and actions, like playing chess or the [game of Go](#). It's here, but it has taken far longer than anybody thought, and that's OK. In survey's I have run in LinkedIn there is clear acknowledgment that the age of AI is on us as an everyday norm unless than three years ([48%](#)). However, we may have all missed the key here. Visual AI is going to clearly beat purely numerical AI.

[Imagine artwork created by AI](#) programs. Go and have a look. There have been auctions for this art work already at [Christies](#) (\$60,000K). Visual AI is incredibly complex, just look at the auto industry and the use of sensors in cars. Generative AI will take us from an interesting idea (not well understood) to an inspirational one where we get to see the creative power of AI in front of your eyes. 2023 will be the year where generative AI makes AI real for us all, we can touch it, see it, even watch it get created. Covid lockdowns may well have encouraged us to see the potential for AI in a more human and expressive way. Would this regenerative epoch for AI have happened without it?

11. TESLA'S PRODUCTS SLIP, LIKE IBM BEFORE, THEY BEGIN TO SUFFER DUE TO THE SLEW OF EV OFFERINGS FROM COMPETITORS AND THE "WE CAN DO IT BETTER STARTUPS."

Elon is not the center of these 2023 predictions, but he comes up again here. I am a Tesla owner, but I have wanderlust for the slew of new EV's from companies like Riviana, Ford and its E Mustang, the Porsche Taycan and on and on. The Tesla is still the largest [selling EV with 60%+](#) Six brands make up the next 15%. The game is now on. Just like the PC business where IBM had 60% share, the advent of Compaq, Dell, etc., quickly shifted market share dominance within three years. By the end of 2023 I believe you will no longer just consider Tesla but will also consider two to three other EV centric models. This is going to put pressures on Tesla to get passed the "early adopter," model to protect its share dominance. History has shown that it will get a lot tougher for the leader to sustain share and volume in the next generation of cars.

In 2023 I predict Tesla will run competitive ads against other EV cars and vendors for the first time. I firmly believe the challenges from Covid with driving to the office, the increase software and hardware density of vehicles (stressing the supply side too) have accelerated major automotive companies' commitment to this new generational idea. This absolutely accelerated the competitive landscape against Tesla.

12. THE METAVERSE CONTINUES TO BE THE WELL-KNOWN MISTRESS NO ONE WANTS TO SPEAK ABOUT

Does anybody like Mark Zuckerberg? The positive answer to that instant poll will be exceptionally low. Re naming Facebook to Meta looks like a packaging exercise to protect the company from the bad reputation Zuckerberg has, but it is more than that. Meta is the idea of two universes colliding and interacting. It may have first been born with [Second Life](#) in 2003 (like Facebook itself was not an original idea from Zuckerberg). It has not come very far in nearly twenty years, so why is 2023 going to be any different? Meta's investments in the Metaverse have been stunning, in the billions a year. The lack of take-off has been the lack of killer applications that bring the physical and virtual worlds together in practical and or entertaining value add. We have tried gaming with mixed results. In 2023 we will get to see business-based applications in digital twins because we are mostly out of the office and need to simulate how technology and environments will work. Thank you Covid for this. As we move to more intelligent machines then we need to see how they will work (not humans) in this new world. These are the killer applications that we will all, either experience the results of (simulated building experiences, machines, cars, etc.) or be part of them.

In 2023 we will all get to see small points of light about why the Meta verse is a reality. It just is not s prime time reality yet. Covid got us hyper addicted to social media. Meta may have falsely assumed that the level of social media addiction from Covid was a rapid on ramp to the Metaverse.

13. WE SOMEHOW THANK KANYE WEST FOR TEACHING US THAT CELEBRITY IS AS DANGEROUS AS CRYPTO CURRENCIES

He is not well and has been prescribed medication to help. But our constant attention to his overreaching self-promotion tells us more about the weird balance of celebrity and branding. Marketers are going to walk away, more and more from these outliers as the downsides are faster and worse than the long tail of goodness. Athletes and celebrities understand this too and the idea that you can separate your personal perspectives from your commercial position becomes somewhat untenable.

