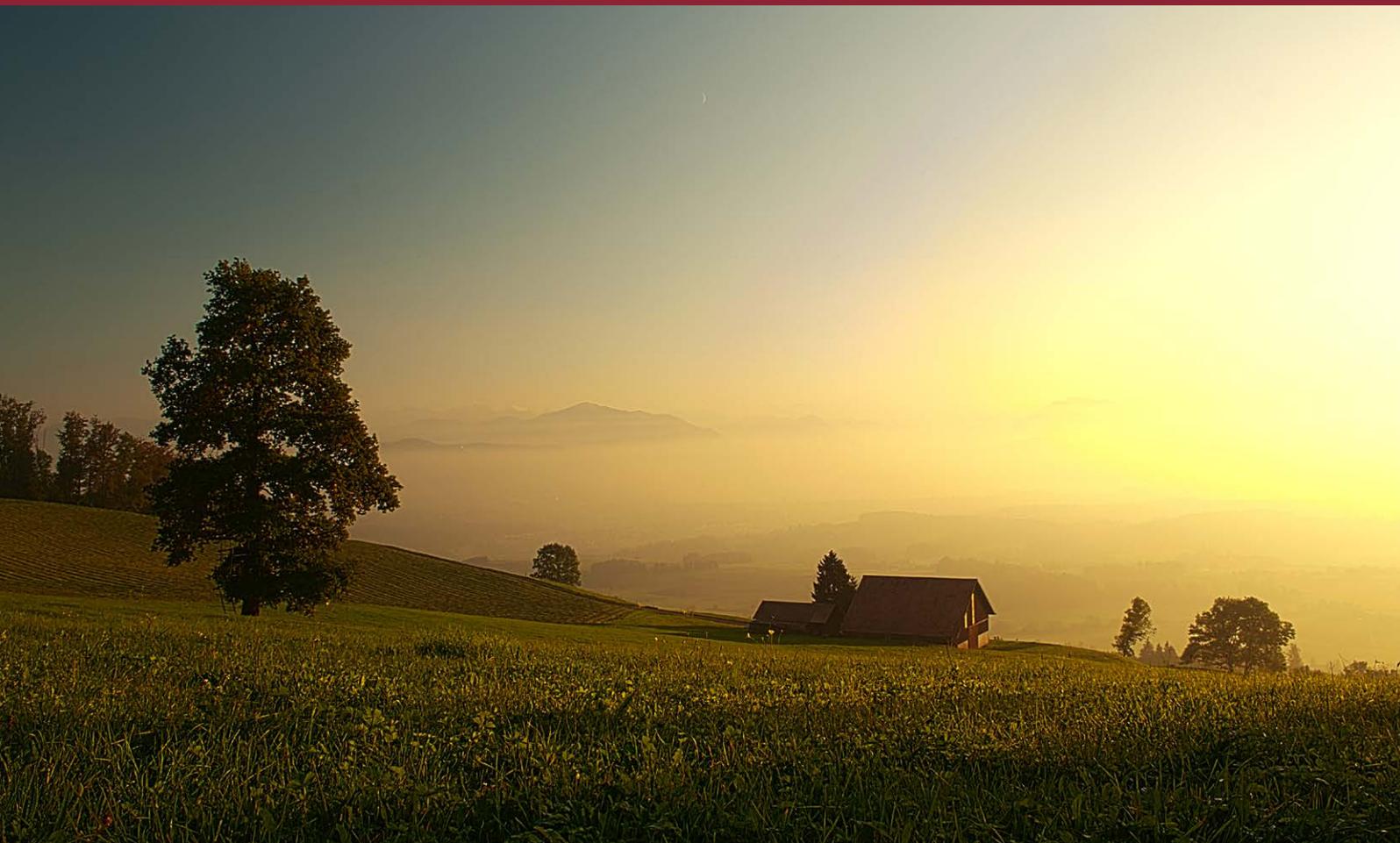


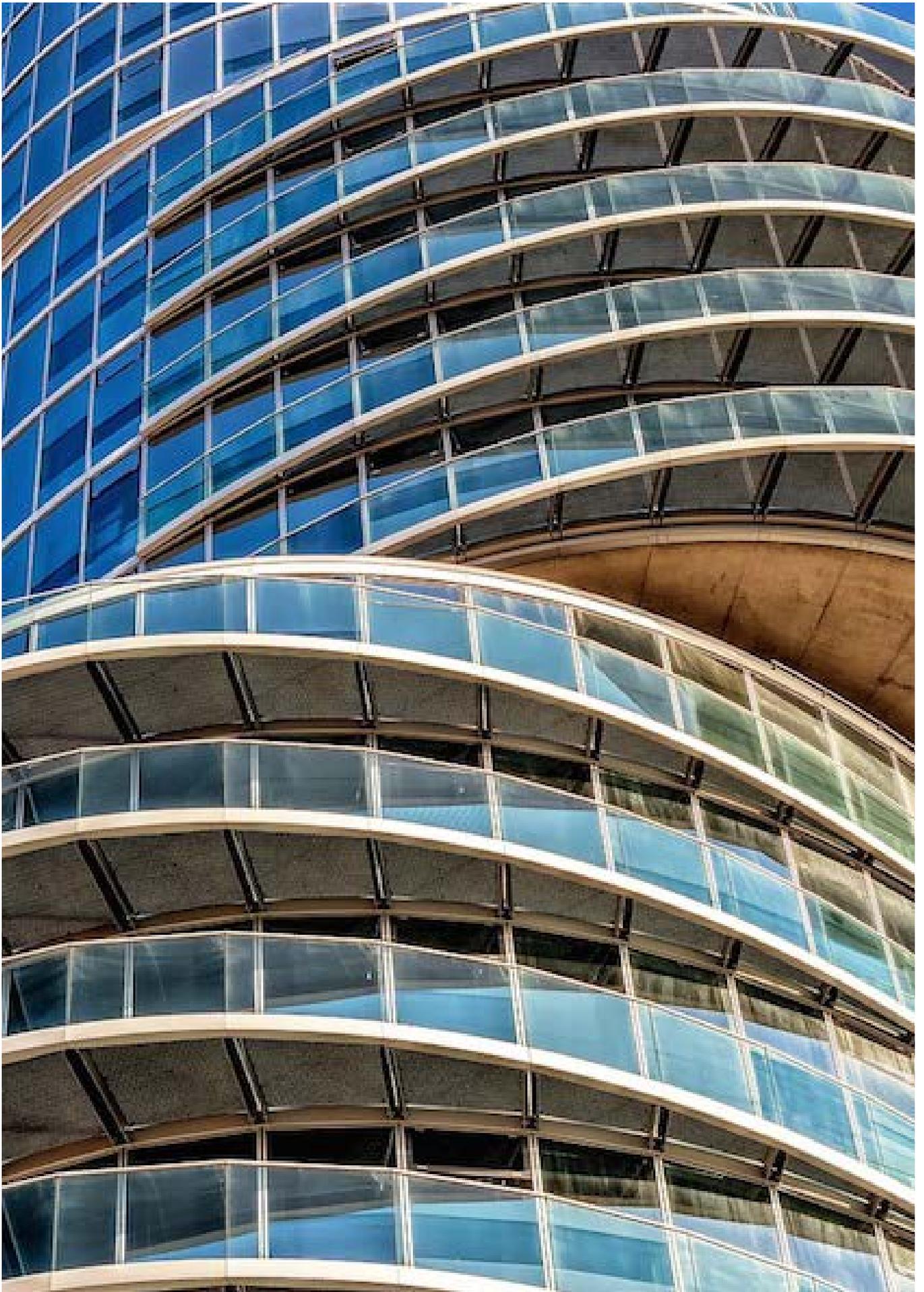
# THE FUTURE OF INNOVATIVE MARKETING

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ba<sup>tm</sup>

REFLECTIONS ON WHERE TO FOCUS THE MIND  
WHEN THINKING AHEAD.





