

**The solution
begins with**

Towards a collaborative
society and economy

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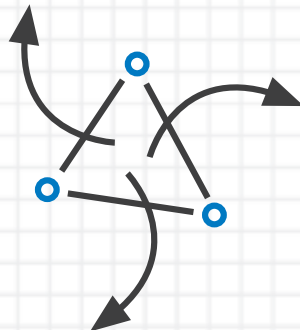
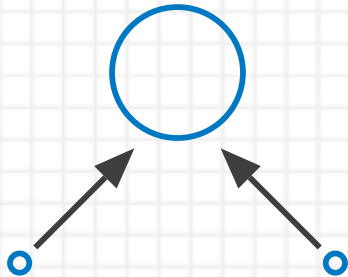
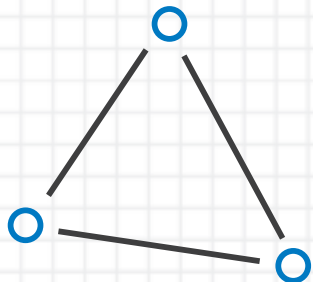
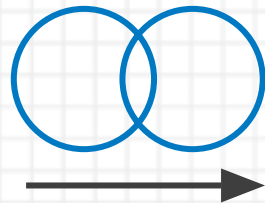
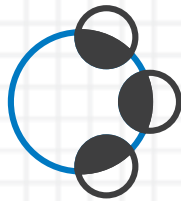
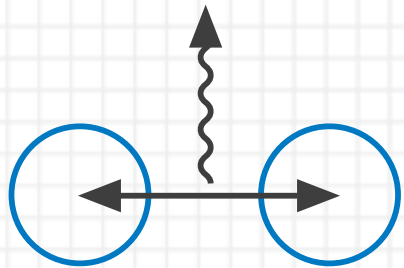
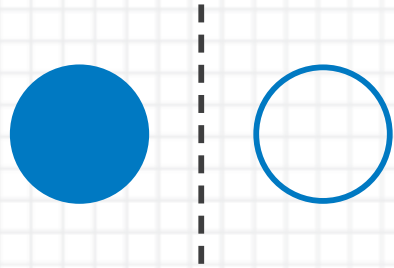
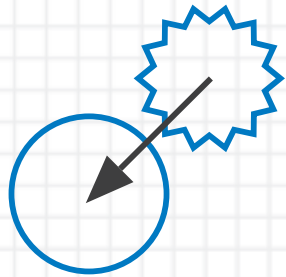
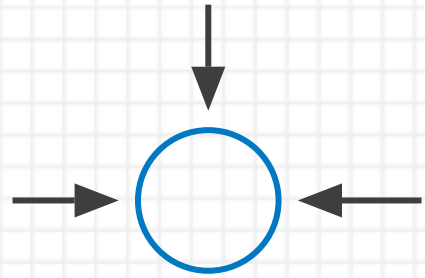
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The solution begins with **CO-**

**Towards a collaborative
society and economy**

Alfons Cornella





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CO-

Introduction: book summary

1

I am writing this introduction in mid-flight while returning from a trip to Canada, where I travelled to explain **our co-society project** (www.co-society.com), as I have done in other parts of the world. It is a seemingly naive adventure that is finding echoes wherever we travel. Because, somewhat sick as we are of an economy that for years has been hostage to the greed of a few, a growing number of global professionals want to return to the origins of what a company really is: people driven by a goal primarily seeking to provide value to others. And they must collaborate together to do so, both inside and outside their organization.

Co-society aims to create conditions so that a company's most intelligent teams can find intersections with those in others, although not accidentally, as is common, but *systematically*. Based on the conviction that the way to generate "economic power" in the coming years will consist of mixing teams, combining their invisible assets, their skills and knowledge, based on a legitimate commitment to collaboration in order to explore and exploit new ways of creating value for people.

the future is **co-**

2

The co-society project arose in 2009 as a result of our work providing innovation services to companies for over ten years. During this time, we had been encountering an increasingly greater number of innovation examples undertaken by company “couples”. Two (or more) companies combining their capabilities (their skills, their brands, their dreams) to launch something different onto the market with the aim of providing new value.

The case pattern we observed in this sense was truly remarkable. The business world is becoming an increasingly “co-” world: collaborative, cooperative, co-creative, co-designed, co-responsible. It is perhaps **an emergent phenomenon**, invisible to those who do not want to see it, yet revealing new ways to convert resources into reality, and into results.

3

One of the obvious reasons why collaboration exists between companies is because there has always been “more outside than inside”. Whatever a company does and whatever a company knows, the knowledge available to it in the outside world is always greater than its own knowledge. **A company cannot know everything**, nor can an individual: being a new Goethe is no longer feasible.

Moreover, the solution to increasingly complex problems today requires greater peripheral vision. Ways of seeing, ways of solving and ways of convincing must be combined. The endogamy of organizations has to be overcome because it stifles the creativity required when it comes to extracting the potential of science and technology to (first) detect and (second) program natural phenomena, thus serving to solve human problems. Companies must, therefore, combine their knowledge in order to prosper.

4

The world is more *complex*, and we must work together for a *solution*. But from what we know today of collaboration, it seems to be a difficult task if there is no *trust* between each side. Collaboration demands trust. And trust is frequently the result of the *generosity* from each side. But this is where one of the problems emerges for those who have to struggle with a potential “co-” economy: **almost the entire theoretical/practical structure that we have in business management is based on the discourse of competition, not collaboration.** Businesses compete; people perhaps collaborate.

Collaboration may be normal in our lives outside organizations, but it does not seem to be the case during our working lives. To speak of generosity in a world that is indeed even dominated by military jargon (strategy, fight, win, defeat, etc) may easily be dismissed as organizational infantilism. Therefore, a “co-” economy agenda begins by learning from companies that have converted collaboration into results. It is difficult at this stage to develop short-term theoretical models: we need a few decades (perhaps even a generation) to lay the foundations of a solid discourse about the economy of collaboration.

**The world's complexity
requires collaboration
built on the trust
arising from generosity**

5

The interest in collaboration goes beyond strictly the business world. Architects work to design spaces that increase the potential for individuals to socialize, developing their creativity in an environment of free thought. Scientific centers have appeared such as the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology in Japan, especially designed so that its various teams can share laboratories and resources without the usual departmental boundaries. It is a space to think freely, creatively and collaboratively.

On the other hand, perhaps where the increasing relevance of collaboration can be best seen is in the relationship between people, in their most personal spaces. Sharing is not only sexy, it has also become essential for young people, as well as for a middle class that is becoming impoverished in a world where simply living has become very expensive. **The business world would do well to learn how people collaborate in these spaces, which are far removed from its usual experience.**



**A generation
of restless people
sharing to
win**

×

**The Infonomia community:
transformative minds
willing to collaborate**

6

Technologies facilitating collaboration are constantly appearing. The most obvious example is the mobile phone, and more specifically the world of applications that it has uncovered. The combination of the (programming) skills of people and increasingly more open data flows will continue to surprise us in the coming years. The ease with which people scattered throughout the world can collaborate together, thanks to technology, to develop prototypes in record times will change the world.

In particular, it will facilitate **the emergence of an economy based on talented individuals connecting together to design and produce a network:** a world of freelancers capable of doing what once required complex organizations, with their accompanying high transaction costs.



**Multiply people collaborating
and you will obtain value**

StartupBus: three days, 60 technicians,
one developed prototype

©Adrianne Jeffries

7

It is essential to understand how networks function in order to exploit their economic potential. Recent research has shown, for example, that all kinds of complex networks (biological, social or electronic) have certain critical points (nodes) whose handling helps to control the entire network. **The entire network's complexity thereby appears as something manageable and guidable to achieve any expected results.** Sophisticated algorithms that will enable us to influence, at our will, living, technological and social systems alike.

A world in which we will perhaps be more concerned about the “collaboration” between humans and machines, rather than between humans, and especially humans and robots.

8

The theory of evolution is frequently interpreted carte blanche as the idea of competition: the survival of the fittest. Schumpeter's model of creative destruction seems to have inherited a similar aspect: many companies disappear during business cycles, their models exhausted, to make way for a new generation of more “innovative” companies. But **the most modern readings of evolutionary models place unique emphasis on collaboration.** Thus, the idea is to add a third principle, linked to collaboration within a species, to the two fundamental principles, that of random mutation and natural selection.

The evolution biologist Elisabet Sahtouris rightly claims: *“In the juvenile stage all species are competitive and creative. They then move on to maturity, a stage in which they realize that cooperation is more efficient in terms of energy. And history continues: for 100,000 years humans lived tribally, became cooperative in local systems and then grew and formed cities, arriving at empires that competed in their juvenile phase”* (La Vanguardia, 14/11/2011). The maturity of the capitalist system leads us to view collaboration as the force for progress in the future.

9

The success of humans is based on having collaborated. Even with people we did not know. It is something natural to our species, even if we believe that selfishness rules us. We have survived because we have collaborated. And although it would be normal to think otherwise, it is my belief that the same thing will happen with companies.

But we do not possess the knowledge, tools or methods to do this. **We still do not know how to systematically create conditions to generate trust between organizations.** So that they can serve us in identifying and connecting their “invisible assets”, thus creating new value (in my opinion, the economic energy of the future will arise from defining “blue oceans” based on multiplying invisible assets: what an organization knows what to do *versus* what it does today).

10

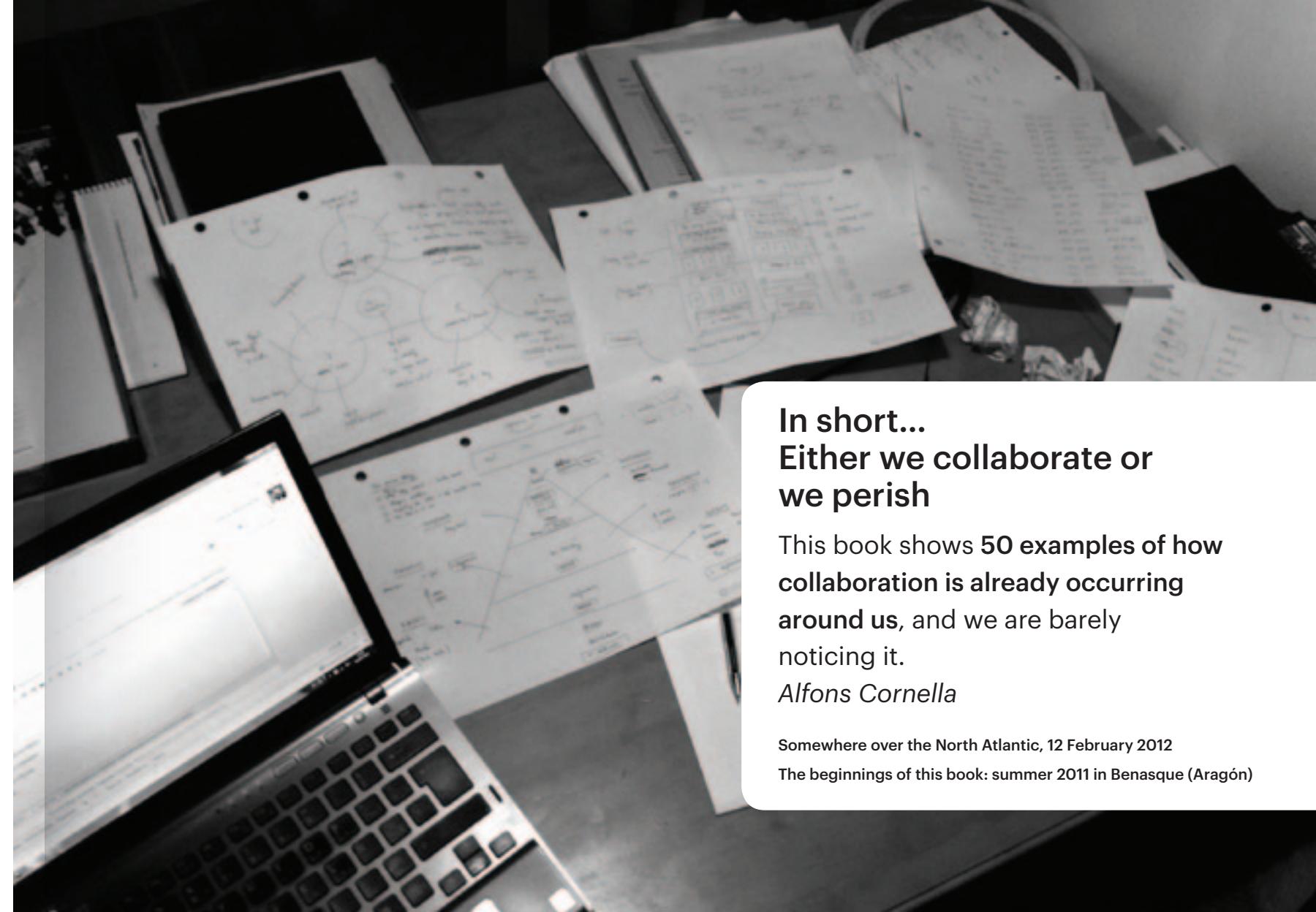
We cannot continue with a selfish discourse: seeking the good of the individual versus that of the group. Perhaps even Adam Smith would have amended his ideas if he had observed that the planet’s natural resources are not inexhaustible, and that we are all on a starship that must live with and from what it has. And although there is growing evidence that we are moving towards a more collaborative economy and society, it may be that ultimately our emotional system, which clearly dominates our rational, leads us to believe that this time we can also apply the phrase of “every man for himself”.

