

VISUALISING THE FUTURE

STATE OF THE NATION 2004



future foundation
group

OCTOBER 12TH 9AM-5PM BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON

STATE OF THE NATION— CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Visualising the Future 12 October 2004

The modern world is more complex than ever—trends swirl and interact to produce a seemingly constantly changing landscape. Not surprisingly, therefore, there is a growing desire to develop clear visions of what the future might hold.

It is for this reason that we have titled this event Visualising the Future. Our aim for the day is to paint a picture—metaphorically and also, in some instances, literally—of how things might develop for individual consumers, for companies and for other organisations. What will be the critical turning points and issues? What are the specific challenges and opportunities? What are the mechanisms by which dynamic and practical solutions are identified?

9.00 REGISTRATION AND COFFEE

10.00 CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

10.15 SEEING THROUGH THE ECONOMIC ORTHODOXY TO THE NEW REALITY

Terence Athaide, Professor Paul Ormerod
and Michael Willmott

In this first session we bring together three distinguished speakers to discuss not only the economy but also how useful economic analysis actually is and the implications for understanding and anticipating consumer behaviour.

We will kick off with an update on economic prospects presented by Terence Athaide, the Future Foundation's Chief Economist. As our nVision subscribers and past conference attendees will know, Terry's insights and forecasts have consistently been of the highest quality over the last five years.

But after Terry, things start to get a bit more contentious. Professor Paul Ormerod—founder of Volterra Consulting and author of two iconoclastic best sellers, *The Death of Economics* and *Butterfly Economics*—will discuss the fundamental problems with economics as it is practiced today.

In particular, he will describe how the work of Nobel prize winning psychologist Daniel Kahneman has turned the world of economics on its head by showing why consumers do not always act rationally.

Paul will be joined by Michael Willmott—Co-founder of the Future Foundation—who will add a sociological and consumer perspective to this. Drawing on his own work into the complexity and complication of people's lives—and the implications for rational decision-making—he will highlight the good and the bad practices of marketing that play upon and even help to encourage irrational behaviour.

For the last 15 minutes, the three speakers will debate where economics still has a role and, crucially, the implications of this new thinking for companies, their strategic development and their marketing practices.

11.30 COFFEE

11.50 EXPLORING THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY OF BRITAIN AND EUROPE

John Fisher and Christophe Jouan

This session builds on recent work for a government department that has involved 20 year forecasts for rural areas of England and Wales. We have extended this analysis across not only Britain but also Europe. John—Co-founder of The Local Futures Group—and Christophe—Managing Director of the Future Foundation's nVision service—will describe a typology of places and localities and identify the booming and declining areas; those that offer the best prospects and those that are likely to be more problematic. In effect, we will map the geography of dynamism across the country and the continent. This session will be of particular relevance to retailers, media and telecommunications companies, financial service providers, government departments and anyone who has any interest in the prospects of local areas both in the UK and Europe.

12.20 EXAMINING THE CONTINUING POWER OF POLITICS

Paul Flatters

It was fashionable some years' ago to argue that politics didn't matter any more. But the power of governments to regulate and control and to influence the public agenda (remember 'rip-off' Britain') is as great as it ever was. With governing parties on both sides of the Atlantic having credibility problems and re-elections looming, an understanding of not only who might win, but what the key campaign issues might be is crucial for business planning. Add in an impending referendum on Europe and the potential for political effects is significant.

Paul is ideally placed to take us on a trip through the possibilities, the likelihoods and things to watch. Although now the Chief Executive of the Future Foundation, Paul's previous job was Head of Research at BBC News making him well placed to assess likely developments and what will be the 'hot' issues in the media in the year ahead.

1.00 LUNCH

2.30 THE CHALLENGE OF BRINGING THE FUTURE TO LIFE WITHIN ORGANISATIONS

Melanie Howard and Irene McAra McWilliam

In today's competitive environment, it seems that innovation has become one of the mantras of our time with every organisation seeking to find ways in which to extend its brand franchise or develop more cost effective ways of delivering products and services to customers and citizens. However, there are many obstacles to effective innovation. Often these prove to be barriers within the organisation rather than a failure of imagination or ideas.

Our speakers will argue that in order to ensure that an investment in futures understanding can be effectively applied to improve organisational performance, a holistic approach to the generation and use of knowledge has to be adopted.

Melanie Howard—Co-founder of the Future Foundation— and Irene McAra McWilliam—Professor of Interaction Design at the Royal College of Art (and formerly head of global design research at Philips)—will look at the ways in which different creative approaches can transform insights into the future into usable knowledge inspiring practical innovation through effective communication. Drawing on a number of case studies from different sectors encompassing technology and telecoms, financial services, white goods and policy making, the session will explore techniques that can build on wider social trends analysis and consumer research to foster more focused thinking and genuine innovation within organisations.

3.30 TEA

3.50 PAINTING A PICTURE OF CONSUMER LIVES—THE METAPHOR OF ‘CONVENIENCE CULTURE’

Charlotte Cornish

We all talk about convenience, but what do we really mean and what are the implications for companies? Is it just about time-saving or is it also about life-management and life enhancement tools? Charlotte—Research Director of the Future Foundation—will argue that we can view a whole range of social and consumer issues as reflecting different types of convenience. For many people, for example, our research shows that luxury is defined by products or services that ease their lives or provide some space and time for reflection. Equally, is the cult of celebrity nothing more than a quick and easy guide to the lifestyles and brands to aspire to? Is convenience culture (in its broadest sense) really the defining feature of the modern consumer society?

4.15 REFLECTIONS ON THE DAY

A summing up by our Chair for the day



Booking form

To book please return this card to the address below; alternatively contact us: **BY EMAIL** at sitia@futurefoundation.net, **BY FAX** 020 7251 8138, or **BY TELEPHONE**, please call Siti Assad on +44 (0) 20 7250 3343.

Please reserve me _____ place (s)

Name of Delegate 1 _____

Position _____

Address for invoicing _____

- full price£620.00
- late booking fee (from 1st October).....£690.00
- an nVision subscriber.....25% discount
- a registered charity.....50% discount

All prices exclude VAT and include full delegate materials.

Terms & Conditions

Future Foundation reserves the right to make any alterations to the programme that may be necessary. Delegates may be substituted at any time but no refunds will be given for cancellations made within 30 days of the conference. Cancellations made more than 30 days in advance of the conference will be given a 50% refund.

Additional delegate names

ADDRESS Siti Assad, **Future Foundation**,
70 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EJ