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# DIAGNOSIS FOR PROGNOSIS

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Forward thinking and being ahead of time requires both a grounding in the present and an unwavering vision for the future. However, it's not just about getting ahead - it's about staying there and it doesn't come easy. As the Nobel laureate, Dr. Daniel Kahneman wisely advised<sup>1</sup>, "long-term decisions need to be made with slow thinking". The ability to take the time, understand relationships and interdependencies in the context of the general underlying structures, helps to better grasp and predict long term opportunities. With improved clarity comes the great benefit of aligning the flurry of short-term tactics and maneuverability with a long-term strategy.

A shared long-term vision encourages minds to think alike. Anchoring a vision in the future may not necessarily reduce entrepreneurial risk per se, but it does promote clarity and, hence, helps reduce the mind's gamble regarding what's ahead; it's a well-known approach to boost alignment and confidence of stakeholders (from staff to investors), speed up decision making and optimize operational efficiencies.

Long-term diagnosis is one of the best ways for long-term prognosis. The long-term prognosis question, of course, is one of orientation. What drives our industry, where are we heading and how will we remain relevant in the future?

“ Lots of companies don't succeed over time. What do they fundamentally do wrong? They usually miss the future. ”

LARRY PAGE  
CO-FOUNDER OF GOOGLE

# LONG-LONG-TERM CUSTOMERS

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Approximately 200 years ago, the average lifespan was around 30 years. Fast-forward to today and it has more than doubled to just over 70 years (as a global average).<sup>2</sup> In short: we live longer, healthier, happier lives and, as consequence, witness more events and phenomena in one lifetime than any generation before us. Future generations will likely live twice as long we do and experience even more throughout their journeys in life. They will live to be much wiser, as they will be around long enough to recognize life's patterns. The signs and signals of this are already here today. For example, Altos Labs, funded by two tycoons Jeff Bezos and Yuri Milner, is where scientists are working on the solution for eternal youth.<sup>3</sup> There is no doubt that this factor of 'a longer life' will have an impact on brand building. Unless you plan to live in the now only, think long-long ahead when it comes to customer value. The value of long-term relationships, brand loyalty and corresponding brand equity will only grow if correctly implemented.

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<sup>1</sup> Kahneman, Daniel. Thinking, Fast and Slow. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Life expectancy by world region, from 1770 to 2018, UN Population Division 2019

<sup>3</sup> Regalado, Antonio. "Meet Altos Labs, Silicon Valley's LATEST WILD Bet on Living Forever." MIT Technology Review, MIT Technology Review, 6 Sept. 2021