We can sadly see this in the way that European countries are reluctant to understand that there must be *one* Europe in order to survive. We must understand that we are at the beginning of a cycle of maturity in terms of economic and social evolution that requires new models, theories, tools and policies.

Wanting to collaborate was before a sign of good education; now it is perhaps a question of good economics, and social wellbeing.

Co-society: a project that hopes to transform

The project's epic nature: to dream that this cover will one day be reality



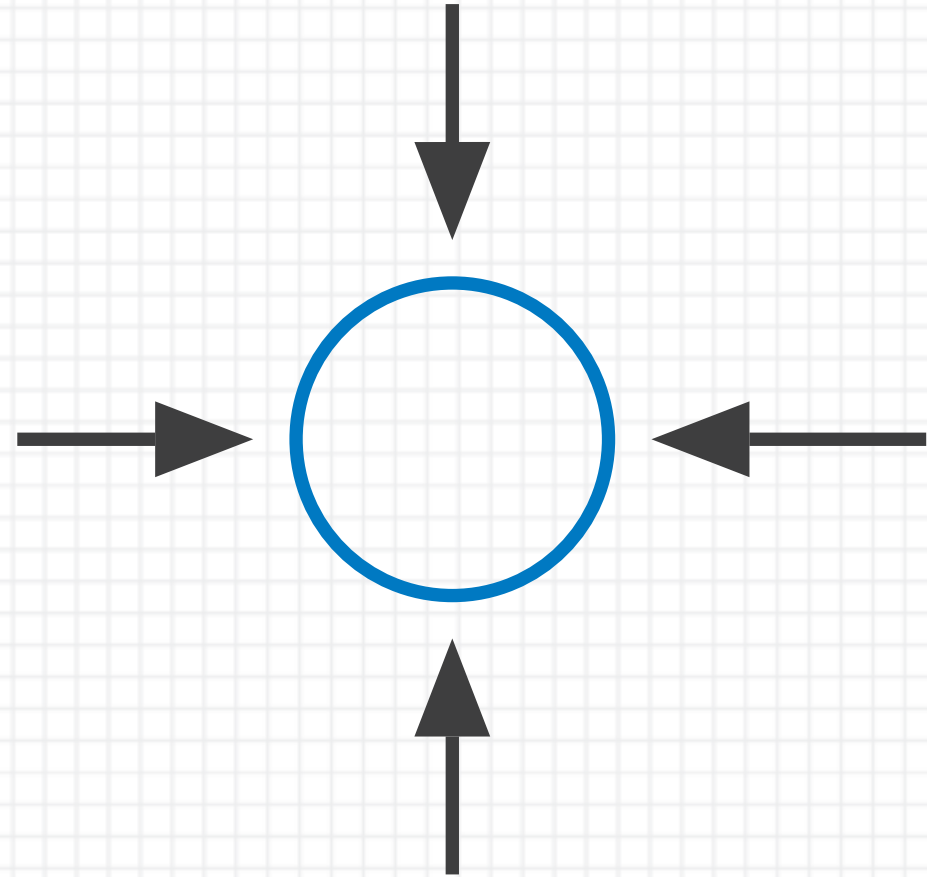
In short... Either we collaborate or we perish

This book shows 50 examples of how collaboration is already occurring around us, and we are barely noticing it.

Alfons Cornella

Somewhere over the North Atlantic, 12 February 2012

The beginnings of this book: summer 2011 in Benasque (Aragón)



1 Towards co-capitalism

CAPITALISM: AN IDEA IN DECLINE?

Various economic crises over the last twenty years have resulted in a **growing loss of prestige for companies**, which are often seen as selfish bodies prospering at the expense of society's resources. Although this is not so in many cases, the dominant idea is that companies exist solely to maximize short-term profits without any rules except that of "anything goes".

But **an enterprise is actually an objective** (and the French etymology of the term confirms this). And it has to be efficient and generate resources (including money) in order to achieve its objective. But its ultimate aim cannot be that of making money, and even less so at the community's expense. This agenda may make sense in the short term, but it proves unfeasible in the long term.

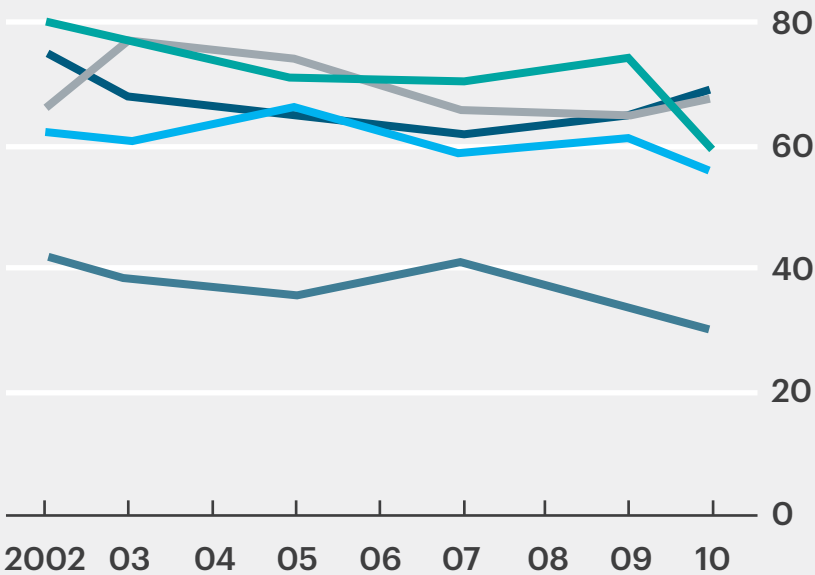
Capitalism has to be reinvented with a new focus, not on maximizing company profits to enrich shareholders, but on **solving the problems of citizens** and contributing to society's overall progress by taking into account the fact that the planet's resources are limited (the Neolithic period is finally over!).

Thus, the crisis of capitalism has resulted in a unique opportunity for its profound reinvention. And perhaps one of the consequences will be the decline of extreme individualism against the **emergence of collaboration as a social and economic system**.

The real deficit

Respondents agreeing that the free-market system is the best, % of total

Germany China United States
Britain France



Source: GlobeScan

Capitalism's waning popularity throughout the world

The Economist, 09/04/11

OTHER TYPES OF COMPANIES ARE POSSIBLE

Technology (the “programming” of nature) and connectability (all humans connectable to all humans anywhere throughout the world) are changing the form in which an objective can be pursued (a company).

On the one hand, enormous capital is no longer needed to turn ideas into results: it is enough to **combine knowledge and assets intelligently**. For example, the way people buy car tires can be reinvented by providing a digital platform that mediates between manufacturers, garages and customers. Or a food product made from mare’s milk can be created to reach the very specific niche market of cancer patients. Or a task can be divided into small sections (MicroTasking) that people scattered throughout the world can work on (digitally connected).

Furthermore, it is already possible to **manufacture locally**, using sophisticated tools yet small teams and with the decisive participation of clients in the final product design.

And only those products for which there are confirmed (committed) customers can be manufactured. Or a project based on aggregate popular subscription can be developed.

Anybody can become a business by using his or her differential knowledge or skills and selling these to other people anywhere in the world, charging them via a simple mobile phone. Thus, a Dutch student, for example, can solve your PC problems if you make an appointment with him on your morning train ride into the city.

The screenshot displays the MicroTasking website. At the top, the logo "MicroTasking" is in large blue letters, with navigation links "How does it work?", "Video", and "FAQ" to the right. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled "microtask:", describes a "A simple task that someone else could do for you remotely." and lists three benefits: "Your tasks" (Offload attention consuming chores), "Our staff" (Dedicated, educated individuals), and "Your time" (Eliminate mundane activities). The right column, titled "give us a task:", features a text input field, a "Task size" dropdown menu set to "Small - \$11.99", an "Additional amount" field set to "\$ 0.00", and a "Total: \$11.99". A large orange "Do My Work" button is at the bottom of this column. A black callout box in the bottom right corner contains the text "Complete a task by distributing it" and the website URL "www.microtasking.net". A "110% Money Back Guarantee!" banner is visible at the bottom of the page.

TALENT DENSITY MATTERS

Talent is the new capital. The world's best companies believe that talent is scarce and those dubbed "the vital few" need to be pampered. Because it is a small number of companies that generate the most employment: "the vital 6%". The progress of many organizations is based on teams with high levels of knowledge "competing" against each other to accelerate the development of ideas in the form of projects involving "trial and error". It is about combining this competition within an organization, with more intense collaboration between teams. **Talent cannot be managed as a mere transaction, but as a complex relationship that has its own rules and mysteries.**

Following this line of thought, **the next major disruption in business will be organizational, not technological:** the companies that will progress will be those that transform their ways of working, based on the idea of stimulating talent. And this involves reinventing the teaching and

development of skills and motivation to convert the company into a driving force of ideas/actions. This requires new external funding mechanisms: innovation banks, tools committed to disruptive ideas, activating funding for radical patents, etc. There will have to be a profound **rethink of what value is within the capitalist system.**

A new kind of talent is emerging, nourished by science and technology and converted into a value for this new form of (local and agile) manufacturing and transformed into services through digital channels: **scientific-based industrial services.** **Talent markets** are appearing for this.

In this sense, we must overcome the fact that even today the act of "pointing out" talent leaders continues to be frowned upon, especially in the West. This is one of today's main paradoxes: we depend on the creations of a few (a very few), but **socially castigate those gifted with talent.**