Ask JK Rowling too. In a world with ever decreasing attention spans and a fascination with the shock power of celebrity we recognize that certain types of celebrity and celebrity endorsements are not appropriate. In 2023 this is going to be amplified by an odd tension between our inherent desire to watch and even commentate on celebrity (people and brands) and an increasingly surgical response when that quest for fame crashes and burns. Just ask Adidas and Kanye.



14. INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY OVERTAKES CONSUMER TECHNOLOGY AS THE GAMECHANGER IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

PwC estimated that seventy percent of the GDP growth between 2020 and 2030 will come from the machine economy (AI, the edge, intelligent machines learning and adjusting). By 2025, eighty five percent of people working in manufacturing will have a co-bot as their partner as they work. That means that if your company is going to grow its revenue in the next ten years it had better have an intelligent technology focus. Nothing will supersede this as a growth engine. Think about the EV automotive, autonomous delivery, 5G networks, micro-robotic assisted surgeries, automated restaurant cooks, wind turbine powered energy grids, Semi-autonomous drones, one driver truck trains going up and down the M4 in the UK, even self-healing building HVAC systems and killer robots (sort of joking on that one). The list is endless because we increasingly see the possibilities for machines to enhance and change the very nature of [work and products or services through the application of real time data.](#)

In 2023 if you have not instituted an intelligent technology review of the possibilities then you are ignoring the engine that will drive 70% of global GDP by 2030. That's a projected \$7 TR in US by 2030. Autonomous systems that do more work without humans being at risk (infection) or being needed (labor shortages).



15. BOOMERS ARE DONE, OK.

Boomers are done. Yes, we are still alive, but we are now mostly retired. We reached the tipping point of dominance in 2020 and it's been a rapid downward slide since. Generation X, Millennials and Generation Y are the present and the future of many of the most important decisions that are made for society, how we work, think about the planet, our politics, food, financial models, sports, entertainment, etc.

In 2023 smart politicians, marketers and charities head to the youngest possible social groups to drive and mold them for the next ten years. Boomers have done their job here with mixed reviews, obviously. It's time to gracefully retire in 2023 and let the younger generations take over. They are digital first, diversity is the norm. A large and mostly young workforce has experienced a radically different working reality with as the world changed around them. Their expectations of how buildings will need to be bought, what great service looks like and how they live an almost fluid lifestyle (renting or subscriptions) is going to change the world round us. Covid was a vibrant accelerant to this.

16. CYBER SECURITY BECOMES THE LEVEL ONE PRIORITY FOR THE C SUITE IT DESERVES

Cyber security is hardly a new concern. This year is going to be very different, because we are in the middle of a perfect storm. An increasing focus on data or digital business models where data and protecting it in motion is essential for survival let alone success. From hospital records to autonomous vehicles and devices on the edge. The ability to protect that data while it is working is going to be essential. We live in an increasingly high threat environment for attacks on key infrastructure like power systems. Just look at the recent cases in the northwest of the United States. These are no longer anomalies. Finally, the global landscape is probably scarier than it has been for a long time, from Ukraine to North Korea. The defense of the United States is increasingly seeing the intertwining of traditional investments in equipment and cyber defense.

In 2023 every CEO will constantly ask and demand answers about their threat surfaces (physical, digital) not just on a planned basis but every time a story is reported. Be prepared to have this as a key determinant of the success of a cloud strategy, your digital transformation strategy and even how you might recruit and retain high performing team members. Covid made us live our lives online. Our sensitivity to threats in that virtual world grew rapidly. Our online lives are more vulnerable than ever before.

[So the biggest question to ask here is: What's your data worth?](#)



17. WOMEN GROW AND CHANGE THE MUSIC INDUSTRY FROM THE STAGE TO THE STUDIO, AND FROM THE TOUR BUS TO THE TICKET SERVICE

Ask anybody of any age or social background what their favorite Taylor Swift song is. I challenge you to find somebody who does not have one. That is the ultimate sign of influence and zeitgeist. However [female artists barely make up one in four artists](#). Females are less than three [percent of producers and are a mere one in eight](#) of the songwriters. This is inherently illogical (like the film industry), and it needs to change. So why is 2023 going to be different because of Taylor Swift? She is re defining how the industry makes money (massively over booked tours, instant dominance of the downloads, only bettered by the Beatles in terms of chart dominance in one go), an incredible level of production in a short period, even during Covid.