# CULTURAL SIGNS FROM THE FUTURE

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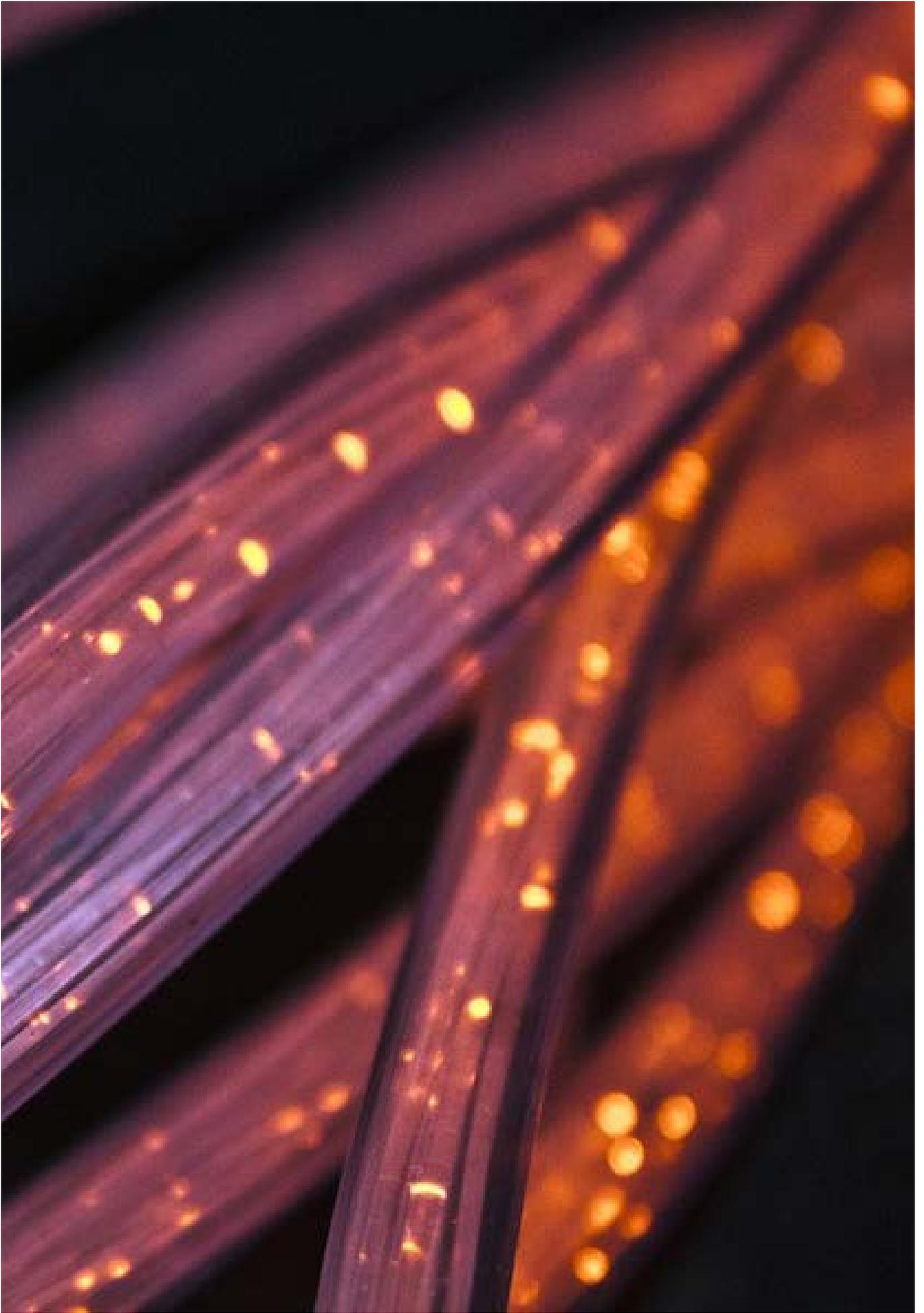
In 1865 Jules Verne wrote *From the Earth to the Moon*. What was total fiction back then turned out to be an indication of where the world was headed. He then wrote *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* in 1870, the source of inspiration for the inventor of the submarine. Verne then went on to envision the helicopter in *Nautilus*. Clearly, such fictional stories and their heroes have spurred creativity and inventiveness in the great minds of our times. Take Martin Cooper, the director of research and development at Motorola, for example. He credited the *Star Trek* communicator for the design of the first mobile phone in the early 1970s. “That was not fantasy to us,” Cooper said, “that was an objective.”<sup>4</sup> So, what’s fantasy and imagination for some becomes an actual road map for others.

“Any sufficiently advanced technology is equivalent to magic.”

SIR ARTHUR C. CLARKE  
BRITISH AUTHOR, FUTUROLOGIST  
AND SCIENCE WRITER

Google glass reminds us of the Terminator who could immediately create a profile of the person he just met. Space travel, which has been the main subject of several sci-fi films, is becoming a branch of today’s tourism industry. Numerous other visionary authors, including H.G. Wells, Aldous Huxley and Isaac Asimov, foresaw the inventions of our modern world. The astonishing and fascinating side of this continuing pattern is that these authors illustrated such future scientific advances in meticulous detail using the limited language of the times in which they lived. It is certainly a sound argument to say that stories authored by visionaries often pre-paint the future.

Yet the rational R&D driven world of today refuses to take the word ‘impossible’ seriously. For instance, the notion of time travel, specifically travelling to the future faster than others, was inconceivable. Now it can be explained through quantum science.<sup>5</sup> According to the Pentagon, by 2045 people will be able communicate using neural activity alone. This means that what we consider as magic today will become the norm of tomorrow. Think about the coming Metaverse and its implications - how about watching *Ready Player One* (2018) or *Free Guy* (2021) to get both inspiration and entertainment?



