




Anticipating 2025: A guide to the radical changes that may lie ahead, whether or not we're ready

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The near future deserves more of our attention. A great deal can change over the next few years.

From mid 2014 until 2025, there will be seven 18-month “Moore’s Law” generations, potentially resulting in a 128-fold increase in raw computing performance (that’s 2 multiplied by itself 7 times). That will enable devices with core components that are, for example, 5 times more powerful, 5 times cheaper, and 5 times smaller (hence requiring 5 times less energy input) than today’s computers. Over the same time period, we can expect similarly striking progress in cloud computing, big data analytics, robotics, synthetic biology, renewable energy systems, 3D printing, artificial intelligence, and many other fields.

Collectively, these changes will enable huge transformation in very many areas of work, play, learning, and healthcare – as well as in our social and economic structures. The potential upsides are enormous. There are potential enormous downsides too.

As a comparison, consider the changes over a similar timescale, between 2003 and 2014. In 2003, there was no Facebook, no Twitter, no YouTube, no iPad, no Kindle, almost no Wikipedia or Skype, and only a smattering of smartphones. There were no freely available online video educational courses, such as the Khan Academy. However, that same past period also saw a tremendous financial crash that, for a while, threatened the survival of economies around the globe. The preconditions for an even worse crash remain in place, as do preconditions for other global crises.

The authors of the chapters in *Anticipating 2025* share the broad view that remarkable changes could be taking place in human lifestyles and in social structures by 2025 – or that if such changes have not yet transpired by that time, the popular mindset could be much more open towards the likelihood and desirability of such changes. The magnitude of these impending changes far exceeds the typical thinking of most of our present-day leaders in the fields of politics, business, and academia – leaders who are “caught in the present”, or who are too accustomed to thinking in linear rather than in exponential terms.

In *Anticipating 2025*, the authors give their diverse views as to which future scenarios are technically feasible and which are desirable. They also highlight the best steps to take to bring these desirable visions into reality, despite the many and varied roadblocks that are likely to be encountered en route.

As befits a critically important discussion, the authors expound a variety of viewpoints, via a range of different writing styles. Readers are urged to explore these chapters widely, leaving aside their comfort zones and briefly suspending their familiar thought patterns. That’s the best way to prepare for the tumult that may lie ahead.

Information relevant to the topics discussed – including additional reading lists, diagrams, and pictures – can be found online at <http://anticipating2025.com/book/>. The same site holds the records (including videos) of a London Futurists conference held in March 2014 with the same name – *Anticipating 2025*. Many of the

presenters and several attendees from that conference have provided chapters for this book.

The book opens with 3 overview chapters that set the scene for further discussion. Part II features 3 chapters on the transformation of medicine and healthcare. Part III considers the future of Artificial Intelligence and potential future mergers between human and machine intelligence. The chapters in Part IV consider ways in which technology can empower transformations in society. Part V explores transformations of human nature and core human behaviour – including a transcendence of present-day human nature via transhumanism. Given the range of radical scenarios for the near future that have been covered in preceding chapters, the final part of the book seeks to answer the question: what next?

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