In 2023 we recognize that to correctly balance the industry female artists become multi layered experts (collaboration, rerecording, road tours, new albums). The music industry sees change in lightning flashes like Swift, Beyonce, Rihanna, bank in 1995 the “Lilith Fair” tour did much of the same as well.

Btw: My favorite Swift song is *Anti Hero*.

2023 is the year this becomes more than an abstract conversation. As we worked from home it enhanced our appreciation (across all age groups) for artists like Taylor Swift and changed our tune when it came to entertainment media. It revitalized vinyl, nearly killed off Hollywood, allowed the Kardashians to move to the top of reality TV and helped us realize Richard Serra was right about how we are the product of television not the other way around.

18. IN SPORTS: ESPN THE OCHO CONTENT FINALLY BECOMES MAINSTREAM BRINGING US EVERY POSSIBLE EXOTIC SPORT, PICKLEBALL ANYBODY?

Pickleball is one of the exotic games we are seeing more of. As we all exit the effects of a pandemic with Covid and the creative ideas we all had to put into place to exercise (table tennis, video classes, walking) some of these activities will continue and grow. That is the essence of Pickleball (low costs, easy to do, small groups of people) and an increased focus on active participation. [Listen to the US champions talking about it here](#). As we shift away from pre- Covid ideas of normal we would be foolish to assume that how we participate in sport will not change too. Listen to this podcast with the [CEO of one of the leading virtual exercise companies in the world](#).

In 2023 we see what once exotic sports were turn into very accepted exercise ideas. Covid was a moment to exercise more (home based work). While Peloton clearly misread longer run changes Covid may well have opened up whole new exercise and sports avenues that would not have occurred with such magnitude beforehand.

19. IN A REPEAT OF THE 1853 WAR IN CRIMEA WEATHER BECOMES A BATTLEGROUND TACTIC OF WAR AND FORCES THE HAND OF THE WEST

The Ukrainian president's visit to the US at Christmas time has been compared to [Winston Churchill's on December 22nd 1941](#). Every war and conflict is incredibly painful to watch and is full of symbolism too. The senseless loss of life and destruction of social infrastructure should be a lesson to not repeat them. What started in early 2022 and has stretched through a mild summer and autumn is about to be redefined by the climate of winter. Yet we do. In the mid 19th century, the British and the then Russian Empire were embedded in a terrible, mud laden trench warfare in the winter. Everything (literally) froze. As we enter the new year the same fear sits at the back of our minds. While technology is currently defining the rebalancing acts in the war, drones in particular, the brutal winter conditions are also going to re shape the nature of the conflict with attacks on mission critical energy infrastructure being one of them and the widespread deprivation of power and heat for large portions of the Ukrainian population.

20. WELCOME TO THE NEW VOLATILE LABOR MARKETS, GLOBALLY EACH OF US NEEDS A VERY ASTUTE SPORTS AGENT

[Scott Boras](#) is a hated man by sports franchise CEO's and owners in the USA. There are similar agents in soccer in Europe, [like Jorge Mendes](#). They have something in common. Even if we fight over the idea that one sport is called football or soccer. They make incredibly high sums of money for their athletes because they know when, where and how to best leverage the market opportunity. (As this was being written [Mendes secured a new \\$75 Million per year deal for Cristiano Ronaldo](#), because he knew the market.) Now imagine if each of us had a Scot Boras or a Jose Mendes? It's an exciting idea (for lots of reasons,) but it also represents the new labor markets idea that employees and job seekers have immensely more power than they have ever before if they can catch the right opportunity in the right way for the best possible personal returns. Covid, remote working, the increasing pressure for labor needs that exceed our ability to automate tasks have all converged together to create a whole new workforce empowerment.

In 2023 the imperative for culture, care, and a connected work experience to retain, delight and entice human capital becomes a norm, not an exception. Like athletes talented and in demand people will be far more able to see, hear and experience (LinkedIn) their potential value than ever before. The shackles of not being able to test the market will have fallen away because of the tipping points of a post Covid world.