# SOMEONE'S NOW IS YOUR FUTURE

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The Hungarian-American physicist Edward Teller famously said, “Today’s science is tomorrow’s technology.” We marvel at the use of technology (just think of using your smartphone), yet we tend to forget that it’s technology that follows science. And yet no matter how much people associate technology with science, the two are very different fields. Scientific research is much more long-term and deeper than today’s technology: Formula 1 is ahead of the high-end supercars; Academia is ahead of commerce; Secret service agencies are ahead of embassies; Many diplomats are ahead of the politicians. In other words, what some call ‘the future’ is already a practical reality today for others. Many of the industries, spheres, institutions, and disciplines that are behind will eventually follow the lead and learn from those that are ahead. This will affect marketing in commercial, technological, and sociological ways.

“The future is already here – it’s just not evenly distributed.”

WILLIAM GIBSON

William Gibson’s point is directly relevant here. What’s ordinary for the luxury industry is extraordinary for the non-luxury industry. Many luxury objects trickle down from the top of the range (think halo products) over time, eventually becoming ordinary and accessible for the non-luxury industries too. For example, many centuries ago, books were once considered scarce objects reserved for the upper class in society only. Automobiles and cell phones were once a luxury only for the select few. Now they are everywhere. The fantastic UFOs of yesterday are the autonomous drones of today, being used in agriculture, delivery services, and much more. As the behavioral economist Prof. Ludwig von Mises put it, “Innovation is the whim of an elite before it becomes a need of the public.” Therefore, the future is not ahead, it is above. What is your point of reference?

# RADICAL TRANSPARENCY

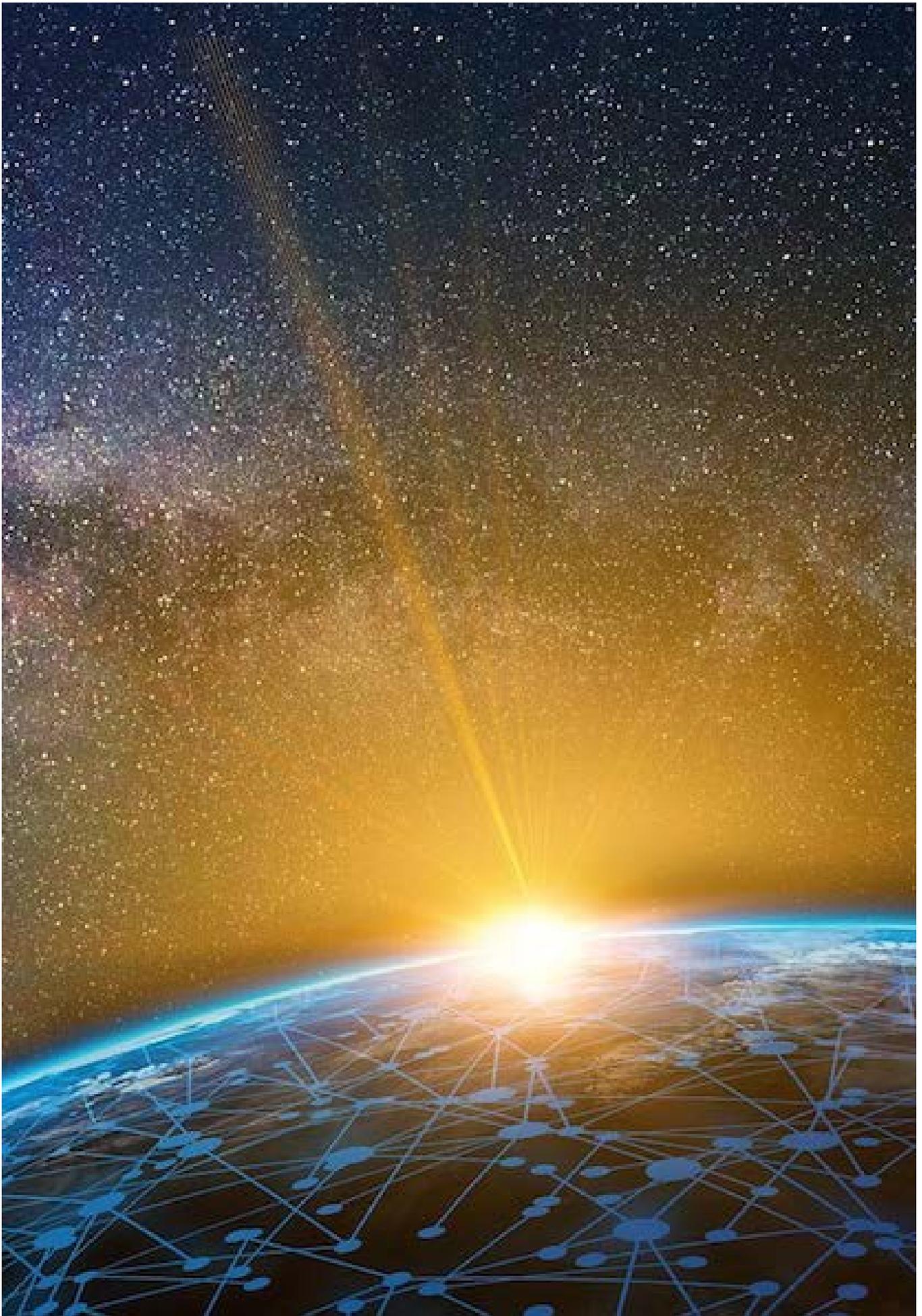
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Today's consumers, and those of the future, will no longer trust corporate messaging in the way they used to. They turn elsewhere to learn the truth, searching instantly online to find out if a product has quality issues or if a company has been exposed for undesirable behavior. You can shut down TV programs or censor print media, but online media is filled with people operating as independent, investigative journalists armed with smartphones – they are unstoppable in both speed and scale.