Gamble on talent as a driving force for disruptions

www.intellectualventures.com

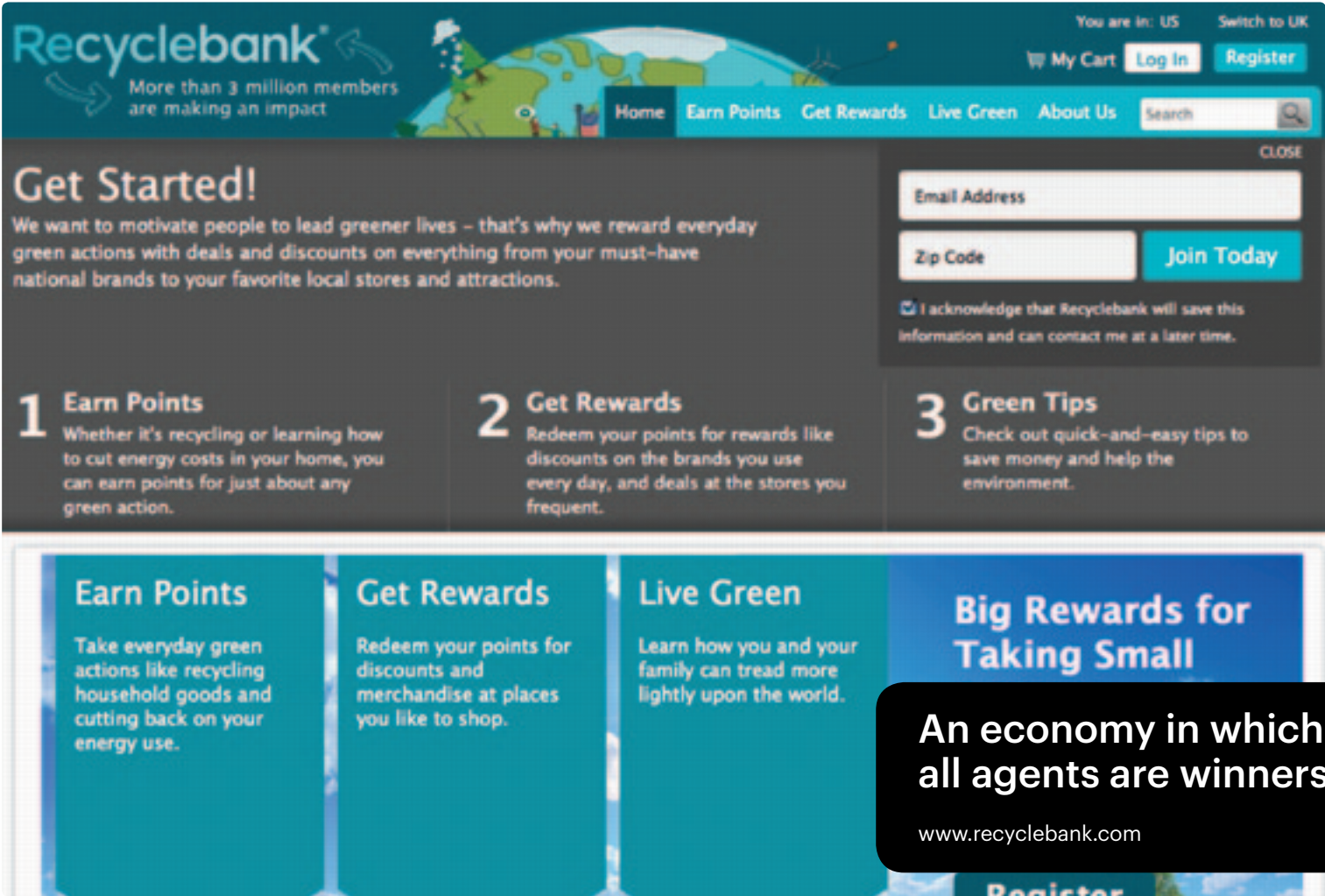
SHARED VALUE

Michael Porter proposes to **redefine capitalism based on the idea of “shared value”**. His idea involves reducing the negative impact of companies in society (the economy’s negative externalities: for example, pollution, considered inevitable until now for manufacturing operations) and increasing their positive impact on it (for example, stimulating qualified employment in a population through long-term training strategies). The company’s main function should be to **meet the needs of citizens**, who periodically also become customers if what the company is offering also has value for them.

This shared value would be the set of *“policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social*

conditions in the communities in which it operates”. With a mutual commitment that goes beyond its contribution to social progress through the payment of its taxes and job creation. The impact may be much greater if the company, for example, creates more efficient ideas and products that are also eco-sustainable, thus generating a benefit for citizens/consumers (in their personal finances), the community (better use of available resources) and the planet as a whole (less pollution).

The idea behind this is that **not all benefits are good**. Those that are good are good for all the agents involved. And society is always one of the main agents. A company must look to prosper (do well) by having a positive impact on the environment (do good).



A ME/WE ECONOMY

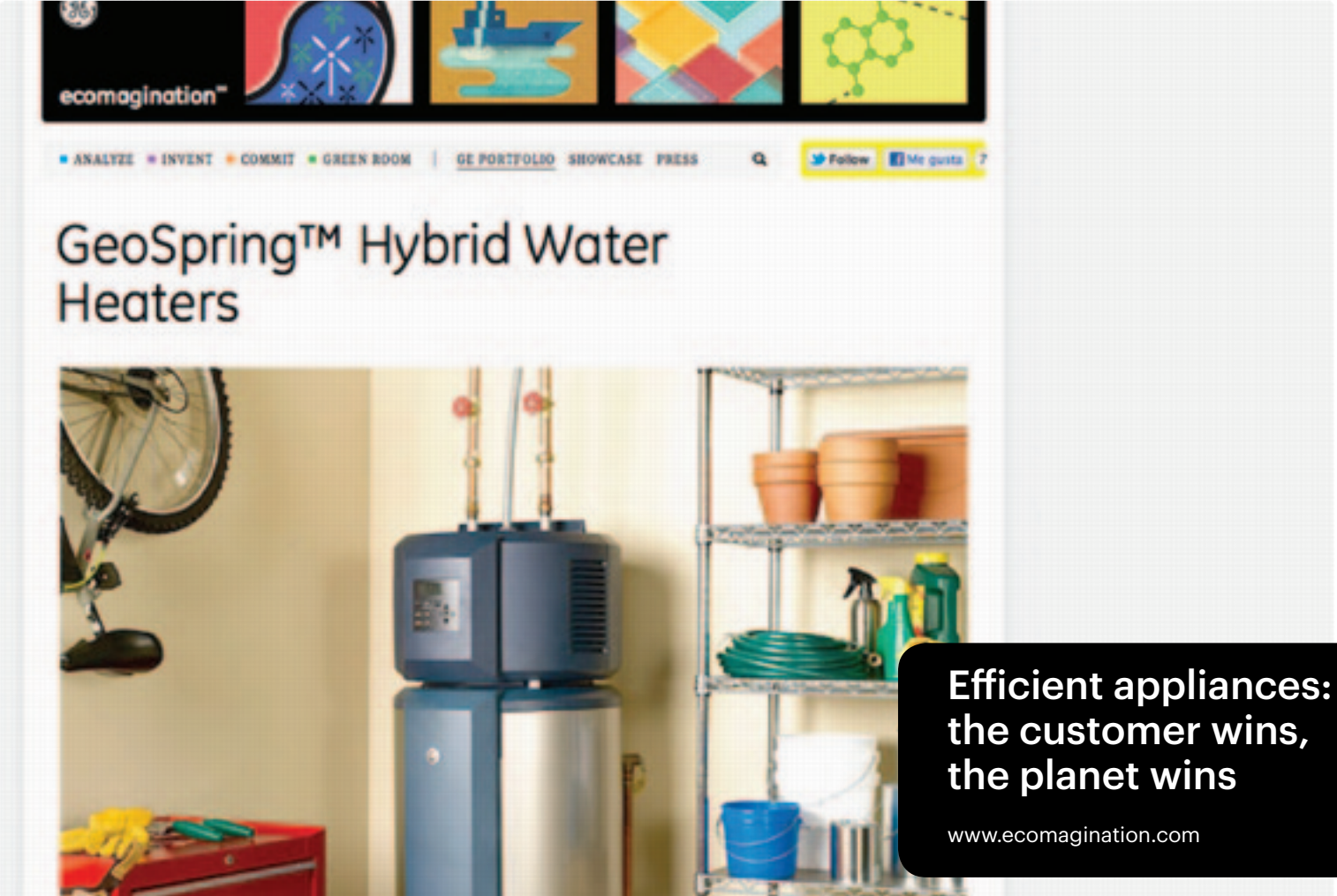
A well-accepted principle in economics is that of Adam Smith's "invisible hand": each individual seeking the best and demanding products and services that can satisfy him or her, so that companies supplying us with these have to compete to convince us that theirs is the best on offer, thus resulting in a market where the supply most accepted by the demand prospers, supposedly the best among all possibilities. **Society progresses as we seek our individual good.** Or at least it has so until now.

This is no longer sufficient, because **the combination of demand's individual selfishness and supply's extreme competitiveness leads to negative effects on society as a whole**, which ultimately affect both individuals and organizations (for example, the effect of pollution on our health and quality of life, or the loss of jobs arising from

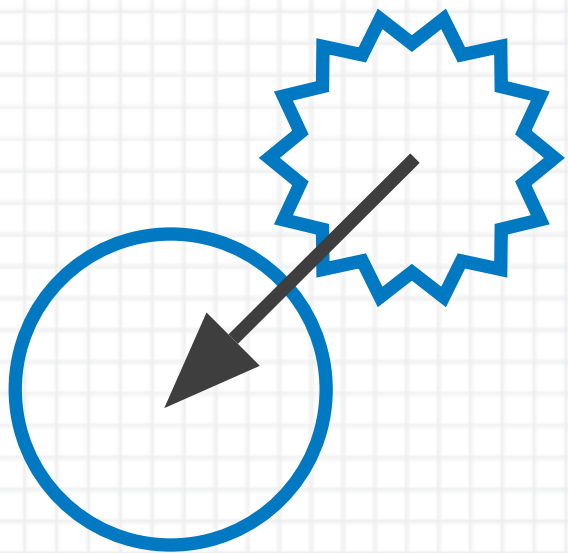
the geographical relocation of companies and potential social unrest that this entails).

An increasing number of companies today are indeed seeking the good of society as a whole, meeting the needs of demands (of its citizens), increasing their social prestige and ultimately selling more. It is the principle of "doing well by doing good". This new situation could be defined as **Adam Smith's "second invisible hand"**.

A breakthrough in capitalism: each citizen/consumer acting in his or her own benefit (me), which creates economic value through markets, but also benefitting society as a whole (we). **The future is, therefore, a me/we economy.** For example, an appliance that uses less energy benefits not only me (lower cost), but also the planet (energy efficient).



The image is a screenshot of the ecomagination website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ecomagination logo and several icons representing different categories: a snowflake, a ship, a colorful geometric pattern, and a molecular structure. Below the navigation bar, there are links for ANALYZE, INVENT, COMMIT, GREEN ROOM, GE PORTFOLIO, SHOWCASE, and PRESS. There are also social media links for Follow and Me gusta. The main content area features a large headline for "GeoSpring™ Hybrid Water Heaters". Below the headline is a photograph of a GeoSpring water heater unit installed in a utility room. To the left of the unit, a bicycle is hanging on the wall. To the right, there is a metal shelving unit with various items on it, including pots, a green hose, and a blue bucket. A red toolbox is visible in the bottom left corner. In the bottom right corner of the screenshot, there is a black box with white text that reads "Efficient appliances: the customer wins, the planet wins" and the website URL "www.ecomagination.com".



2 **Co-innovation emerges**

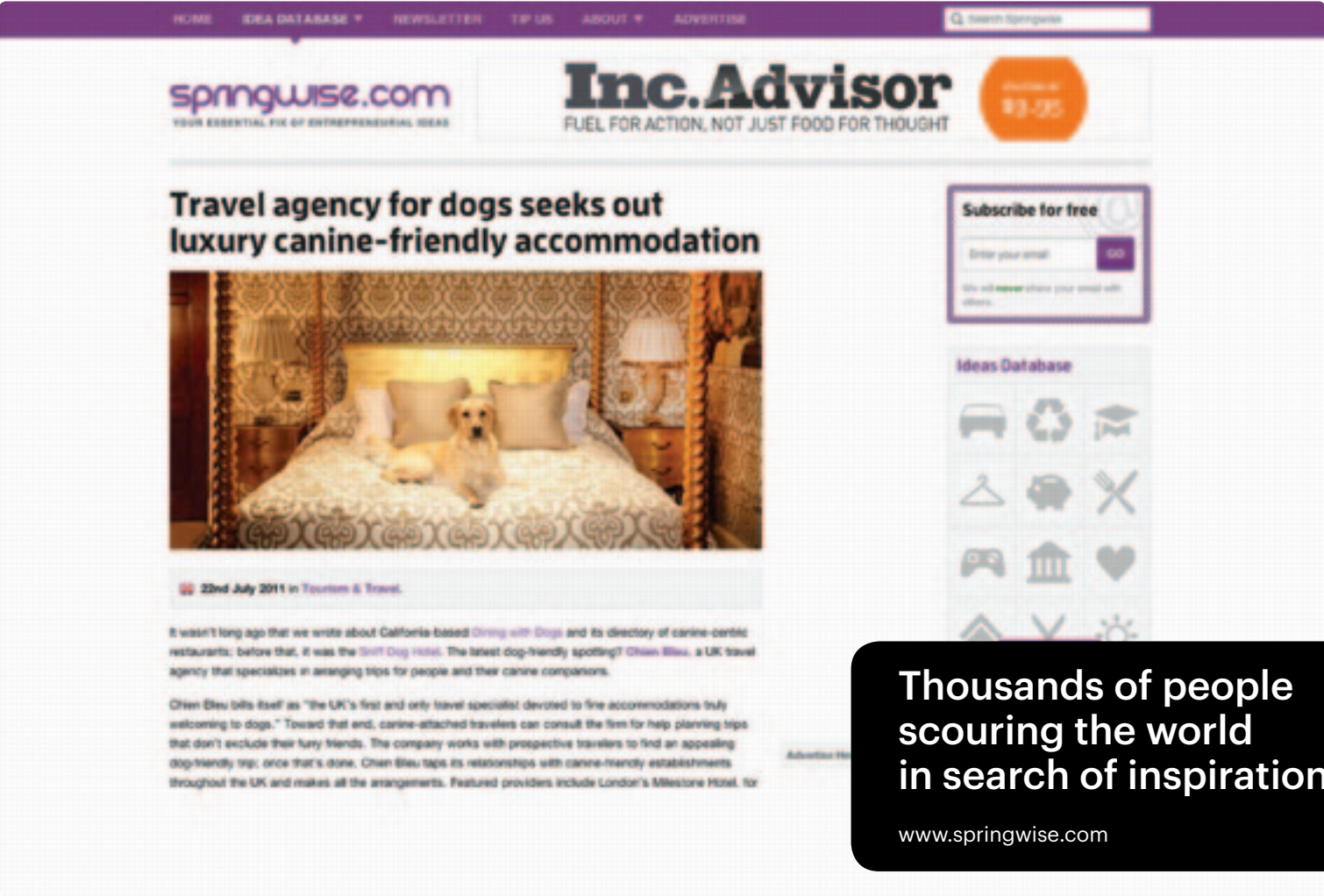
MORE OUTSIDE THAN INSIDE

No one doubts the usefulness of open innovation, as **there will always be more potential talent outside than inside an organization**, if only for the simple fact that there are more people outside than inside. Companies such as Procter & Gamble have shown this with the initiative C&D (Connect and Develop): dozens of scouts in search of products that can be incorporated into the range that P&G offers to its consumers. If the company decides that they are really interesting, they will either license or acquire them.

