

# “The future of marketing: towards a theory of everything in marketing”

<b>AUTHORS</b>	Bang Nguyen
<b>ARTICLE INFO</b>	Bang Nguyen (2011). The future of marketing: towards a theory of everything in marketing. <i>Innovative Marketing</i> , 7(4)
<b>RELEASED ON</b>	Wednesday, 29 February 2012
<b>JOURNAL</b>	"Innovative Marketing "
<b>FOUNDER</b>	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”



NUMBER OF REFERENCES

0



NUMBER OF FIGURES

0



NUMBER OF TABLES

0

© The author(s) 2025. This publication is an open access article.

Bang Nguyen (UK)

## The future of marketing: towards a theory of everything in marketing

### Abstract

Today, with the emergence of new technologies and applications such as customized ads, Internet cookies, databases, social media, neuromarketing, face recognition, and machines with eyes, these are the first exposures to the future in the world of marketing. In this article, 10 predictions about the futures of marketing are made, aiming to present leading views on marketing futures from leading marketers. Realizing that marketing has always been affected by the broader environment, this article looks at worldwide developments over the next 100 years and predicts how these will affect the marketing scheme. Findings suggest that marketing in the future is not just confined to business, advertising, promotion, customer relations, etc., and that marketing is much more important than simply being a tool, but rather an ideology or applied philosophy to the society, business, economy, and life. This paradigm includes convenience marketing, social relationship marketing, marketing as a way to create structured thinking, and marketing as an inherent part of human culture. It seems as if marketing can be anything, and it is omnipresent where people are present, like a sixth dimension. Marketing is a force that has a light and a dark side. In the future, marketing will be a necessary skill for everyone. Whether it is for learning how to build relationships, learning how to manage information, or to know how to create a fairer and more just society, marketing transcends all of these very meaningful subjects. As Einstein may have wanted to put it: 'This is the true theory of everything in marketing'.

**Keywords:** marketing, future, science, technology, innovation, society, culture.

### Introduction

For decades, scholars have contemplated on what the future of marketing is. The transition from transactional to relational marketing was a great evolutionary transformation, changing the way in which marketers would think about the marketing concept. Whilst many ideas have been suggested, these have always been built on current relationship practices and therefore, do not suggest a new paradigm in marketing. Today, with the emergence of new technologies and applications such as customized ads, Internet cookies, databases, social media, neuromarketing, face recognition, and machines with eyes, these are the first exposures to the future in the world of marketing. In this era of information, monitoring, tracking, and using customer data, skills and knowledge to utilize data are fundamental for marketers to understand and fulfill customers' needs better. But this is a limited view of what marketing is. Marketing must adopt a greater role in our societies and cultures, so it can evolve and aid to human kind. In this article, 10 predictions about the futures of marketing are made, aiming to present leading views on marketing futures from leading marketers. Realizing that marketing has always been affected by the broader environment, this article looks at worldwide developments over the next 100 years and predicts how this will affect the marketing scheme. Specifically, predictions are broadly drawn from science and the scientific community as well as emerging technological developments, effectively

looking into how these will affect marketing practices over the next 100 years.

To ponder about the future by looking at the environment is always interesting but also, a daunting task, as some may regard this as fiction, but history tells us that marketing paradigms usually emerge as a result of the present stage at which the world operates in. Early marketers focused on developing products, keeping costs per produced unit low and supported mass marketing. This early marketing paradigm surfaced as a result of the Industrial Age, but as scientists over the past 100 years have increasingly improved their technologies, by inventing cars, airplanes, health drinks, the Internet, etc., new approaches to marketing have emerged. All of which created a specific approach to marketing such as mass customization, database marketing, green marketing concepts, social marketing, and one-to-one marketing. Thus, in the next 100 years, it is imperative that we look at what science offers in order to predict how the marketing scheme will evolve. As a result, revolutionary developments in marketing are evident.

Typically, predicting the future is made by historians, sociologists, scientists, and science fiction writers. In a way, predicting the future should be as important for marketers as these groups, as marketing is the way in which our cultures are communicated all over the world. Indeed, being a marketing futurist should be as recognized as in any other disciplines. Cutting edge marketing and developments in the world's scientific community will enable this study to look into the revolutionizing approaches that will emerge in marketing, allowing us to understand what marketing is really about. Our understanding of marketing in

the next 100 years will eventually determine how human culture will change and not least, how business, customers, markets, and societies will evolve.

**Predictions about marketing in the next 100 years.** Predicting the marketing scheme over the next 100 years is of course, an overwhelming and risky task. The difficulty is, obviously, that no one knows how the world will take shape in the future. Even science has had its fair share in making wrong predictions. But interestingly, predictions of scientific development have often been underestimated. For example:

*“In 1899, Charles H. Duell, commissioner of the U.S. Office of Patents, said, “Everything that can be invented, has been invented.” In 1927, Harry M. Warner, one of the founders of Warner Brothers, remarked during the era of silent movies, “Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?” And Thomas Wat-*

*son, chairman of IBM, said in 1943, “I think there is a world market for maybe five computers” (Physics of the Future, Dr. Michio Kaku, 2011).*

It is clear that the pace of the development of science and innovation were underestimated in the excerpts above. The lesson is nevertheless, that what may sound unrealistic today, may well become everyday nature in the future. It is with this positive notion of those predictions, that the paper moves on to the next sections to provide 10 predictions about the future of marketing, which may change the fate of marketing and eventually, humans, markets, consumption, and culture. The future scenarios are drawn from a combination of interviews and current researches from science, which eventually leads to this author’s interpretations of what the future of marketing is, whilst reflecting the realms of environmental changes that shape our world in the next 100 years.