Connectivity and transparency have left companies and their brands no choice but to take full responsibility for their oil spills, child labor, mistreatment of animals and so on. There will be more information, but also new sources of information. Consequently, both large and small corporations must be conscious of the fact that increased connectivity and speed will not only make transparency more relevant than ever, but it will also intensify interdependence. Genuine transparency in business will become the macro-theme of future commerce. Already today, consumers can pull their phones out of their pockets and with a few taps compare not just prices and service quality, but also brand reputation. They can check if companies are paying employees enough or if their supply chains are sustainable. The fundamentals of trade have begun to move beyond monetary transactions. Radical transparency in value chains will play an important role in the future of marketing. How ready are you?

“ Realize that everything connects to everything else. ”

LEONARDO DA VINCI



# CONNECTED OMNI-INTEGRATION

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Raising the quantity of connections doesn't proportionally raise the quality of connections. Where does the opportunity lie in a world where the speed, the quantity and intensity of connectivity keeps expanding exponentially? Connection quality is what will determine real value in the future. New economies of quality will become part of a larger cultural shift towards an inner paradigm of authenticity, meaning and sincerity as an antidote to the twentieth century phenomenon of mass-producing more of the same. It is not about how many connections one has, but rather how the quality of those connections interrelates. Similarly, it is not about the number of brand associations that exist in the minds of consumers, but the quality of those associations. Creating value, then, requires maximizing the quality (not quantity) of messages to build stronger bridges between brands and individuals.

More people will be connected to more information, and the Internet of Things (IoT) will begin to connect things to all other things. The well-connected fridge knows what products you are running out of, or what will soon expire, transferring this data anonymously to your choice of supermarket and triggering a delivery for you.

Nevertheless, connectedness is progressively going beyond the 'net' and reaching deeper than a mere exchange of information. In a world that is becoming increasingly digitized, the value of physical connections will become crucial. The right kind of qualitative omni-integration will be key for the innovative marketers in the future. This will be true even more when the real, physical world will start to converge with digital layers (think augmented reality and metaverse).