Today, we have **the best tool ever designed to explore the world**: the Internet. It helps us explicitly monitor our environment, systematically exploring whatever is able to affect us as a business. But the truth is that few companies intelligently use this tool, because one thing is possessing it and another is knowing how to use it. The Internet cre-

ates new opportunities for companies (sometimes simply groups of people with the same criteria located around the world) that make their powers of observation (“see” where others only “look”) a useful value. Such exploratory networks will thematically specialize by initiating a new kind of business based on talent.

Because **collaborative monitoring provides better results than individual monitoring**. First, for the simple fact that “four eyes see more than two”. And second, because peripheral vision is essential in business today: one has to look at other sectors, other markets, etc. We must be able to read transversely whatever seemingly does not affect us, but can in fact inspire us. Thus, collaborative exploration may be the next step in an intelligent monitoring of our environment. **We must need to know how to combine visions in order to detect blue oceans**. Exploring for inspiration.



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THE EXAMPLE OF SCIENCE

If there is a place where we can catch a glimpse of the future of collaboration between organizations, it is in the **long tradition of knowledge exchange between scientists**. The value of scientists is “measured” by their production of knowledge and, more specifically, their ability to generate new knowledge that can be published because of its unique contribution to understanding natural and social phenomena. In principle, **the value lies in sharing, not concealing**. Although in reality, the access to limited resources seems to be interrupting science’s traditional tendency to be transparent.

Value emerges from this combination, from the joint work between scientific individuals and groups collaborating to solve increasingly complex problems. A radical example of scientific collaboration can be seen in the **Atlas Collaboration**: more than 3,000 scientists in many different specialties contributing to solve the most complex

questions about the structure of matter at the CERN in Geneva. The list of co-authors in their articles is more extensive than the contents of the texts themselves. **It is this convergence of disciplines that helps science to advance.**

The science of the future will be even more open, based on transparency in experimental methods and on observation and data collection (there should be no secrets in how experiments are made), public access and the possibility of reusing scientific data (open data), transparency in scientific communication (accessible publications that are not subject to publishing groups) and the use of digital tools to facilitate scientific communication. See the Open Science Project proposal (www.openscience.org): Faraday’s advice to a younger colleague (“Work. Finish. Publish.”) perhaps needs to be revised. Publishing an article should no longer be sufficient. If we want open science to prosper, we must raise our expectations: “Work. Finish. Publish. Liberate.”

EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION FOR NUCLEAR RESEARCH (CERN)



CERN-PH-EP/2010-004
March 15, 2010

Charged-particle multiplicities in *pp* interactions at $\sqrt{s} = 900$ GeV measured with the ATLAS detector at the LHC

The ATLAS Collaboration

Abstract

The first measurements from proton-proton collisions recorded with the ATLAS detector at the LHC are presented. Data were collected in December 2009 using a minimum-bias trigger during collisions at a centre-of-mass energy of 900 GeV. The charged-particle multiplicity, its dependence on transverse momentum and pseudorapidity, and the relationship between mean transverse momentum and charged-particle multiplicity are measured for events with at least one charged particle in the kinematic range $|\eta| < 2.5$

The ATLAS Collaboration

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S. Asai¹⁰⁴, B. Asai^{104,105}, D. Asai¹⁰⁴, L. Asai¹⁰⁴, K. Asai¹⁰⁴, A. Asai¹⁰⁴,
A. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, B. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, G. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, B. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, E. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, K. Asatryan¹⁰⁴,
M. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, N. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, G. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, B. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, D. Asatryan¹⁰⁴, C. Ay¹⁰⁴, G. Ay¹⁰⁴,
Y. Azuma¹⁰⁴, M.A. Azuma¹⁰⁴, G. Azuma¹⁰⁴, C. Azuma¹⁰⁴, A.M. Azuma¹⁰⁴, H. Baccaro¹⁰⁴,
K. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, G. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, M. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, E. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, P. Baccaro^{104,105}, Y. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, D.C. Bailey¹⁰⁴,
T. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, J.T. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, O.K. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, M.D. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, S. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, F. Baccaro¹⁰⁴,
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S.P. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, S. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, A. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, T. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, E.L. Baccaro¹⁰⁴, D. Baccaro¹⁰⁴,
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M. Baccaro¹⁰⁴

The complexity of science demands the collaboration of thousands

www.atlas.ch

SWAYING BETWEEN COMPETITION/COLLABORATION

The current economic system seems to have been built upon competition: companies compete to attract customers and Schumpeter's theory of creative destruction claims that, like a type of natural selection mechanism, value proposals evolve, as does the way in which companies apply them to produce sustainable results. What we know how to deal with is a economy based on competition. And **business professionals today are trained from this model.**

But the reality is that we are seeing increasingly more **examples of companies working together to progress, even those in the same sector:** automobile manufacturers working together to develop common technologies, even if their market niches do not coincide; telephone companies combining their networks to improve customer service, with lower investment; and pharmaceutical companies joining forces to develop drugs requiring investments that

exceed their individual capacities. And this is happening not only with large companies. Small businesses are also realizing, for example, that joint action is in their interests in order to be present on the Internet with increased chances of success.

Collaboration makes sense to ensure that each company can continue to compete individually. Banks, for example, are thus joining forces to combat the danger of fraud and theft in digital media, because this is a problem for everybody that endangers the business of each one. **Therefore, deciding in which cases to compete and in which to collaborate becomes a necessity.** There has to be collaboration when interests are aligned, when there are assets that are appropriate to synchronize, or when there are economies of scale available. In any case, in an environment in which what we know is how to compete, **collaboration is something we must learn to manage.**



Deciding when to compete and when to collaborate is essential



BMW PSA

By building together the hybrid systems both BMW and PSA will reduce the costs and probably will be able to share their knowledge and achieve new innovations. The new hybrid system will debut somewhere in 2014 and will be available, of course, for the BMW, Peugeot and Citroën eco-friendly vehicles.

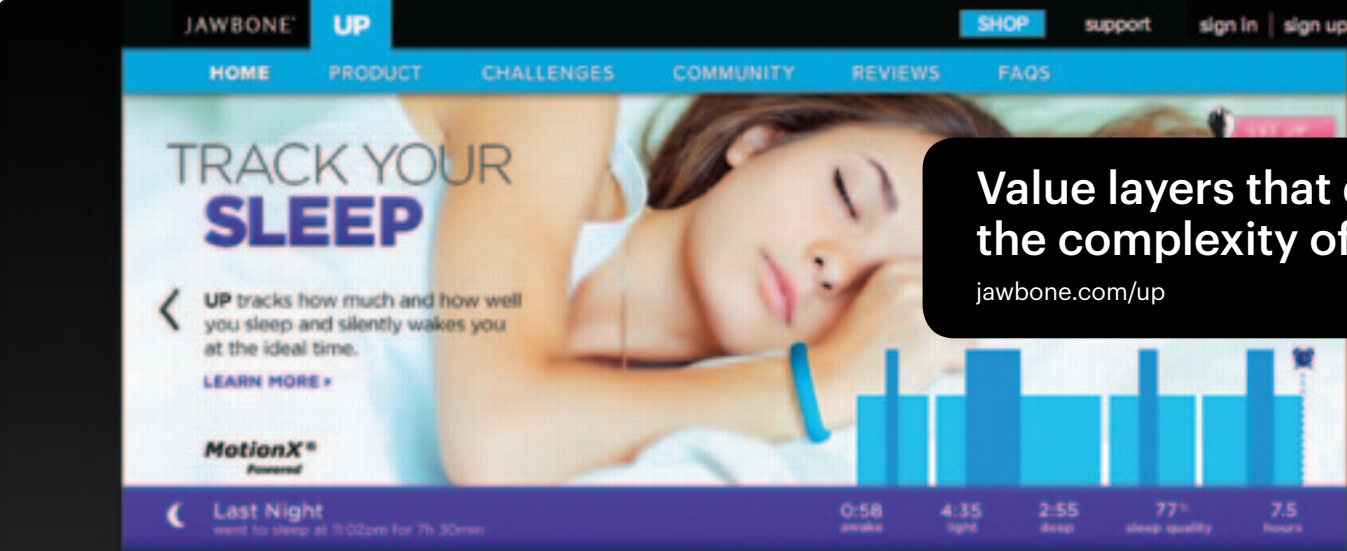
COMPLEXITY

The sophistication of the value layers received by citizens in “advanced” societies requires resolving increasingly complex problems with increasingly interrelated technologies. Science becomes a way of delving into the possibilities of natural phenomena (science as the *mining of phenomena*) and technology converts these possibilities into systems and devices to meet our needs (technology as the *programming of phenomena*).

At the same time, relationships between humans at both a small and large scale, between groups of individuals and between ethnic groups and nations, are distilling **new social problems that often decay into the form of wicked problems**: problems for which it is difficult to find a solution because the problem is not even known for certain. In short, **the world is becoming increasingly more complex**.

A common organizational attitude when faced with this complexity is the proliferation of actions: **the response to complexity is more complexity**. More products, processes, technologies and markets are perhaps not the best strategy for responding to complexity. A more intelligent proposal consists precisely in fighting for simplicity in an organization, focusing on *what we know how to do well*. It is about simplifying the day-to-day, redefining activities, roles and processes to create quality time to be able to innovate.

The way to deal with (external) complexity is to arm oneself with intelligent (internal) simplicity. **A more complex world cannot be solved individually. Complexity requires collaboration.** Collaboration is facilitated by mutual *trust*. And trust does not arise if the parties involved are not committed to collaboration by contributing *generosity*.



The screenshot shows the Jawbone UP website. The main header includes 'JAWBONE UP', 'SHOP', 'support', 'sign in', and 'sign up'. The navigation bar has links for 'HOME', 'PRODUCT', 'CHALLENGES', 'COMMUNITY', 'REVIEWS', and 'FAQS'. The main content area features a large image of a woman sleeping with the text 'TRACK YOUR SLEEP'. Below this, it says 'UP tracks how much and how well you sleep and silently wakes you at the ideal time.' and 'LEARN MORE'. A 'MotionX' logo is also present. At the bottom, a sleep summary for 'Last Night' shows: 'went to sleep at 10:02pm for 7h 30min'. A bar chart shows sleep stages: 0:58 awake, 4:35 light, 2:55 deep, 77% sleep quality, and 7.5 hours. Social media sharing options (Like, +1, Send, Tweet, 5,016, +1, 408) are visible. Below the main content, there are several smaller tiles: 'ARE YOU UP FOR IT?', 'live UP', 'SLEEP FOR AN EXTRA HOUR EVERY NIGHT THIS WEEK', 'UP FOR IT?', 'UP live feed', 'THE SIMPLE ACT OF TRACKING ACTIVITY INCREASES ACTIVITY 26%', and 'UP FOR IT?'.