Table 1. Future scenarios

Future scenario	Examples	Sources
1. 3D advertising, augmented reality and Internet in the contact lenses	Adverts in 3D similar to the ‘Back to the future jaws ad’. A personal virtual Butler appearing in your eyes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A Single-Pixel Wireless Contact Lens Display. By A.R. Lingley, M. Ali, Y. Liao, R. Mirjalili, M. Klonner, M. Sapanen, S. Suihkonen, T. Shen, B. P. Otis, H. Lipsanen and B. A. Parviz, November 2011.</li> <li>2. Augmented Reality in Contact Lenses. <i>A New Generation of Contact Lenses Built With Very Small Circuits and LEDs Promises Bionic Eyesight</i>, by Babak A. Parviz, September 2009.</li> <li>3. Contact Lenses with Circuits, Lights a Possible Platform for Superhuman Vision, by University of Washington, January 2008.</li> <li>4. Self-Assembled Single-Crystal Silicon Circuits on Plastic, by Sean A. Stauth and Babak A. Parviz, in <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, September 2006.</li> </ol>
2. Telekinetic powers and neuromarketing	New era of gaming and promotional competitions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This Is Your Future, by Michio Kaku, March 2011.</li> <li>2. A Brain-Machine Interface Instructed by Direct Intracortical Microstimulation, by Nicoletislab.net – O’Doherty, Hanson, Lebedev, Henriquez, and Nicoletis, 2009.</li> <li>3. Neuromarketing: Is There a ‘Buy Button’ in the Brain? Selling to the Old Brain for Instant Success, by Patrick Renvoisé, September 2005.</li> </ol>
3. Matrix like world – the future shopping experience	Virtual shopping experiences; intelligent shopping; convenience marketing; increased collective buying power	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Let’s Get Physics-al: Computing Will Continue to Evolve into the Future, by Amina Khan, June 2011.</li> <li>2. Concepts and Practices of Digital Virtual Consumption, by Janice Denegri-Knott and Mike Molesworth, June 2010.</li> </ol>
4. Creating firm personalities: the likeability effect	The personification of companies is evident; putting a face and personality on your company; importance of being likeable; the art of freezing out customers who you do not like	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can Make Themselves More Likeable? by Bang Nguyen 2012.</li> <li>2. ‘Human Voice’ in Social Media Helps Build Customer Relationships, Positive WOM, by Hyojung Park and Hyunmin Lee, May 2011.</li> </ol>
5. Targeting and building relationships with key authoritative people	Emergence of Chinese culture where guanxi or relationship building is vital for business. Firms not only target key customers but also target key authoritative people as a marketing strategy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lobbying as a Marketing Activity, by Tyler Willis, June 2011.</li> <li>2. When Does Guanxi Matter? Issues of Capitalization and Its Dark Sides, by Flora F. Gu, Kineta Hung, and David K. Tse, 2008.</li> </ol>
6. The end of postmodern marketing and the beginning of future postmodern marketing	Critical marketing rethought (again). Marketing as a science or an art	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Postmodern Marketing? by Stephen Brown, 1993.</li> </ol>
7. Biotechnology and nanotechnology – humans living for hundreds of years, cloning, and creating life that never existed before	As humans change, so do marketing. Marketing’s power lies in its ability to convince the world to accept that we can play God and create animals that have never walked on the surface of our Earth, either for production purposes or for entertainment such as Dinosaurs and Pokemons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take a Test Drive Through the Next 100 Years, <i>Michio Kaku Previews Innovations From Now to 2100 in ‘Physics of the Future’</i>, by Michio Kaku, March 2011.</li> <li>2. <i>Regenerative Biology: Have We Discovered the Fountain of Youth?</i> by Daniel Honan, November 2011.</li> <li>3. Say What, Doc? Is Biomedical Research Really Close to Curing Anything? by Douglas Melton, October 2011.</li> </ol>

Table 1 (cont.). Future scenarios

Future scenario	Examples	Sources
8. Robots and jobs	Traditional middle class jobs are gone. Instead, jobs will be more facilitating and controlled by robots	1. "Polymorphic robots", by Wei-Min Shen, 2011. 2. "Kismet" , by Cynthia Breazeal, 2011.
9. Marketing in a global catastrophe – war, poverty, climate change, natural disasters, and scarcity of resources	Warfare marketing. The role of marketing in the event of a disaster. Marketing used to downgrade living standards	1. The Last Frontier: Market Creation in Conflict Zones, Deep Rural Areas, and Urban Slums, by Jamie L. Anderson, Contantinos Markides, and Martin Kupp, Summer 2010. 2. The Battle for Your Mind/Marketing Warfare/Bottom-Up Marketing, by Debra L. Scammon and George M. Zinkhan, January 1992.
10. Marketing in a type 1 civilization – sustainable energy and flying cars	Energy crises gone, no dependence on oil, multi-cultural societies, but will people be wiser with such powerful technologies?	1. Physics of the Future, by Dr. Michio Kaku, March 2011. 2. The Kardashev Scale. "Transmission of Information by Extraterrestrial Civilizations", by Nikolai Kardashev, 1964.

Today, science is the foundation of our societies and economies. Science is exploding all around us, and covers a number of areas, including computer science, nanotechnology, biotechnology, robotics, artificial intelligence, which are built on quantum mechanics, also known as science in the very small (particle physics). Marketing can be thought of as an application that follows events from our societies and economies, and it is therefore, only logic to use scientific developments as a platform to make future predictions about marketing.