21. YOU BECOME WHAT YOU EAT FOR REAL

Type II diabetes is going to be a top [three killer in the world very](#) shortly. It is in the same leagues as cancer and heart disease. It is not just the disease of the western world. More citizens in China and India will have it than the total population of the United States and then multiply it by one and a half. It is a painful, omnipresent and well understood disease, yet it's incidence and distribution and frankly the solution for it lies squarely in each of our hands. Covid [amplified dietary concerns in the US](#). Higher food costs will make that situation worse. The period may well have accelerated a dietary crisis but increasing wealth across the globe has radically shifted diet towards foods that feed type II diabetes (meat, dairy, sugars). In the west 20%+ of those over the age of 70 years have type II. As we get older this is going to be a hidden killer. In 2023 we will finally recognize that we need to change what we put in our bodies or there is a high chance it will reduce our lifespan. Expect to see a whole new slew of medical ads on TV, revised insurance rates for life insurance and the medical industry (your doctor) check for this. \$15.6 billion was spent in 2002 just on diabetes meter/measurement systems. [There is a CAGR of over 8% a year](#) too. This a growth industry for all the wrong reasons.



22. CHINA SITS TIGHT AND QUIET, AS THE WORLD BEGINS TO SPURN THEM BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND CULTURALLY

We just do not know how economic trade relationships will work with China in 2023. For some twenty-five plus years China's pathway to an economic duopoly with the US was never in doubt. The annual reported growth rates were astounding and constantly sent a sense of un-stoppable momentum for China. Covid may well have put a brake on that for China and caused the world to reflect on its collective need to manage their own supply chains, manufacturing capacities and dependencies, especially with our increased focus on semi-conductors as the intelligent brains of so much of what we consume. Incredible amounts of innovation are occurring in the world's largest automotive economy in China but it could be prevented from spreading across the globe unless we can find a fluid, two way exchange of trade.

2023 is a pivotal year for China, its economy, and the nuanced relationships with economies around the world are going to come under constant monitoring at all levels. The EU and other geographies will feel far more empowered to say, "we can do it here too, or somewhere else." India may benefit the most from this shift as will the mid-west of the US you can learn more about this from my conversation with [JP Nauseef](#). Trade needs to become two way, because we are all collectively better for it that way, a mutual win-win.

23. THE DALLAS COWBOYS FINALLY WIN THE SUPER BOWL, AGAIN, FINALLY!

They hit hard, move fast and fly around. They look a lot like Dan Quinn's other defenses starting in Seattle. In an era where offense is the essence of the NFL a great defense that is hyper aggressive is a pleasure to watch. I chose this as the last one because being slightly counter to a general trend, in this case the league's offensive focus really should pay its rewards.

The same will be true for all of us in 2023. Slightly counter to trends is what will make for success in a potentially volatile 2023. Doing nothing or trying to absorb it and hope you make it in 2023 will not make for a successful year.



IN CLOSING:

[Quantumrm](#) published 422 predictions for 2023. It made me feel in-adequate in these twenty-three. It does, however, illustrate the enormous possibilities next year has. In part caused by a major shift in the economic patterns around us (de globalization, generational shifts). In 2023 everything gets thrown into the air from home to work to travel and way beyond. The possibilities are endless because of all these forces and how they might start to work together. [The idea of permanently asking: what if ? Will be the evolving normal of 2023.](#)

Lets' see what ifs become the what were ideas of 2023 take us.



MICHAEL GALE

I am the bestselling (Wall Street Journal and Amazon) author of the book, *The Digital Helix*, about the DNA of successful digital transformation traits of the 28% of corporations thriving in the \$2T digital transformation industry. This book was the number one book on digital transformation in 2017 and 2018. I am the founding partner of Inc.digital and I am a top 10 global A.I. influencer (Thinkers 360). I am the host of a weekly podcast series about the digitally transformed world of ten years from now (*Futures In Focus*) available on iTunes and most podcast platforms. I have been a group partner at Monitor Group, The Chief Web Officer and a GM at Micron and a serial entrepreneur having built and sold two SaaS companies and been part of a team that took a company public in the 1990's.