Value layers that dissolve the complexity of life

jawbone.com/up

CO = S

Collaboration (co-) should result in more intelligence (s- for smart). An intelligence that is no longer understood only in terms of intelligent people, but also **products that make things smarter**. For example, toll booths on highways that open new tollgates automatically when there is a traffic jam, or pill containers that notify people when they should be taken, or bridges that decide to increase their tension according to the weight they must bear at any given moment. Or screws that clearly indicate if they have been tightened properly. Or vending machines that interpret environmental conditions and suggest what drink may be more tempting at any given time. All this without waiting for a human to provide the orders.

Objects should be “smarter” in the sense that they should be able to respond autonomously to a given situation or stimulus (change of variables in their surroundings). This

is why greater collaboration between machines is becoming increasingly dominant: an exchange of data captured by one so that another can act (*Internet of things*). And although it might seem trivial, we must start thinking about the **collaboration between humans and robots**. In order to do this, we must first better understand how humans behave. The intelligence revolution does not consist in us understanding how a machine works, but rather that its use is so intuitive that in reality it seems as if the machine understands us.

Therefore, the products/services of the future must incorporate greater intelligence. In order to achieve this, the companies producing them will have to resort to other companies with **solutions and systems to increase the intelligence density of objects**. Consequently, the road to smarter products or services is collaboration, the intersection of knowledge.

Smarter is using relationships and technology to help drive down Rx costs

CDHP

TOOLS

RX

CARE MANAGEMENT

Driving down Rx costs

By creating smart relationships and using innovative technology, Aetna is helping to drive down Rx costs and sharing the savings with you. You can get the health care they need and manage their condition.

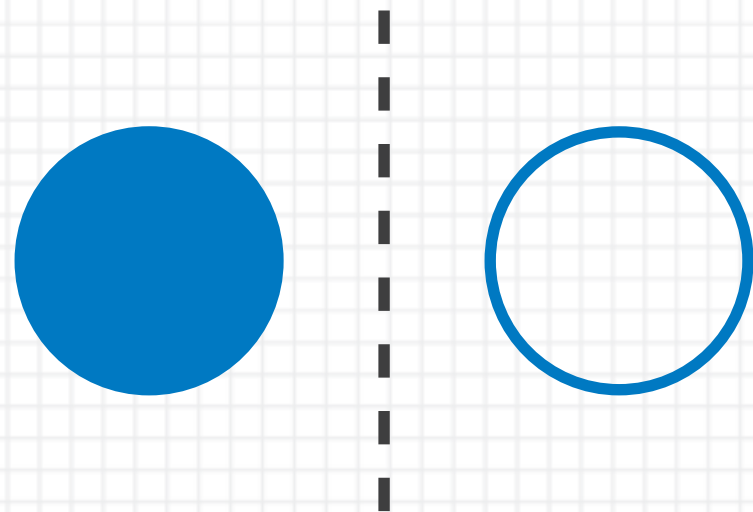
- Smarter relationships mean more savings. Aetna has entered into a strategic agreement with CVS Caremark. This collaboration allows us the ability to pass savings on to you.
- Integrated pharmacy and medical coverage means less hassle and more

Provide better customer service by combining intelligences

The collaboration between a pharmaceutical company and a drugstore chain helps to provide a better service to both their customers

www.aetna.com

[Video Transcript](#)



3 Transferring models

RELEVANCE OF THE BUSINESS MODEL

The digital revolution brought more than drastic changes in the value chains of companies (outsourcing, disintermediation and direct sales to consumers) and excessively exuberant value bubbles. It also showed us the importance of the **“business model” concept: the set of arguments and reasons about how a company designs, produces and transforms ideas into value and results.**

Today, we know that the way an organization converts resources (input) into value (output) is the result of a complex relationship between its critical capabilities, as visualized in a map of its business model. **This business model “snapshot” of an organization briefly illustrates how it translates its capabilities into a value proposition that serves its customers.**

More specifically, and according to Osterwalder’s standard model, a business model is built around one *value proposi-*

tion (or more) that reaches its customer niches through the appropriate *channels* and whose perceived value is informed by a type of *relational system* between them. It is essential that it has some kind of differential capacity (*critical activities* such as knowledge), which is translated through the use of *critical resources* (for example, physical and human capital) and *critical partners* (with whom to combine knowledge and capabilities) into that fundamental value proposition. In all, the company converts its *input* cost into a *results* flow.

Therefore, a company’s success in terms of its business model is increasingly based on how it “orchestrates” the different talents that make up the departments governing each business model component. **The collaboration of these business model components is essential to convert capabilities into results.**

The Business Model Canvas



This business model graphic illustrates how an organization creates value

Osterwalder’s “standard model”: *Business Model Generation* (2009)

BUSINESS ISOMORPHISMS

We are increasingly witnessing that **what works in one sector's business model can be transferred to another**. For example, what we have learned that works in cloud computing or digital services is beginning to be applied to the world of energy services. Or the revolution in car sharing, access to a car as an alternative to car ownership, is “infecting” other businesses that have nothing to do with transport, such as the publishing industry (the Zipcar model applied to Chegg): it makes more sense to have temporary access to university textbooks rather than purchasing them when you are only going to use them for one semester. Or even what we know about the mechanisms governing sick leave: could this not also be applied to “professional leave”, which is how we should be calling unemployment?

A test of the usefulness of this “transfer of ideas” between seemingly distant fields can be found in **the design thinking movement, which proposes applying the thinking/**

working methods of design to the world of business. Moreover, design can also learn much from the business world. And this dual relationship must also occur between conventional business and social business.

In short, it is about applying the mathematical idea of isomorphism to the business world. In mathematics, *“the discovery of an isomorphism between two structures essentially means that the study of each can be reduced to the one of the other”*. The mathematical concept of “isomorphism” (from the Greek *iso-morfos*: equal-shape) aims to make use of the opportunity that arises from the fact that two objects have a similar structure: what we know of one can be applied to the other. Will the systematic application of isomorphisms become the new way of generating wealth in our economies? **The collaboration between companies sharing a business model essence, even if they are in different sectors, will become a new habit.**

The image is a screenshot of the Chegg website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Chegg logo, a shopping cart icon, and links for 'Sign In', 'Rent Textbooks', 'Sell Textbooks', 'My Account', and 'Help'. The main content area features a large illustration of a penguin wearing a red and orange striped hat and orange mittens, standing on a snowy surface. To the right of the penguin, the text 'Rent Your Textbooks & Save Hundreds of Dollars' is displayed in green. Below this, there is a UPS logo and the text 'Order today and get it by Wednesday'. A wooden signpost on the right side of the page reads '21-Day "Any Reason" GUARANTEE' and 'LEARN MORE >>'. In the bottom left corner, there is a blue box with the text 'CHEGG PLANTS A TREE EVERY TIME YOU RENT. OVER 4 MILLION TREES PLANTED. >>'. In the bottom right corner, there is a blue box with the text 'FIND YOUR BOOKS' and a search bar with the placeholder text 'Enter ISBN, Title or Author's Name' and a green 'FIND BOOKS' button. At the bottom of the page, there is a social media section with a 'Like' button and the text '44,039 people like this. Be the first of your friends.' Below this, there are two tabs labeled 'OUR STORY' and 'CONTACT US'.

Why buy books that you will only use for one semester?

www.chegg.com

MATHEMATICS FOR BUSINESS

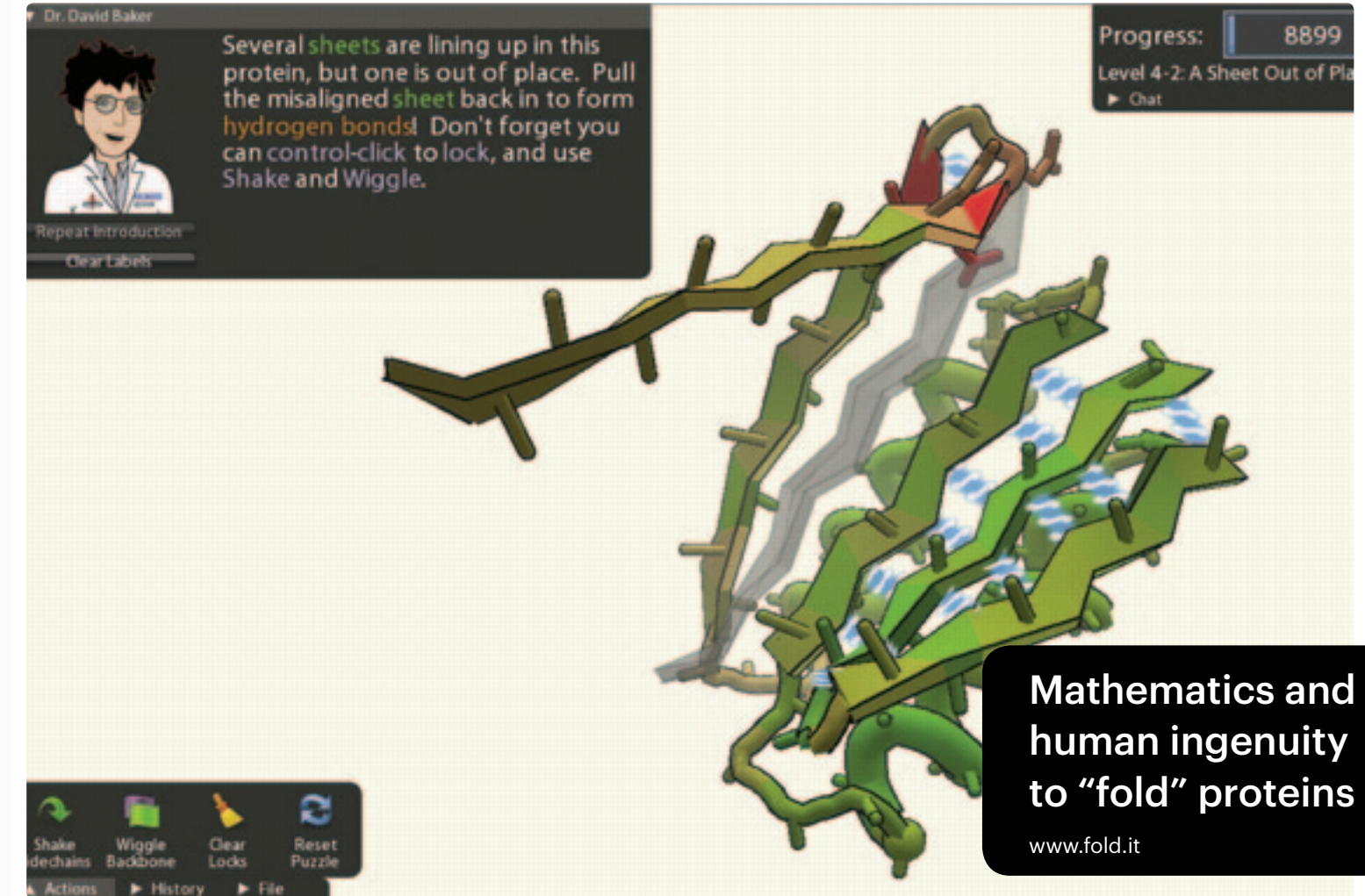
One of these “transfers” that is especially relevant for business comes from the world of mathematics. **The ability that mathematics has in modeling situations to help find solutions will become increasingly applied to business.** Our predictive capacity will also increase if we are able to create a business model.

Thus, models explaining the effects of seismic disturbances are today being applied to understand recurrent criminal activity in cities: when a theft occurs, it is very likely that another will occur soon after, a fact that may be of interest to insurance companies. Or statistics on the impact of wars throughout history can provide models on the probabilities of a chain of terrorist attacks. Or the three-dimensional capabilities of human reasoning in complex

mathematical games may help determine the possible ways in which a virus protein folds, something that may not be feasible with other methods (www.fold.it).

In terms of other ideas, **the replication behavior of large social groups through avatars** whose habitual actions are programmed can provide the knowledge required to make decisions about products and services with fewer risk levels.

The vast amount of data that organizations have available about their customers has become a new form of capital. And its activation into value depends on our ability to apply mathematical models to this data in order to draw conclusions and make demonstrable predictions.