The 10 propositions made in this paper have been carefully selected as a result of interviews and from the researcher’s interpretations of what should be relevant. Many scientific impacts are drawn from various sources, most notably, ‘Physics of the Future’ by Prof. Michio Kaku as this text is at the forefront of science; however, predictions are not limited to this book. Student interviews with Marketing Issues classes and interviews with leading academics in their respective fields are incorporated as well as continuing research, including Prof. Philip Kitchen’s ‘The Future of Marketing: Critical 21<sup>st</sup> Century Perspectives’. It is always difficult to cover all scientific developments and conjecture their impact on marketing, but from these 10 propositions it is believed that major developments are covered.

**1. 3D advertising, augmented reality and Internet in the contact lenses**

With recent developments in 3D, it seems that the nearest prediction would be for marketers to focus on developing 3D advertising and holographic imaging. The technology already exists. There is a memorable scene from the movie ‘Back to the Future’ where Michael J. Fox travels to his distant future to save his son from making unfortunate mistakes with Griff (Biff’s grandson). In that opening future scene, Fox’s character is intimidated by a 3D animation/hologram of a great shark, attempting to get its teeth into him, and which seemingly is an advertisement from the nearby cinema for a contin-

uation of the Jaws series. This could very well be in development now as the technology is already flourishing. In the future, such 3D adverts would not just be confined to large billboards or street ads but also in our living rooms – engaging ads coming out of our 3D televisions. Similarly, Minority Report-style advertising billboards, which can recognize passers-by, and target them with customized adverts are already under trial by IBM’s innovation laboratories. Such billboards would take target marketing to the next level, effectively allowing large billboard adverts or shop windows to match individual customers’ demographic profiles with targeted products.

Visually, the future will be fascinating. Currently in its early stages on various mobile smartphones and in the form of mobile applications, augmented reality is an attempt to provide users with information in real time with recognition technology. This presents great opportunities for marketing. For example, if a tourist travels abroad and does not know what to see, he or she could use the smartphone to get directions about where to go by filming the surrounding area. Instantly, information on what is being filmed will appear straight on the screen – all in real time. This already exists today. In the future, this augmented reality will exist in people’s contact lenses. Everywhere they go, they will have information about their surroundings right in front of them. Even the Internet will be readily available. And if they meet someone from a different country and that person speaks a different language, subtitles will appear in their ‘screen’ so they will be able to understand what that person is saying. For marketers, this is a major opportunity to develop direct marketing applications and customize individual ads to suit individual needs. For example, new approaches to marketing could be to develop a virtual ‘guide’ that can be loaded at different places around the city. This guide may appear as a friendly person and will be the customer’s personal guide around the city. Interaction and simple dialogue will be possible, enabling the customer a more interactive and memorable

experience. One could imagine that customers would have to subscribe to this service or simply choose from a range of guides between different companies offering such services. The benefits for the marketer are evident in terms of their customization efforts as well as data collection.

With vast amount of information wherever people go, marketers are competing with each other on conveying the most relevant information to the most relevant customers. Information agents and brokers may exist to sort out data following customers' preferences. The most successful companies are those that are able to find and analyze knowledge in this vast amount of data and use it appropriately and intelligently. As a result, in order to have the most relevant information, it is only logic to predict that huge efforts must be on data collection, data management, and data science and technology. However, this may only be seen in the nearer future. Once the 'virtual butler' is developed, marketers' jobs will be much easier.

The virtual butler or concierge is a customer's personal assistant and as the name implies, a personified computer program that takes care of everything on behalf of the customer. It is the ultimate form of marketing, as one customer will have just one 'person' to deal with – an assistant to take care of all the customer's shopping needs; a kind of one-stop-shop. It is similar to having one sales person for one customer, but across all firms that exist. This is possible as the butler will have access to all data that is stored on the Internet (assuming that the cloud technology will continue to grow) and contact to all shops that exist. Direct communication between the butler and those shops will be possible and orders can be done effortlessly. It is a form of convenience marketing for a life style that puts emphasis on convenience and saving time. Apple's recent launch of Siri, the intelligent personal assistant, is evidence towards such a future, although Siri presently is still at its early stages and underdeveloped. It is possible to imagine that customers in the future can customize their own butler and buy into larger 'ranges of products and services' through subscription. The key marketing notion and selling proposition here is: one customer, one 'sales person'. In reality, it is rather billions of customers, one computer program/database. In this case, butlers must appeal to customers as likeable, drawing attention to each firm's individual personality. This entails building up a personality for the firm i.e. a front figure that acts in a similar way as to how a person would develop a relationship with another person. This likeability effect will be discussed in a later section.

## 2. Telekinetic powers and neuromarketing

*"By 2100, like the gods of mythology, we will be able to manipulate objects with the power of our minds. Computers silently reading our thoughts will be able to carry out our wishes. We will be able to move objects by thought alone, a telekinetic power usually reserved only for the gods." ... "Although this godlike power seems unimaginable advanced, the seeds of all these technologies are being planted even as we speak. It is modern science, not chanting and incantations, that will give us this power"* (Physics of the Future, 2011).

It is astonishing to even imagine how computers will be able to read our thoughts, and take action on what we desire. Indeed, as unimaginably as it may seem, science should not be underestimated. It was not long ago when, Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, said in 1943, "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." Assuming that such scientific progress, i.e., Moore's Law keeps its pace, in a hundred years time, we may well, have telekinetic abilities. In fact, recent research has successfully made monkeys move objects with their thoughts alone by wiring their brain. For marketers, this is a new area that should be speculated on. In doing so, we may think in terms of what the logic of marketing currently is and where it is headed, which then, feeds into the predictions of how marketing will be implemented in the future. Certainly, the field of neuromarketing exists even today, where brain scans will reveal how certain customers will respond in certain ways to certain stimuli. Take this concept into the future, and what we will experience are customers skipping away from adverts on their TVs not with a remote controller, but rather with their minds!