# RELEVANCY AND PERSONALIZATION

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Personalized technology (and the ensuing data, in any shape or form) will be THE disrupting force in marketing. As it drives and empowers the consumer, it influences (purchase) behavior, channels of choice and budgets. An exponentially growing tendency in the world of commerce is to blend advanced media technologies with customer-centricity. Billions of dollars are being invested in consumer behavioral research, including big data and analytics, in-depth studies of the unconscious (neuroscience, psychoanalysis, behavioral economics, etc.), psychographics and so on. All of which will have critical implications for the future of marketing. The direction in which the why question within consumer research is headed is leading us to a peculiar stage in the brand–client relationship. The consumer has more choice than ever, and the brand wants to know more than anything who the consumer is and what they really want. More importantly, brands want to know why the consumer prefers their brand or product to their competitors. In many ways, it is about predicting what consumers want before they know they want it - offering them something better than anything they could ever wish for.

The future role of innovative marketing will be similar to the role of the Blue Genie from oriental folklore. All the Genie cares about is being your best friend and he is dying to figure out what it is he could do for you to make that happen. However, it is not that your wish is his command. Customer-centricity is not just about serving, glorifying or loving the consumer. It is about creating meaningful bonds by crafting a product or experience that exceeds expectations and generates advocacy, lasting impressions, and loyalty. It is about the right product or service for the right person at the right time.

In Google’s case, the Blue Genie effect occurs when the search engine pre-recognizes what you are searching for and provides top results fulfilling your wishes before you’ve made them. Google’s reason for being? To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.

Understanding and adopting truly customer-centric approaches to value creation will result in better products, services, experiences and humanize touch points between brands and consumers, rubbing the lamp to finally embellish what is within. Being stuck inside the lamp for thousands of years gave the Genie a crick in the neck. The time has come to let it out.

# FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Stewart Wallis from the New Economics Foundation so aptly stated that, “History tells us that a value shift is triggered by creation of a new story about how we want to live.” A bigger marketing budget will not necessarily lead to an increase in brand value. The real opportunity lies in mastering the ability to be distinctive, authentic, and transparent in everything you do. If you haven’t already done so, start by investing time, energy and capital in purpose and the ensuing culture if you are serious about investing in the future. Why? Key factors that will shape the future of innovative marketing are not in technology (think of it as an enabler, not as a differentiator) but are rooted in creativity, humanity, and connectivity.

“The most exciting breakthroughs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will not occur because of technology, but because of an expanded concept of what it means to be human.”

**JOHN NAISBITT**  
FUTUROLOGIST AND AUTHOR

When complexity increases, so does the yearning for simplification and meaning. On a fundamental level, it will not be about technological progress in and of itself. More likely, it will depend on the purpose of the world’s inventors in developing the next wave of technological means to foster progress, acting as a catalyst for positive change.

One of the key challenges today is, as formulated by Dr. Clotaire Rapaille “to bridge the gap between technological time and sociological time and, in doing so, accomplish the objective of connecting future leaders. They would have literally experienced the future together, and ‘graduated’ from the future, setting them up to lead the rest of us there.”<sup>6</sup>

Leaders will increasingly use tools such as the [\*Guiding Purpose Strategy \(GPS\)\*](#) to change the world for the better using their inner Know-Why to help them shape better futures.

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<sup>6</sup> Rapaille, Clotaire. *The Global Code How a New Culture of Universal Values Is Reshaping Business and Marketing*. St. Martin’s Press, 2015.

Markus Kramer is Managing Partner at Brand Affairs, a consultancy specializing in pinpoint brand positioning and visibility. He advises boards, executives and operational teams on all aspects of purpose, strategic positioning, reputation and brand Management. The brands Markus works with include Harley-Davidson, Aston Martin, Ferrari, DHL, Luxury Goods, Financial Services Firms, Technology Brands, Governments, NGOs, Startups and many more. Markus is a Visiting Professor in Strategic Brand Management at Bayes Business School (formerly Cass) London and holds degrees from the University of California (USA), Oxford (UK), MIT (USA). He is the author of The Guiding Purpose Strategy© and runs The Brand Marketing Booster™ program.



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