Mathematics and
human ingenuity
to “fold” proteins

www.fold.it

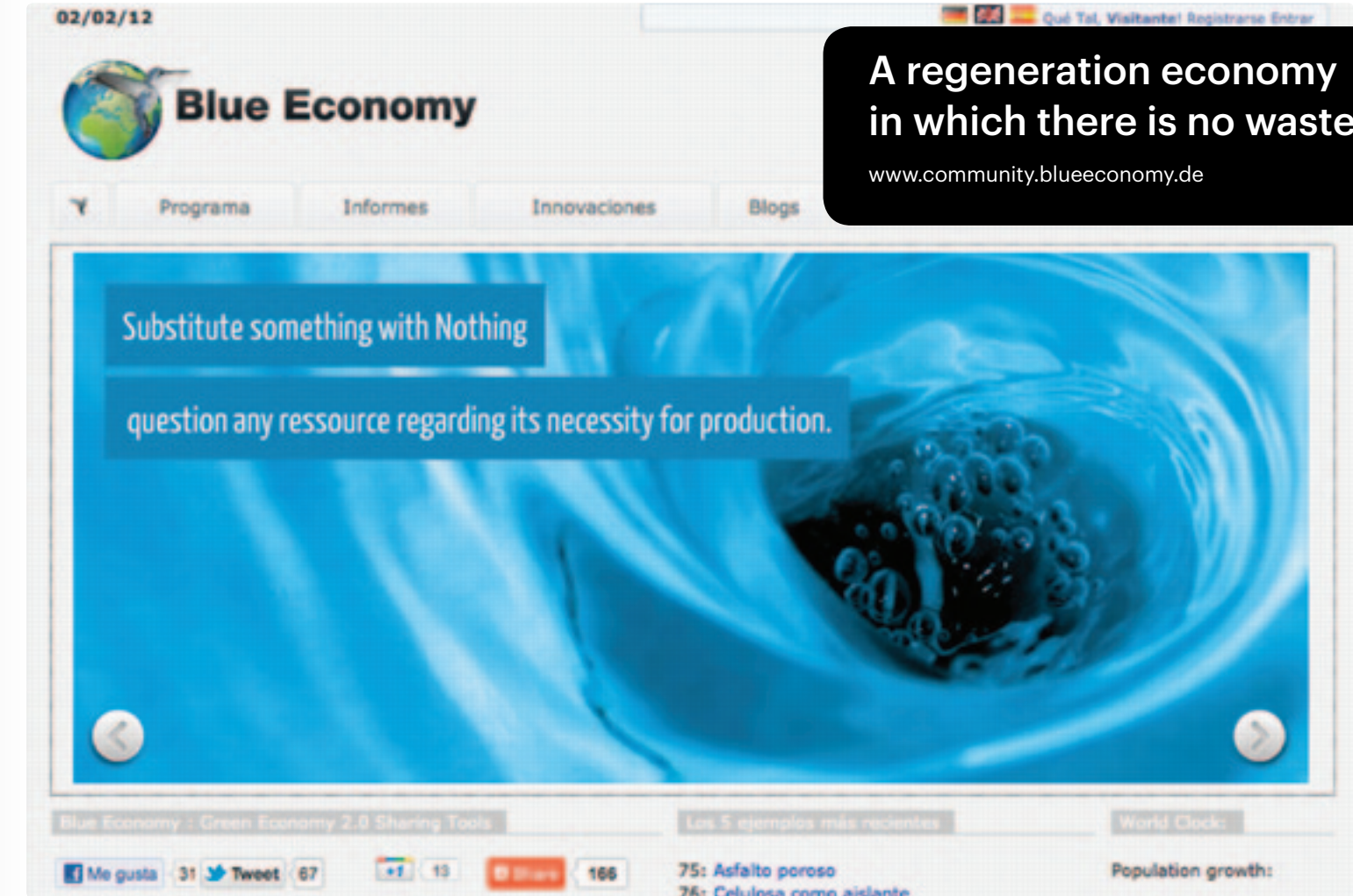
BIOLOGY FOR BUSINESS

Biological metaphors have been proposed for business for many years now. For example, that **an organization is not a “machine” to achieve a goal, but an “ecosystem” of complex relationships between mutually dependent agents.** A system comprising all manner of contracts and commitments whose management requires the satisfaction of many parties. More recently, the paradigm of networks has also emerged as a candidate to be metaphorized by companies: an organization as a network of agents in which nobody wins (in the long term) if only one loses. Moreover, evolutionary theory has also been applied to economics: **Schumpeter’s creative destruction could be understood in the light of Darwin’s theory of natural selection.**

Much has also been written on **biomimetics, which seeks inspiration in the solutions of nature to solve engineering problems.** It is about making the most of Evolution’s great R&D lab, with its constantly changing mutation and fit of the most suitable, to arrive at a solution that saves

countless trial-and-error processes. Not to mention the sustainable economy, the need to incorporate the Planet in the economic equation **in an attempt to overcome our Neolithic childishness:** thinking that Nature is infinite and we can squander its resources without any limits.

Gunter Pauli goes one step further when he proposes in his **Blue Economy model that we become inspired by Nature’s simple solutions to solve our problems more efficiently and cheaply rather than using the Green Economy.** In his words: *“A Green Economy model has required companies to invest more and consumers to pay more, to achieve the same, or even less, while preserving the environment. A Blue Economy consists of viewing waste as a resource and seeking solutions using nature’s design... we can find ways of utilizing physics, chemistry and biology with renewable materials and sustainable practices just as ecosystems do. A Blue Economy engages regeneration.”* **A “co-” economy in which the waste of one is the raw material for the other.**



**A regeneration economy
in which there is no waste**

www.community.blueeconomy.de

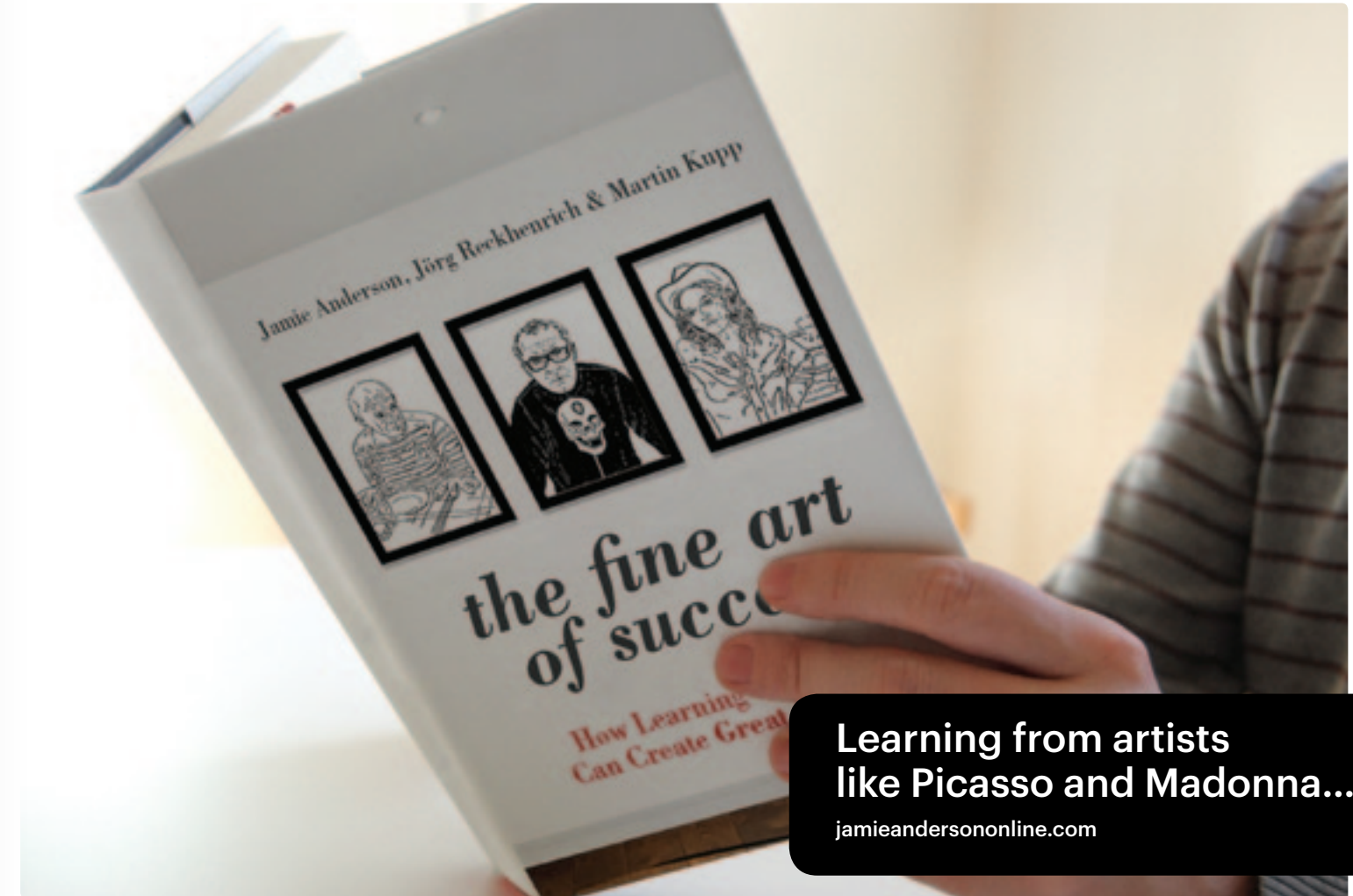
ART FOR BUSINESS

An untraversable distance seems to have existed between the art world and the business world: what counts in the latter, what is valued, is exploiting the known, do what has always been done, what has been shown to work, and not imagination or the search for a “personality” to clearly differentiate a company from its competitors. **What frequently reign are standards.** What is learnt in a business school are methods and systems that have been distilled from the experience of dozens of prior examples. No wonder the idea of business cases, illustrative or instructive examples, dominates the mental landscape of these schools.

But perhaps **we should now take the art in business more seriously.** Because in an era of an increasing lack of differentiation, where consumers have serious problems distinguishing among an oversupply, what may be crucial is that a company is able to find a personal, differentiated style. Moreover, **understanding the ability of art to communi-**

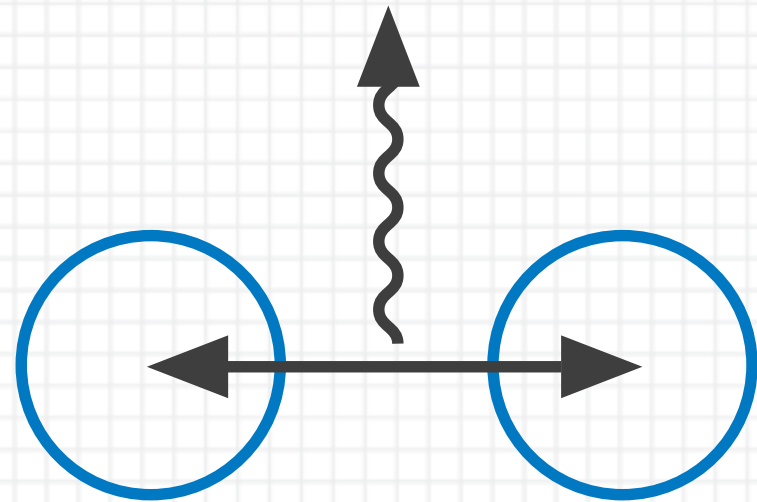
cate emotions can be very useful in an environment of information saturation (“infoxication”). Because every business ultimately becomes the “explanation of a story”. Following another line of ideas, businesses can learn from art its experience of centuries managing brilliant talents. A company’s talent consists of “artists”.

Understanding art is not just a matter of finding inspiration in it to increase the creativity of the teams that make up organizations. The way in which art views the world encourages open minds to face problems differently, combining diverse styles of knowledge that are sometimes at right angles to each other. It is not surprising that innovative business schools such as the Rotman School in Toronto are attempting to learn from the arts in their way of understanding the new challenges of corporate management. **The world’s complexity often requires a disruptive vision that can be provided by the arts.**



Learning from artists
like Picasso and Madonna...

jamieandersononline.com



4
Collaboration
is a process

COORDINATE/COOPERATE/COLLABORATE

It is essential to clearly define what we mean by collaboration so that we can distinguish it from coordination and cooperation.

The aim of coordination is to efficiently undertake a task involving various people, usually within the same organization (an example: to get things done).

Cooperation is aimed at generating efficiency by combining the skills of various groups or organizations (an example: outsourcing).

Collaboration is based on the commitment to find a way to multiply the skills of groups or organizations by

identifying common spaces and combining the different assets of each (an example: R&D between two pharmaceutical companies).