The possibilities and applications of such telekinetic technology for gamers and games are numerous. For marketers, it will be vital to capitalize on this technology and use it to develop new types of gaming. Using only the power of thought, a gamer can control a character to do what he or she wants it to do. Whether it is moving around in different worlds or flying a spacecraft to shoot the enemies, creative game developers have the opportunity to make games even more realistic and more real life. At first, marketers, of course, will have to ensure that customers will accept these types of games, as pushing the games too fast to the market, will result in a public outcry and eventually, regulations (assuming that the public will alienate any mind controlling gaming because it is too private to tap into the brain). Therefore, the role of marketing is essential in this respect in that it must monitor the opinions of the public before launching such radical games. This process requires market research and traditional ap-

proaches to customer monitoring and tracking. However, once, these technologies are common, using our minds as a telekinetic power may very well be the norm. The next move could then be to control larger things like a car or other transportation media. Whatever the applications are being developed, the role of marketing is two-fold: to constantly monitor public opinions and to incorporate innovation in product development. Indeed, jumping straight into a new technology will cause outcry, as history tells us. The marketers' role is to ensure and reassure public acceptance and work in phases, one step at the time, so that new ideas and technologies will become the norm. This is explained by adaptation level theory, which suggests that customers experience fairness and just in norms at which they have become adapted to.

Other marketing schemes using this technology may be to create competitions as part of a larger marketing and promotional experience with activities such as games, competitions, entertainment etc. It is clear that the future will involve more research to tap into the minds of the consumers and more into consumers' brains (minds) and body (genes). This direction does not seem unlikely as the notion of current relationship marketing is aimed at treating customers on a one-to-one basis, and what could be more advanced and ultimate than to understand customers by tapping into their thoughts and brains – a customer cannot say no to their own preferences. The technologies of the future will enable marketers to do so. The next section takes this idea of tapping into the minds of the consumers even further.

### **3. Matrix-like world – the future shopping experience**

Even today, social networking websites have changed the way in which people communicate and the way we develop our relationships with other people. Facebook, in particular have developed many innovative ideas to bring not just the Internet into the world of social networking but also, the real world. For example, applications such as 'Facebook pages' gives companies a new way to build loyalty and interaction; it gives users the opportunity to link real life experiences with the virtual world in real time. 'Facebook live' shows live streams from different events where 'things are happening' and you can join in and take part with your comments. 'Facebook deals' gives users another incentive to be interactive and commercial by looking for discounts, deals of the day, and offers. Perhaps, 'Facebook check-ins' will soon be a rental space for companies to display themselves. In a way, word of mouth and viral marketing are responsible for the popularity of Facebook and many other major websites like Twit-

ter, YouTube, and Google. In the future, it may not be word of mouth, but 'thought-2-thought' or 'mind-2-mind' that brings customers together to use a particular platform. This suggestion builds on the two previous predictions about mind controlled applications and augmented reality. It does seem that the purposes of social networks have been to bring together the real world and the virtual world. In the future, this may be possible by tapping into the brain and the result may be that people can log into a virtual world that is actually build as an exact replication of the real world, say a supermarket, and customers can shop from their online connection, not having to leave their homes. Again, this is a convenience driven culture and not so farfetched, as many technologies of today have the exact same purposes. Thus, work, shopping, or any other responsibilities that a person may have can be done from any single location of the world. It is possible then to be at multiple locations at the same time, and this sense of transcending time and space, is essential for marketers to understand.

Indeed, the applications of social networking to marketing are endless. For example, communities will be built around social media; people may get together to overthrow governments; or companies may find themselves building relationships with customers, and others, recruiting employees through social media as well as spying on other companies. Social media is a battlefield, and marketing possess the tools to win the war, capturing essential information about suppliers, customers, competitors, and the environment. In the future, work places and virtual offices may even exist on social networking sites, allowing employees to work from any location of the world. Marketing focus will be on 'place' and relevancy to ensure that products and services are relevant and readily available where the customers are. Sorting out this relevancy, i.e. where to stock the right type of products along with the right location, is essential. People are travelling across places and it is marketers' responsibility to bring them their homes to their location, including products, services, experiences, and even families. In a world where the gap between the virtual and the real world is closing, a sense of belonging is essential, thus understanding the role of 'home' is vital for marketers and marketing efforts must be built around this. Even if it means to research a customer's family history and adapting into a virtual environment in order to create a homely effect.

So far we have established that the role of marketing in the future will be to manage knowledge and information, create and lead customers' level of adaptation to new technological developments, and to drive and direct human cultures, both in the virtual

and real world. The above discussion has suggested a direction of change in the way in which human cultures are expressed, and it is this change in time and space that leads to the next proposition about marketing's role to *create structures* logically. This is meant to suggest that marketing will have to be the driving force in structuring the ways humans think. As information, markets, cultures, societies, time, and space merge through social networking and media in a real versus unreal environment, with no boundaries across continents, the move towards a global community is evident, thus, creating the need to have people think in a structured and logic way seems more important than ever. The marketing research and planning process clearly suggests a four phase process where analysis, planning, implementation, and control are necessary to clearly devise a successful strategy. It is reasoned that if this process can be applied to human thinking, this logic may help in solving many issues in the future. In this case, analysis and planning are essential components at this stage in order to reflect on why and what social networking can be used for. Later on, discussions about how all four phases are vital for human survival in a global catastrophe are presented.

