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**PLANNING FOR  
UNPREDICTABILITY**

**FUTURE FOUNDATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**STATE OF THE NATION 2005**

**19.10.2005 9AM-5PM BRITISH MUSEUM LONDON**

# PLANNING FOR UNPREDICTABILITY

## FUTURE FOUNDATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

### STATE OF THE NATION 2005

#### NEW IDEAS, NEW ANALYSES AND NEW RECOMMENDATIONS

For this year's conference the organising theme is 'Planning for Unpredictability'—an issue that is particularly pertinent at the moment. Not only is economic growth slowing, and consumer spending particularly so (with all the implied uncertainties and disparities that that implies), but we now have the spectre again of terrorism and the potential impact on the political and consumer psyches. Then there is the confusion of European politics following the rejection in France and the Netherlands of the European constitution—where exactly is Europe going now?

Add in a growing understanding that much of what we thought we knew is being shown to be incomplete at best—as our collective knowledge increases we are beginning to realise that we know much less than we thought and everything is more complex than imagined—and the question arises as to whether it is really possible to 'predict' anything.

So we have built a programme that considers these, and other uncertainties, and assesses what we can do to survive them. How, in understanding and coping with unpredictability can we identify new opportunities and build robust success?

10.10

## UNDERSTANDING UNPREDICTABILITY

Paul Ormerod (Volterra Consulting)

We start by considering some of the latest thinking in the area of uncertainty and unpredictability. As author of one of this year's most acclaimed business books (*Why Most Things Fail*), Paul is uniquely placed to explain the complexities of the modern world, why we get so many things wrong and how we might go about planning and executing in a better way.

Here is what some reviewers have said about Paul's book:

'This engrossing and entertaining book is a careful, comprehensible analysis of the limits of human rationality's ability to control the world, and of the implications for public policy of the failure of most rational calculation to produce its intended results' Alisdair Palmer, *Sunday Telegraph*

'Punchy and entertaining ... The real importance of what Ormerod is saying goes far beyond economics... Exhilarating' Brian Appleyard, *New Statesman*

'If there must be a government economist, I say give the job to Paul Ormerod' Simon Jenkins, *The Times*

10.40

## THE POLITICS OF UNCERTAINTY AND THE UNCERTAINTY OF POLITICS

Paul Flatters and Jamie Allsopp

Paul and Jamie will consider not only how politicians might respond to our uncertain times but also what it might mean for citizens and consumers.

This session will assess, among other things, what might happen to the future development of Europe and of global co-operation more generally. More specifically, it will ask whether as a society we are becoming less tolerant of the behaviours of others (smoking for example) and will investigate what citizens really want and expect from their politicians. What might this mean for policy formulation and regulation. Is there really no end to what might be regulated and controlled?

11.20 Q&A

11.35 COFFEE BREAK

12.00

## UNRAVELLING THE WINNERS AND LOSERS IN THE ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE

Neil Blake (Experian Business Strategies)

In an uncertain economic environment, how are governments, businesses and consumers likely to react? Who will be the winners and losers over the next 12 months and over the longer term. Where will the pressure points be? Which economies in Europe and globally will do well and which less so? Neil is Research Director at Experian Business Strategies and will unveil his latest thinking on the economy with particular reference to retail sales where we are already seeing patchy and diverse performances.

12.30

## CUSTOMERS IN CONTROL: COMMUNICATING IN UNPREDICTABLE MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY TIMES

Melanie Howard

Melanie will look at how the profound shifts in social attitudes and identity formation have fundamentally changed the way in which media and technology are consumed and used by individuals. Now, people can create their own repertoires and can access information, communication and entertainment via a growing range of channels and tools. Presenting findings from a new research study, the session will identify what new planning paradigms are required to create effective, flexible communications programmes aimed at the fast changing consumer for brands and organisations in the 21st century.

13.00 Q&A

13.20 LUNCH

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14.30

## UNPREDICTABLE STYLE? WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM FASHION AND CULTURE INDUSTRIES?

Peter Wallis

As the original style guru (author of The Sloane Ranger Handbook under his pseudonym of Peter York), Peter is well placed to consider what we can learn from the idiosyncrasies and capriciousness of fashion and cultural imagery. Is fashion, style, culture really that unpredictable? Or does it provide clues as to how we can make the apparently random and erratic more manageable? Always an entertaining speaker, Peter will kick off the afternoon session with style.

15.00

## PLANNING COMMUNICATIONS IN UNPREDICTABLE TIMES

Paul Edwards

Currently Chief Strategy Officer for advertising agency Publicis, Paul has a long and distinguished career in advertising and social research. Here he will consider what companies are and could be doing to both react to and exploit unpredictability.

15.30 Q&A

15.50 TEA

16.10

## MONTE CARLO OR BUST! MODELLING THE FUTURE

Chris Farmelo

Chris Farmelo, of the Future Foundation will explain how he has used Monte Carlo simulations and other statistical tools in helping clients as diverse as BBC, First Direct, DEFRA, Air Miles and English Heritage.

16.30

## COPING WITH THE COMPLACENT CONSUMER

Michael Willmott

The day will finish with a session that is part personal rumination and part summary. Michael will begin with a critique of the modern world: does the lack of tolerance and the seeming growth in volatility of opinions (and actions) merely reflect nothing more than a society that is so affluent, so indulged that it doesn't really care any more? Has the idea of rational thought and the renaissance man/woman been jettisoned in an orgy of self-indulgence? And is this helping to drive unpredictability?

Michael will then go on to summarise all aspects of the day and discuss what it means for consumer decision-making processes, for brands, for marketing and business and organisational strategy.

17.00 Q&A

17.15 Finish

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## REMEMBER THE EARLY BOOKING DISCOUNT!

To book please return this card to the address overleaf; alternatively contact us: **BY EMAIL** at [clementines@futurefoundation.net](mailto:clementines@futurefoundation.net), **BY FAX** 020 7251 8138, or **BY TELEPHONE**, please call Clementine Schultz on +44 (0) 20 7750 5726

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