Companies claim that collaboration is and will be important, but standardized strategies and models in this field do not exist today. Consequently, a growing number of **initiatives are appearing for the academic study of collaboration**, including group dynamics, design thinking and so on.

And according to Lynn Margulis, “*cooperation, not competition underpins evolution*”.



Collaboration has evolved throughout history...

Wired, January 2011

...sion. Their families and drinking buddies occasionally acknowledged their talent, but beyond that, not so much. Suddenly, in the past five years or so, no matter how specialized your area of work, it has the potential to be seen and acknowledged by a substantial global audience. The day you log on and see that a video you posted went viral and is being written about with awe by tens of thousands of people? It just might change your life.

I am certain these tiny little metrics—mere blurry numbers on a computer screen—wield immense power. Because it's not just you who's seeing them, it's everyone else, too. They know. And you know that they know. This is all part of a fundamental engine of human motivation. Status, self-esteem, reputation—you name it. I suspect, be willing to burn hours for their promise.

I think the motivation is there whether or not the recognition leads to anything tangible. Certainly plenty of tangible outcomes are possible. For the budding author, for example, online recognition might bring with it the press enquiry, the speaking engagement, the book contract.

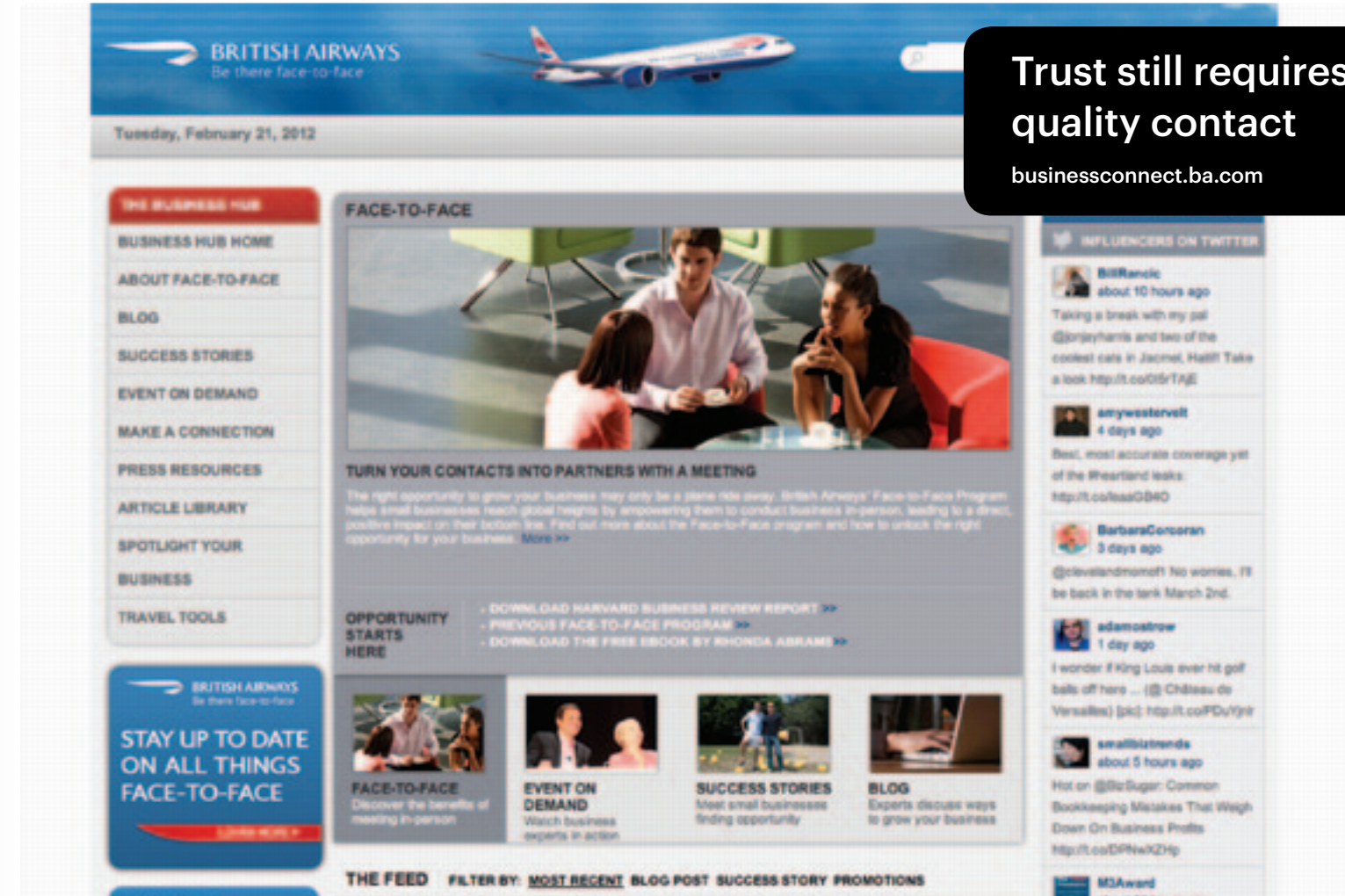
TRUST

We have already stated that the world’s complexity requires collaboration and the combination of knowledge. But **collaboration requires a foundation of trust**. Collaboration requires a desire, motivation and willingness to do it. And this willingness arises from the establishment of a foundation of trust. Moreover, **the greater the desire to collaborate, the more likely a fruitful collaboration**. Quality collaboration cannot be forced. In this sense, establishing the conditions for effective collaboration has a lot to do with generating trust.

Investing in generating trust both within and between organizations thus makes perfect sense. It is necessary to apply methods and **systems that “cancel out” the natural centrifugal tendency of groups** in order to create a good social climate: each group tends to think that its “agenda” is the most important. Nullifying this trend towards individualism, to-

wards trying to capitalize on the assets of others for one’s own benefit, lies in **finding a “shared vision”**. Something that gives more meaning to adding rather than subtracting, extracting as much as possible towards one’s own field.

Teams have to be trained to communicate their goals with a willingness to join forces right from the start. They must be trained to negotiate with shared efficiency criteria, without it being seen as a capitulation. We must learn to create a type of “second innocence” in teams that, far from being naive, overrides corporate cynicism (the idea that everybody has come to try and take advantage of us), with the conviction that there is very useful value out there. Possessing “intelligent trust” is not easy at all, but it is crucial to obtain it. Therefore, **it is essential to choose project “partners” based on their skills, willingness to collaborate and ethics of confidentiality**.



Trust still requires
quality contact

businessconnect.ba.com

COLLABORATION REQUIRES A PROCESS

Various studies on collaboration show that **there exists a strong correlation between having a collaboration process and the resulting success of the collaboration.** For example, it is important to have mechanisms that enable people to get to know each other (beyond that of purely professional relationships, for emotional ties play an essential role in many business collaboration processes). It is worth knowing how to apply mechanisms that can help to obtain a “shared vision” between the various parties in the process. Also of use to this is having physical spaces to facilitate collaboration, as well as human catalysts to nullify the natural tendency towards individualism in teams. And one must also have forms of legal agreements (and the willingness of the attorneys on each side) that do not impede collaborative progress by overzealously protecting one’s own interests. Collaboration is not possible without a dose of generosity. **You have to**

train yourself for effective collaboration. Collaboration is by no means trivial.

We know that any interaction between objects or agents creates complexity. In fact, **complexity science is defined as “the study of the phenomena which emerge from a collection of interacting objects”.** Moreover, most of the real problems of complexity appear (“emerge”) spontaneously from the struggle between different agents for scarce resources. All collaboration is, therefore, between agents interacting for some kind of scarce resource (knowledge, experience or access to markets, for example) and this is susceptible to generating complexity.

Thus, **in order for collaboration to produce workable results, a process must exist to control this complexity by making the most of the interaction between the agents involved** in the collaboration.



The image shows a banner for Groupaya, a platform for group collaboration. At the top left is the Groupaya logo, which consists of the word "groupaya" in a sans-serif font, with a stylized orange sun and two blue human figures holding hands above the "o" and "p". To the right of the logo are three links: "Our Story", "Our Community", and "Blog". On the far right, a black box contains the text "Experts that fluidify group collaboration" and "groupaya.net". The main text of the banner reads "We help groups work better together to create their future." in a large, bold, black font. To the right of this text is a graphic showing six blue stick figures arranged in a circle, with an orange arrow pointing from them to the text "Open High-Performing Always Improving". Below this graphic is the text "Our Vision for Groups" in a blue, handwritten-style font. At the bottom left, there is a quote: "We have over three decades of combined experience helping Fortune 500 companies, startups, nonprofits, foundations, government agencies, and grassroots movements solve meaningful, wicked problems collaboratively. Now we're aiming even higher. We want to work on bigger, harder". At the bottom right, there is a blue box with the text "Questions past clients have hired us to help them answer:" followed by four questions: "How do we leverage the collective wisdom of our community?", "How do we make our processes inclusive, fast, and effective?", "How do we get better at learning from each other?", and "How do we shift our partnerships with others from...".

groupaya

Our Story
Our Community
Blog

Experts that fluidify
group collaboration

groupaya.net

We help groups
work better together
to create their future.

Open
High-Performing
Always Improving

Our Vision for Groups

We have over three decades of combined experience
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Questions past clients have hired us to
help them answer:

How do we leverage the collective wisdom of our
community?

How do we make our processes inclusive, fast, and
effective?

How do we get better at learning from each other?

How do we shift our partnerships with others from

NON-OBSTRUCTIVE CONTRACTS

Collaboration is needed because the world is more complex: nobody possesses all the knowledge required to solve a situation. **And trust must exist for there to be collaboration, and this requires a certain degree of generosity. But it also demands reciprocity and security.** The combination of generosity (*“I’m showing that I’m willing to share”*) and security (*“but we’ll make sure that both sides are playing by the same rules”*) is essential in any collaboration.

Recent studies have shown that cooperation generates returns in the form of social connections: those who do not cooperate are punished by a certain form of social ostracism that ultimately has a negative impact on their economy. **Not collaborating carries a high cost with it in the long term.** But that does not deny the fact that it is legitimate to seek a framework of security in collaborative relationships.

Collaboration, especially between companies, may **have to confront the difficulty of corporate selfishness:** lawyers on both sides will obviously lean towards protecting their clients as much as possible, which is not necessarily a good

thing for them. **It may be that giving ground individually is the best way to come out victorious as a group,** replacing the interests of one party with the interests of both parties will facilitate multiplying skills (what we have learned from *game theory*).

One of the most frequent sticking points in collaboration is the **need to protect the use of information to share:** what the parties knew before beginning conversations, for example. It is true that we have tools available to tackle this situation in some cases, but the question becomes more complex when the conversations are open and are structured in such a way without knowing exactly where they will lead. We know how to handle a license, for example, but it is more difficult to manage the potential value arising from fully open conversations in terms of the legal security of all the parties involved. There is a lot to be learned in this field. Thus, **it is necessary to clearly define the ethical standards, confidentiality policies and intellectual property rules to be applied so that collaboration can progress.**