#### **4. Creating firm personalities: the likeability effect**

As social media increasingly determine the way in which humanity communicates and build relationships, it will be more important for companies to have a face and a voice – to engage with customers at the same level and to stand out. Research suggests that a friendly, happy, and pleasant person will be more popular, successful, trustworthy, etc. A firm must therefore adopt such a stance to become personified in order to build closer relationships. In the future, customers have evolved into intelligent shoppers that will not fall for the usual sales tactics. They have the ability to compare and contrast every single offer that exists on the omnipresent Internet connection that is available in their contact lenses or on their highly advanced hand-held devices. Therefore, the difference between various companies will be the way in which they differ in their personalities. Indeed, the personification of companies is evident and putting a face, voice, and personality on the company is a differentiation tool for marketers. Specifically, the importance of being likeable is at the utmost importance. For marketers, more research must be done in terms of examining how a face can be put on a company to make it more attractive and likeable.

Effectively, this means that marketing has to have an impact within the first 1-2 seconds and the focus must be to capture and convince customers in those 1-2 seconds. This may be regarded as Touch Point

Marketing, where firms must enhance their touch points, i.e., promotion and dialogue with their customers. Customers have choices as never before, but if they recognize traits in a person that they like, or feel attracted to, this is where they will put their money. At the same time, firms must consider how they are able to look pretty, attractive, and even play to the consumers at their most fundamental level, including their emotions, feelings, and genetics. Because it is only to those basic human instincts from the times of the cave men, that the marketing tools will have an effect on. In other words, customers will only respond stimuli to their very basic needs, i.e., things that are genetically coded in their DNA. From a firm perspective, the marketing tools may no longer be as effective like today because customers are too intelligent to fall for them, given the information that they have access to. It is easy to imagine that this intelligence stems from consumer applications and mobile apps that are developed to make intelligent suggestions, and to assist and give advice to those consumers as to where they should shop, hang out, or stay on holidays. Most notably, peer to peer suggestions in the form of peer ranking will be the consumers' most precious tool to sort out vast amounts of information and choices that exist. Thus, with such intelligent and powerful consumers whose choices could determine the demise of a company, the importance of fulfilling and playing to the very basic needs such as love, affection, and sense of belonging are essential. It is imperative for firms to shift customers away from shopping in an objective way but rather in a subjective way. This is the key. In the future, these factors must be incorporated into any successful marketing concept.

However, segmentation-wise, there is another aspect to consider. Intelligent customers may sometimes not be attractive for firms as they increasingly 'act strategically', by using either their collective buying power or by spreading negative word of mouth – to the whole world. As such, firms will need a strategy to avoid these customers and this is where the art of 'freezing out customers' who you do not like, comes in. In many ways, freezing out customers is similar to ignoring people by not returning messages, phone calls, or emails. However, more research is warranted in this area as it is very little researched and known.

#### **5. Targeting and building relationships with key authoritative people**

With the emergence of the Chinese in the world of business and culture, increasingly, their influence will be vital for marketers. Guanxi or relationship building is vital for business in China. With relationships as a fundamental business strategy, mar-

keting applications to foster trust and fairness are developed, which in turn increase commitment, cooperation, and the quality of the relationship. Whilst these ideas already exist today as part of the relationship marketing paradigm, a different perspective is necessary to consider. That is, firms need not only target key customers and suppliers, but also target key authoritative people as a marketing strategy. These influential people include groups of politicians, presidents, judges, police, military, and community leaders, who will have more power than those of today, as a global world order will be evident. The consequence of this global government or federation will change the way that marketing will be conducted. Especially, it will be essential to strategize and look at who to lobby, but not only that, also to build relationships with these influential people. In a later section, a deeper discussion about this global federation/world order, which scientists believe we are moving towards, will be provided. See the section on marketing in a Type 1 Civilization.

Indeed, these key people also are on social networks, so the opportunities to reach them are there. A firm must therefore consider and organize plans on how they can infiltrate these key groups of people on the social networks in order to become successful merchants. And with a world that is connected in every possible way, marketers have all the opportunities to fully extend their social relationship marketing strategies.

## **6. The end of postmodern marketing and the beginning of future postmodern marketing**

Postmodern marketing is in many ways a topic that could include anything, since no one knows what it truly is. Over the years, discussions about postmodernism have included many topics such as fragmentation of consumers, consumerism, a rejection of modern marketing, disorder, and generally, a critical view of the marketing scheme. However, in the words of postmodern marketing scholar Stephen Brown, postmodern marketing as it always has, offers little to the field of marketing, other than critical re-thinking of the subject. Certainly, it can be described as rejecting everything, but offers nothing. Nevertheless, a noteworthy topic which future marketers will surely discuss is whether marketing predominantly remains as a science, or as an art. There is no doubt that marketers have used the scientific principles to establish marketing as a science, but at the same time, marketing also requires creativity and unscientific tools to develop marketing applications. As such, the philosophies within marketing will be discussed for many years to come. It seemed appropriate to mention postmodern marketing in this article as it deals with the future of marketing – a trait of postmodernism.

