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## Mid September 2014

### Welcome to the Middle of September Edition of What's Emerging

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Paul is currently travelling in the USA for the Business Innovation Factory conference in Rhode Island and the Community Catalyst event in Las Vegas. You can follow both these events on line or you can follow the Twitter stream for The BIF conference by searching for the hashtag #BIF10. When Paul returns he will be presenting at two conferences on the future of medicine, working with the Bendigo Bank on the future of their community banking model and State Trustees leadership team on how to approach foresight in strategy. If any of these areas interest you then please contact us at [info@emergentfutures.com](mailto:info@emergentfutures.com).

We hope that you continue to find then newsletter interesting and useful.

Cheers,

Paul Higgins, Sandy Teagle, Prafulla, Syed Muqthar, and Samantha Kyle-Little

#### SECTIONS

[What we are writing about](#)

[Business Tips](#)

[What's Emerging](#)

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### What are we writing about?

Paul will be blogging from his trip in the USA at [www.futuristpaul.com](http://www.futuristpaul.com) so check in their or follow his blog for the latest writing.

### Business Tips

As Paul is overseas we do not have any business tips this edition.

### In case you missed it: Most popular links from the Last Edition

[This chart shows the stunning disappearance of middle-class jobs — everywhere](#)

You are not imagining it. The above chart is from "Polanyi's Paradox and the Shape of Employment Growth, " a new paper (my analysis to come) by David Autor at the Federal Reserve's Jackson Hole conference. And here is how Autor defines, high-, middle-, and low-wage jobs:

[↑ Top of the page](#)

### ■ What's Emerging

#### How to feed the cities of the future

Come along with The Verge for the second season of Detours. We've traveled across the country to find the people, groups, and companies that are solving America's problems in new and unconventional ways. [Read More...](#)

#### Canadian gov't economists insist that stats on collapsing middle class mean just the opposite

Dave sez, "Last year, Employment and Social Development Canada put together a report suggesting that the Canadian middle class has seen wage stagnation and is experiencing record levels of debt; Finance Canada felt that this 'appears to conflict with the general message in Budget 2014 and previous internal briefings' so they made a new report -- that says the opposite, while looking at the same data." [Read More...](#)

#### Hidden Obstacles for Google's Self-Driving Cars

Impressive progress hides major limitations of Google's quest for automated driving. [Read More...](#)

#### Nobody knows anything, geopolitical risk edition

This has not been a great year for geopolitical stability (though it is also easy to exaggerate how bad it's been). Failing states in the Middle East, ongoing conflict in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Israel, war between Russia and Ukraine, geopolitical tensions in East Asia, and a worsening Ebola epidemic in West Africa have all caused investors to ratchet up their concerns about political risk. [Read More...](#)

#### Drone Developers Consider Obstacles That Cannot Be Flown Around

The tech industry's enthusiasm for building small delivery drones may be getting ahead of figuring out what to do with them. [Read More...](#)

#### The Man Who Feeds 1.2 Million Kids A Day

Running a massive school meals program that feeds malnourished kids, Manoj Kumar is on a mission to show how entrepreneurs can make real inroads in tackling India's age-old social problems. [Read More...](#)

#### The Near Future Of Implantable Technology

Jennifer French is the 2012 Rolex Yachtswoman of the Year, a silver medalist in sailing, and a quadriplegic. She is the first woman to receive the implanted Stand and Transfer system, an experimental device that uses implanted electrodes and an external control device. French injured her spinal cord when snowboarding in 1998, but has since become an advocate for access to neurotechnological therapies, devices, and treatments. She is a co-founder and executive director of Neurotech Network, a non-profit organization focused on education and advocacy. French told her story in her book, *On My Feet Again: My Journey Out of the Wheelchair Using Neurotechnology*. [Read More...](#)

#### Limits to Growth was right. New research shows we're nearing collapse

The 1972 book *Limits to Growth*, which predicted our civilisation would probably collapse some time this century, has been criticised as doomsday fantasy since it was published. Back in 2002, self-styled environmental expert Bjorn Lomborg consigned it to the "dustbin of history". [Read More...](#)

#### Robots Can Now Tend Your Garden For You

One of Harvest Automation's new nursery bots can work 10 hours a day for \$40--a lot less than even an illegal worker might get for the same job. And, as an employer, you have no issues with sickness, or slacking-off, or immigration checks; and you don't need to provide breaks, or restrooms. The bot just gets on with it, slowly moving pots from one area to another, no back-chat, no nonsense. [Read More...](#)

#### Evidence Grows That Online Social Networks Have Insidious Negative Effects

A study of 50,000 people in Italy concludes that online social networks have a significant negative impact on individual welfare. [Read More...](#)

## The Technology of 2025

Virgin Media Business has shed some light on the technology of the future, following an in-depth study carried out with The Future Laboratory into the hyper-connected world that awaits us in 2025. [Read More...](#)

## Hackers Are Homing in on Hospitals

Computer criminals are increasingly capturing valuable information stored on hospital computer networks. [Read More...](#)

## Google's smart contact lens is one step closer to your eyeball

Google and Swiss pharmaceutical company Novartis announced this morning that they will be collaborating on bringing Google's smart contact lens technology, which contains sensors for tracking things like blood glucose levels for diabetics, to consumers. [Read More...](#)

## MIT study: Services like UberPool, Lyft Line cut transit time, pollution

Last month, both Uber and Lyft announced that they were testing out ways for people to carpool with others who are riding on similar routes. The feature helps passengers cut their ride costs by as much as 60 percent. [Read More...](#)

## Brainy, Yes, but Far From Handy

In factories and warehouses, robots routinely outdo humans in strength and precision. Artificial intelligence software can drive cars, beat grandmasters at chess and leave "Jeopardy!" champions in the dust. [Read More...](#)

Address: Level 27 | 101 Collins Street | Melbourne | VIC 3000  
Phone: +61 3 9018 7917 | Fax: +61 3 9012 3580 | [emergentfutures.com](http://emergentfutures.com)

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