## **7. Biotechnology and nanotechnology – humans living for hundreds of years, cloning and creating life that never existed before**

Returning to science and to scientific progresses over the next 100 years and envisioning how it may impact on marketing, we see an unbelievable turning point in human evolution. As incredible as it may sound, scientists suggest that we may be the last generation to die of ageing. Our kids will live for hundreds of years, because their human tissues and parts can be grown and created in labs. This will of course have profound effects on many things in the world, but not least, on how marketing will be perceived. If people get to live for hundreds and hundreds of years, certainly, their perception of what is important will change. Perhaps, the current fad or the current trends do not seem so attractive anymore. Marketing in many ways, have over the years been strong in developing such fads to create awareness of products and services, which may now be unimportant. The days where customers would stand in line and sleep in line for days to get their hands on the latest game console or latest tablet computer, will be a thing of the past. Now that customers are in no hurry to live in the now, marketers will have lost the opportunity to create buzzes and trends. Of course, in this discussion, the propositions can only be philosophical. However, it seems likely that the field of marketing may not be as much concentrated on looking at fads, trends, and prediction of the markets, but rather on issues of learning, sustainability, and experiences – things which are more profound to life and to the society.

From the field of nanotechnology, another amazing discovery is predicted to change how humans cure illnesses. In the future, nanobots will be injected into the human body to detect the human body for any diseases. It is predicted that with these nanobots, many illnesses of today will disappear including cancer and Parkinson's disease. The health care and the whole weight loss industry will obviously be affected by such scientific improvements. For marketers, a general shift in their role will be evident in that they no longer can be focused on just selling or marketing goods and services. Rather marketers must act as consultants, similar to doctors and nutritionists, as experts in not just a marketing context, but also in specific areas such as the medicine or nutrition. Only then, can they become effective 'integrated marketers', advancing from understanding markets to becoming an intelligent marketer in any areas that they desire. These future marketers will have the information and knowledge to do so, as a direct result of the discoveries of biotechnology and nanotechnology coupled with the assistance of their



technologically advanced devices. One of the strengths of marketing is that it can be integrated into any given situation and adjust to a changing environment. In other words, marketing possess the ability to be flexible and adaptable, so as times change or as the environment change, marketing will transform itself to become part of the new situation, in this case, a changing attitude towards life and health. This is the key to understanding the new paradigm of marketing. Flexibility, adaptability, and relevancy; it is the paradigm of the general theory of marketing – a theory of everything in marketing. More will be discussed at the end of the paper.

And lastly, scientists suggest that with future advancements in biotechnology, humans will be able to bring back animals from the past by decoding their DNAs and furthermore, to create animals that never existed on earth before. This is of course amazing, but will no doubt raise questions about ethics as well as religious issues. In this case, ethical marketing will emerge as the most important tool for marketers. Whilst it is important that ethics are used to deal with the critical aspects of what is the right thing to do and what is wrong, it is also important that marketers find way for such inventions to flourish. There is no doubt that many future inventions including those mentioned here will cause concern for many people, and create divided opinions. The role of marketing is to be utilized as the fundamental tool in communicating a message or a vision, and the tool used to create communities and groups. Social marketing in particular will play a more significant role as humans are becoming more concerned about their societies, communities, and cultures. Because humans have already conquered other important aspects in life such as controlling their own aging processes and all the technologies that exist, the only issue that may still be out of control are those of the societal concerns. This is where marketing must come in and emphasize its ability to communicate, bring together communities effectively, and address the need for logic. Certainly, the Jurassic theme park or Harry Potter theme park seem like a great places to visit with such biotechnological advancements, but opinions will be divided, and whether or not certain things are accepted, will come down to how strong marketers are to influence vital decisions surrounding this.

## 8. Robots and jobs

Robotics will play a significant role in the future and replace many middle class jobs such as teaching, nurses, health care consultant, doctors, etc. In terms of seeing robots walking on the streets like Hollywood movies, this is unlikely over the next 100 years, as our most advanced robots of today

only has the intelligence of a cockroach. However, robotics and machines will change the way middle class people live as the middle class of the future will be shifted into jobs of management and those of the facilitating kinds. Certainly, there are no threats in robots and machines taking over marketing academics or practitioners' jobs, because robots will not be able to do science, nor will they have any creative capabilities. But in a future, where robots are part of everyday lives and work, many things will run more efficient and smooth. It is only obvious to suggest that the lifestyles of people in such a future will be very different – convenient being one of them. The key for marketing is that it must use its segmentation tools to understand those lifestyles, and to find ways in which positioning can be done, so that the firms can appear the way they want to in the minds of the consumers. It is hard to hypothesize the kinds of criteria that may be used, but the demographic, geographic, psychographic, and behavioral criteria will still be fundamental. However, new and more advanced segmentation systems may divide/segment customers based on their DNA codes, as DNA mapping of people will become the norm. As such, the medical doctors will have a database from which they can easily and more efficiently determine any illnesses that may occur in any individual person, and recommend treatment accordingly. In the same way, retailers will be able to look at genetic codes and find out which products and services, which food and drinks, or which clothes sizes and colors will appeal to a person the most, and tailor their marketing efforts accordingly. This is the future of marketing segmentation.

So far, we have seen the positive aspects of science and how these future inventions will feed into the way in which we should consider marketing and what emphasis marketing should be put on. In the following prediction, we look at the darker sides of the world, and view the changing role of marketing in a world dominated by global catastrophes such as wars, terrorism, poverty, climate change, natural disasters, and scarcity of resources.

## 9. Marketing in a global catastrophe – war, poverty, climate change, natural disasters, and scarcity of resources

What would people do in the wake of a global catastrophe? Some of their first concern may be to find food, water, and shelter. In which way does the knowledge of marketing help to contribute in such a situation? By using a global catastrophe as a case study, broader discussions about marketing and what it represents are presented in order to remind academics and practitioners about what marketing can do in those situations. There are implications in

understanding how marketing can be thought of in such a future. Indeed, this section reveals that marketing is an essential survival tool that is required for the survival of our species in the event of a global catastrophe caused by wars, terrorism, poverty, climate change, natural disasters, or scarcity of resources.

In a situation of chaos, the strength of marketing lies in its ability to create structure and order with logic, and to communicate this idea to the larger community. As mentioned earlier, the marketing planning process, consisting of analysis, planning, implementation, and control will be vital in any situation of disorder. The focus of any chaotic situation is to create order. This can be achieved with the structured thinking behind the marketing planning process. If there are natural disasters, the first step will be to critically analyze the dangers and people's needs before creating the essential plan. Once the plan is approved, the implementation starts, however, realizing the uncertainty in the changing environment of a disaster zone, control must be carried out consecutively, feeding back into the implementation procedures. Throughout this process, the marketer will need the ability to communicate and convince their vision effectively, so that everyone can come together and work as a community. Therein lie the strengths of marketing.

Commonly, marketing has been compared to war strategies, and there are many benefits in educating marketing to the public in order to make the layperson understand these strategies, so that they can take action in a situation of war. In marketing, understanding the environment, the competition, and oneself are vital in order to successfully engage in the world of business. In war, understanding the terrain, the enemies, and oneself are essential to successfully win a war. Applying the same thinking, in a global disaster or warzone, marketing can provide the tools to analyze and understand vital information to successfully survive and win. Thus, marketing strategy will play an essential survival tool in a war, not only for the military, but also for the commoners.

In a world that is becoming increasingly scarce in its resources, one day, we might find that the future we dreamt of for all these years would no longer be possible as resources such as oil or natural elements have run out. In those situations, marketing is a necessary tool that should be used to downgrade people's life standards and to bring equality and fairness, so that everyone will be treated just. In a declining world, marketing is the core ideology that can provide fundamental structures, and create something out of nothing. It will assist in the planning processes to create a new vision for a new world, and eventually,

attain a sense of acceptance amongst people. Marketing, again, cannot be limited to focusing on customer needs, but rather, must be seen as a larger influence on philosophies, ideologies, societies, markets, and cultures – a true theory of everything.

## **10. Marketing in a Type 1 Civilization – sustainable energy and flying cars**

In the last prediction about the future of marketing, this paper turns to the most ambitious prediction from science thus far. Scientists suggest that everything that is happening around the world today is a pre-stage to the next logical evolutionary phase of human kind. Everything we experience in today's world including democracy, economies, trade federations, etc. are in fact precursors to something that is mentioned as a Type 1 Civilization. In a Type 1 Civilization, humans will have mastered the energies of the Earth, which means that we will have achieved the mastery of the resources of our home planet. In such a civilization, there is a global government, countries are multi-cultural, wars have ceased to exist, and people live in peace with one another. With a global community that is in peace, fully connected, and has infinite energy resources at its disposal, a different culture will emerge, and it is the marketers' job to foresee what development we are moving towards. Marketing Futurists will be common and act as advisors for scientists, politicians, and leaders. Regardless of the new cultures, it is important to remember that marketing at its most fundamental level will always exist, as if it was the sixth dimension. That is, marketing provides a way of human communication that is expressed with logic and perfectly structured. It is the concept of exchange between people. And just as important as a scientist, a doctor, or an engineer, a marketer is essential in a team of survival of our species. Marketers bring creativity, logic, structure, flexibility, adaptability, and knowledge. It is, therefore, possible to suggest that marketing serves a bigger purpose, and that purpose is to ask why, how, what, and when. These are the questions that are necessary to ask in the processes required to analyze, plan, implement, and control. Marketing is thinking. In fact, it would be in the theme of this article to suggest that: 'marketing exists, therefore I am'. Thus, marketing is prediction – the ability to foresee trends, therefore, marketing is progress – a vital trait for human survival.

However, it is uncertain whether mankind in the future will be as responsible and wise as we would prefer it. Having all the greatest technologies to improve life and prolong life, do not necessarily mean that people will be more intelligent or wise. Perhaps people will be more reckless knowing that they can

simply replace organs and tissues. Perhaps more alcohol related problems will arise, or even increased social misbehavior now that everything seemingly has no risk and everything seems 'safer'. In such a future, the role of marketing may be a dark side and a dark force that is used as a tool to manipulate, cheat, lie, deceive, and as a tool to gain control over the people. This is a dangerous concept within marketing, but clearly, a part of marketing. The future of marketing and its wisdom lie within people's knowledge to manage and control it. Marketing in a way, can go any way it likes similar to the uncertainty of the forces of nature.

## Conclusion

It has been clear that marketing futures are not just confined to business, advertising, promotion, customer relations, etc. Marketing is much more important than simply being a tool, but rather an ideology or applied philosophy to the society, business, economy, and life. Over the past decades, scholars have contemplated on what the future of marketing is. In this paper, many ideas have been put forward, suggesting a new paradigm in marketing. This paradigm includes convenience marketing, social relationship

marketing, touch point marketing, marketing as a way to create structured thinking, marketing as a tool to predict/foresee trends, etc. In summary, marketing should be seen as a combination of adaptability and flexibility; an entity that has a life, which in itself is a strange thing to put forward. But having reviewed the future of marketing, it seems as if marketing can be anything, and it is present where people are present, like a sixth dimension. Marketing is a force that has a light side and a dark side. An omnipresent power drives and directs human kind towards something. The aim of this conceptual paper has been to hypothesize what marketing is evolving to. Presumably, what it has concluded is that marketing is everything, so the word itself should not be able to conceptualize its full meaning.

Nevertheless, it has been evident that in the future, marketing will be a necessary skill for everyone. Whether it is for learning how to build relationships, or learning how to manage information, or to know how to create a fairer and more just society, marketing transcends all of these very meaningful subjects. As Einstein may have wanted to put it: 'This is the true theory of everything in marketing'. But then again, Einstein was not a marketer, or was he?

## References

1. Anderson, J.L., Markides, C., and Kupp, M. (2010). "The Last Frontier: Market Creation in Conflict Zones, Deep Rural Areas, and Urban Slums", *California Management Review*, Vol. 52, Issue 4, pp. 6-28.
2. Breazeal, C. (2011). "Kismet" <http://www.ai.mit.edu/projects/humanoid-robotics-group/kismet/kismet.html>.
3. Brown, S. (1993). "Postmodern Marketing?" *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 27 (4), pp. 19-34.
4. Denegri-Knott, J. and Molesworth, M. (2010). "Concepts and practices of digital virtual consumption", *Consumption, Markets & Culture*, Vol. 13 (2), pp 109-132.
5. Gray, R. (2011). "Minority report-style advertising billboards to target consumers", The Telegraph, 01 August 2011, Telegraph Media Group Limited.
6. Gu, F.F., Hung, K., and Tse, D.K. (2008). "When Does Guanxi Matter? Issues of Capitalization and Its Dark Sides", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 72 (4), pp. 12-28.
7. Helson, H. (1948). "Adaptation-level as a basis for quantitative theory of frames of reference", *Psychological Review*, 55, pp. 297-313.
8. Kaku, M. (2011). "This Is Your Future", <http://www.newsweek.com/2011/03/13/this-is-your-future.html#>, March 13, 2011.
9. Kaku, M. (2011). "Physics of the Future: How Science Will Shape Human Destiny and Our Daily Lives by the Year 2100", Doubleday.
10. Kaku, M. (2011). "Take a test drive through the next 100 years: Michio previews innovations from now to 2100 in Physics of the Future", [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/42137896/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-innovation/t/take-test-drive-through-next-years/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/42137896/ns/technology_and_science-innovation/t/take-test-drive-through-next-years/), updated 3/19/2011.
11. Kardashev, N. (1964). "Transmission of Information by Extraterrestrial Civilizations", *Soviet Astronomy*, 8, p. 217.
12. Khan, A. (2011). "Let's get physics-al: Computing will continue to evolve into the future", Interview with Michio Kaku, <http://www.physorg.com/news/2011-06-physics-al-evolve-future.html>, June 14, 2011.
13. Kitchen, P.J. (2003). *The Future of Marketing: Critical 21<sup>st</sup> Century Perspectives*, Palgrave-Macmillan, Basingstoke.
14. Lingley, A.R., Ali, M., Liao, Y., Mirjalili, R., Klonner, M., Sapanen, M., Suihkonen, S., Shen, T., Otis, B.P., Lipsanen, H., and Parviz, B.A. (2011). "A Single-Pixel Wireless Contact Lens Display", *Journal of Micromechanics and Microengineering*, Vol. 21 (12).
15. Melton, D. (2011). "Say what, Doc? Is Biomedical Research Really Close to Curing Anything? Floating University Lecture, Harvard Stem Cell Institute, November 2011, <http://www.floatinguniversity.com/lectures-melton>.
16. Nguyen, B. (2012). "Can make themselves more likeable", *Journal of Brand Management*, forthcoming.
17. O'Doherty, J.E., Hanson, T.L., Lebedev, M.A., Henriquez, C.S., Nicolelis, M.A.L. (2011). "A brain-machine interface instructed by direct intracortical microstimulation", *Front. Integr. Neurosci.*, 3, pp. 1-10.

18. Park, H. and Lee, H. (2011). "Human Voice in Social Media Helps Build Customer Relationships, Positive WOM", *International Public Relations Research Conference*, <http://www.marketingprofs.com/charts/2011/5130/human-voice-in-social-media-helps-build-customer-relationships-positive-wom#ixzz1Ptv9UGFb>.
19. Parviz, B.A. (2009). "Contact lenses with circuits, lights a possible platform for superhuman vision", <http://www.physorg.com/news119797260.html>, January 17, 2008.
20. Parviz, B.A. (2009). "Augmented Reality in a Contact Lens: A new generation of contact lenses built with very small circuits and LEDs promises bionic eyesight", <http://spectrum.ieee.org/biomedical/bionics/augmented-reality-in-a-contact-lens/0>, September 2009.
21. Renvoisé, P. (2005). *Neuromarketing: Is There a 'Buy Button' in the Brain? Selling to the Old Brain for Instant Success*, SalesBrain Publishing.
22. Sample, I. (2011). "Monkeys use mind control to move a virtual arm and experience touch", *The Guardian*, October 5, 2011, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2011/oct/05/monkeys-mind-control-virtual-arm>.
23. Scammon, Debra L. and Zinkhan, George M. (1992). "The Battle for Your Mind/Marketing Warfare/Bottom-Up Marketing", *Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 56 (1), pp. 122-125.
24. Shen, W.M. (2009). Invited presentation at the 7th Robotics workshop at the US Army REDCOM/TARDEC Joint Center for Robotics, 12/11/2009.
25. Stauth, S.A. and Parviz, B.A. (2006). "Self-Assembled Single-Crystal Silicon Circuits on Plastic", in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, September 19, 2006.
26. Willis, T. (2011). "Lobbying as a Marketing Activity", <http://bigthink.com/ideas/38863>, June 13, 2011.