MEASURING SUCCESS

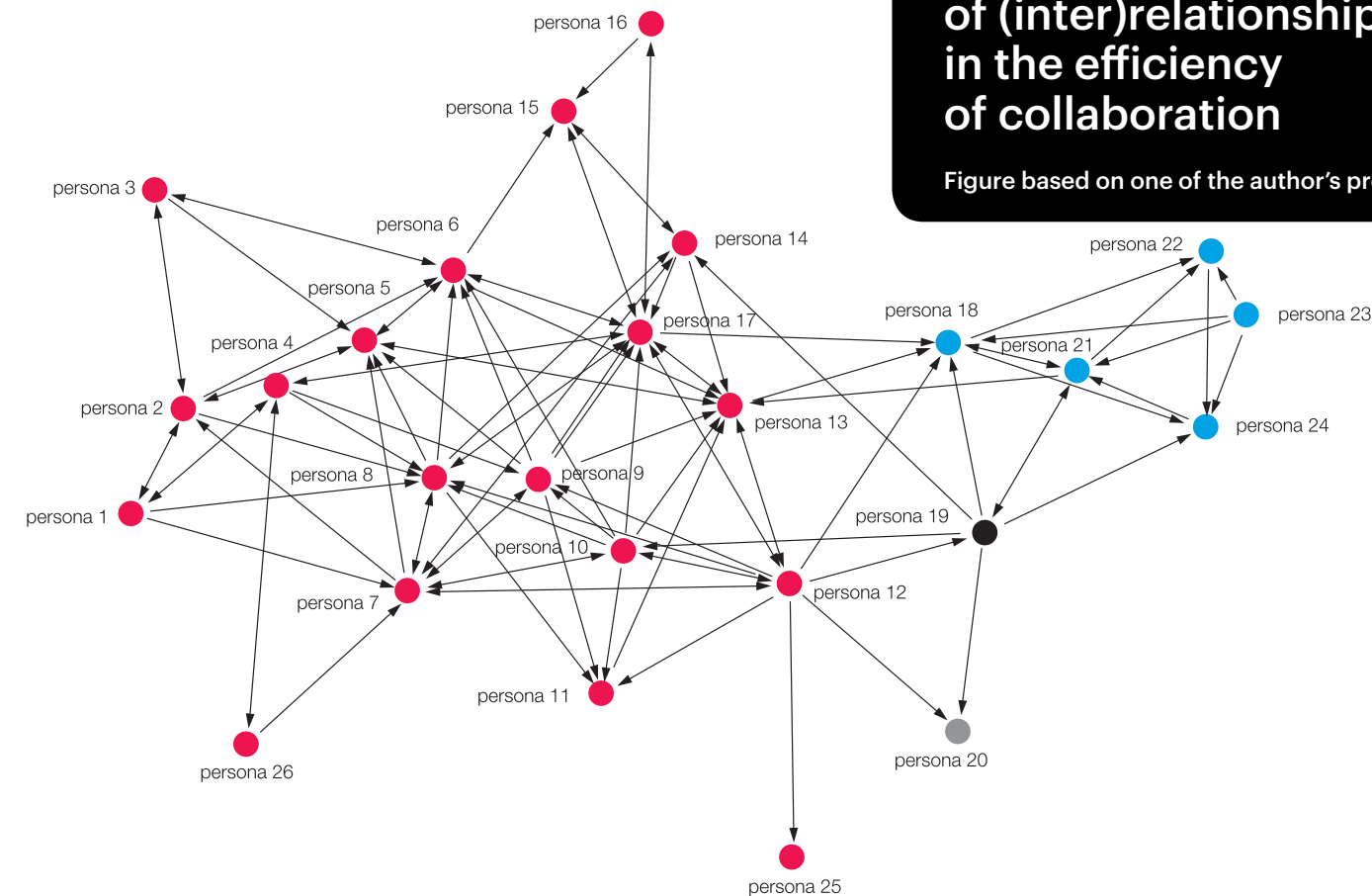
It has been said that what cannot be measured in business cannot be managed. Perhaps the idea comes from science, in which it is essential to measure in order to extract patterns and deduce laws that allow for verifiable predictions. It is logical, therefore, that there is a desire to measure the impact of collaboration. **Companies sense that collaboration between them is potentially good, but they need some sort of measure to be ultimately convinced.** But the problem is that it is not so easy to do this.

Thus, for example, Steven Johnson reminds us in his book *Where Good Ideas Come From* that encounters, conversations and situations between people often occur **encouraging an idea that remains “frozen”**, often for many years, while it is being involuntarily processed by the mind until it finally emerges. It is what he calls a “slow hunch”. How to measure the impact of something that is injected in an apparently innocuous manner into our mind, but that may ultimately revolutionize the world?

Various studies have shown that **the interest of companies in measuring the impact of collaboration in achiev-**

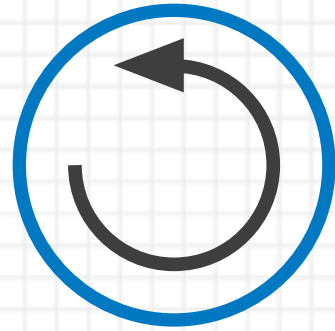
ing their objectives is now very rare. There are other priorities in which to invest resources. And yet, measuring the results of collaboration will be essential to justify the usefulness of a shift from a focus on “competing” towards a focus on “collaborating”. **Perhaps the path involves tools that fluidify collaboration and extract the appropriate data to measure that impact.** The emergence of tools such as SNA (Social Network Analysis) may be relevant, used to analyze social networks and measure the interrelationships between nodes (individuals or organizations) in their various degrees of connection and interdependence.

Successful collaboration depends on the various parties involved visualizing their “probable destination”; that is, the potential results of the collaboration. Thus, collaboration is most successful when the shared vision and goal are most clear, and when the participants are aware of their potential for contributing to the project. Measuring the relationship between the starting conditions in a collaboration and the results obtained will be crucial for distilling its efficiency. **We must learn to measure what actually works in a collaboration.**



Measuring the impact of (inter)relationships in the efficiency of collaboration

Figure based on one of the author's projects



5

Co-space/time

THE ARCHITECTURE OF COLLABORATION

Space plays a very important role in collaboration. There are in fact **buildings designed for collaboration and buildings that, without fully knowing why, facilitate better collaboration for users**. There are historical examples such as MIT's legendary Building 20 in Boston, which although built as a temporary structure ultimately lasted for over fifty years as a space that encouraged the combination of talents (scientific groups from very diverse disciplines). It was precisely its temporary nature that made possible all kinds of experimentation with the building (for example, running cables through walls without asking for anybody's permission). This "lack of seriousness" spontaneously converted it into a "magical incubator". In contrast, **"serious" buildings, designed specifically for the cross-pollination of ideas, ultimately limit collaboration because their square-meter price prevents using them in a daring manner**. And all innovation requires daring.

We have all experienced **spaces that spontaneously encourage collaboration**, whether it is a hotel lobby (such as New York's Ace Hotel), a café (not necessarily Starbucks) or a cabin in Finland, with its sauna and icy dip in a nearby lake as part of its "socialization menu". Or even a carriage on a high-speed train or an airplane cabin. Understanding why these spaces facilitate collaboration is very important today for business.

Moreover, it is necessary to **rethink office furniture design** to respond to the new realities of work, **with the aim of interaction between professionals**, beyond that of the old organization into departments or, even worse, cubicles (cube farms). What we need are spaces to ramble, to dream, to play, but also to concentrate, to navigate and to combine.

A temporality that encouraged collaboration

MIT's legendary Building 20 (1943-1998)



©MIT

SPACES ARE FOR SOCIALISING

For the first time in history, **many of us can work wherever we want, without physical presence being essential in order to form part of a team.** At least in theory. In fact, an aircraft’s cabin, a taxi seat or any street corner are already common work spaces, for in all these places I have had telephone or digital conversations, have written articles and have accepted projects.

But at the same time, **the “conventional” office has become a necessary place, a place to socialize.** Where you can open your mind to other people’s ideas and where you can call into question the convictions arising from working in isolation. **Offices are no longer white-collar factories, but markets for exchanging ideas, projects and dreams.** A cozy place where you even have to think about how to paint the walls to be able to jot down ideas on them as soon as they emerge (see IdeaPaint’s range of whiteboards).

It is no wonder, then, that although many professionals can now work quietly at home as freelancers using powerful tools, it is understandable that co-working spaces and hubs are also appearing, spaces to share and socialize that are more than just a shared office space. **The trend towards self-employment is feeding the success of these shared spaces, and also involves the development of new working habits,** new cost structures (in particular, lessening the costs of spaces), new services and especially the emergence of situations for “improbable connections”, for serendipity.

All this highlights **the relevance of the art of hospitality.** Learning how to create a collaborative atmosphere in a shared physical space is no trivial matter. It takes time and requires special skills. It is not about having an office manager, but a “life and soul”, **a particularly sympathetic person who can energize collaboration.**

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CLUSTERS AND “SOCIETIES”

Companies need to collaborate because their ability to confront increasing complexity is limited. Thus, for example, sector clusters are being designed, or are emerging, to share technology centers, conduct research that is in the collective interest, define standards or lobby public powers. **Clusters make possible what would be too costly or impossible individually.** But a global economy, with a certain bias towards the East, is calling into question the interest and usefulness of local groups. And more so those that have been planned. For many companies, relationships are more intense with companies that are physically very distant than with neighboring ones. A cluster in which nobody contributes anything, and in which everybody expects results, is like a sum in which all the summands are zero. There are no results without multiplying the willingness and value contributions of the components involved. Consequently, symbiosis polygons such as Kalundborg's in Denmark make sense: one's waste is another's raw material.

Moreover, **areas that are densely populated with companies enjoying thematic rapport are appearing in some world cities in a completely spontaneous manner**, based around truly unique individual “champions” catalyzing the creative energies of professional groups that are being drawn to them from all corners of the planet. This is the case of Silicon Roundabout in East London, for example. A cluster of hundreds of digital service companies that emerged against all odds in the midst of a recession (in 2008) and outside any hint of industrial policy planning. Its driving force: success stories attracting others. And a bohemian-based social environment (rich in creativity) and modest living costs (more in tune with professionals who value ideas more than luxury cars).

The future: transverse social spaces (“societies”) spontaneously emerging between companies from different sectors that are not competitors and are seeking systematic intersections.



**Talent hubs in cheap,
bohemian spaces**

www.siliconroundabout.org.uk


URBANISING TIME

One of the critical paradoxes of our time has to do with **the imbalance between our physical capabilities and those of the machines we have created**. Thus, for example, we have constructed a digital world in which the amount of information we receive per time unit is continuously increasing (tending towards the infinite), while our ability to process this has stalled (and is even tending towards zero because we are becoming dispersed). The result is what has been dubbed a **“time famine”**: **the feeling that we need more time to understand what we are receiving, without knowing where to obtain this extra time**.

One potentially harmful consequence is that **time ceases to make sense: we can no longer differentiate between when we are working and when we are not**. Mobile systems make us permanently available (always on). The worst thing is that we are always available to carry out processes, but not to think. In other words, extending our working time prevents us from finding and enjoying quality time

to think, analyze and dream. **And we cannot expect to innovate without having time that is free from routines** aimed at increasing productivity (as occurs in most conventional companies).

Therefore, the proposal is for **new concepts of space/time (read, situations) specially designed for collaboratively expanding the mind** to release it from the usual routines (see, for example, corporate innovation camps). Furthermore, there are those who can afford the time for a few days solitude a year to devote themselves to reading, thinking and writing (I must confess that is how this book began, during some reading holidays). Others dedicate a few days a week to open their home in order to share it with other professionals and facilitate creative talk time (see the case of Jelly). Work is even being done to convert interruptions, which are common in all workplaces, into a new source of mental energy. Because **every moment should be an opportunity for improvement**, for combining minds and making progress.



Hiya. Jelly is a semi-weekly work-together, and you're invited!

As seen in... [Wired](#), [NPR's Talk of the Nation](#), [NY Post](#), [CNN](#), [NPR's Morning Edition](#), [Current TV](#), [NPR's Marketplace](#), and [NBC's Today Show](#)!

Find Jelly in...

Over 100 cities around the world.
For the full list, visit our wiki:
[wiki.workatjelly.com](#)

...

Start your own!

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...

WHAT IS IT?

[Watch this video](#)
to see what Jelly is like.

...

JELLY UPDATES

Sign up for occasional updates.
(About new Jellys and such.)

What is Jelly?

Jelly is a casual working event. It's taken place in over a hundred cities where people have come together (in a person's home, a coffee shop, or an office) to work for the day. We provide chairs and sofas, wireless internet, and interesting people to talk to, collaborate with, and bounce ideas off of.

You bring a laptop (or whatever you need to get your work done) and a friendly disposition.

[Watch this video about Jelly](#), or read about it in [Wired](#).

Why do you do this?

Jelly started in NYC in February of 2006 when roommates [Amit](#) and [Luke](#) realized that they loved working from home, but they missed the creative brainstorming, sharing, and camaraderie of a traditional office setting (where you get on much.)

So they started inviting friends to come work from their home in proximity to new and interesting people every couple weeks.

Emboldened by their early success, they made it a monthly thing.

Who can come to Jelly?

Anyone!

We see a lot of designers, developers, and internet types, but we see all sorts of people: writers, artists, designers, etc.

Open your home to generate moments of exchange

workatjelly.com


COLLABORATIVE TOOLS

As we have already seen, collaboration requires a process. And **the efficiency of every process is strongly related to using the appropriate tools**, and using them productively. Thus, for example, we have had video conferencing systems (including immersive telepresence) for a decade, but the conventional routines that we are very accustomed to prevent us from making the most of these, because we have not designed any new ways of extracting value from them.

Indeed, it is still perceived that face-to face relationships are still superior, as opposed to virtual ones, in all types of collaboration. **It seems that a physical *meeting* has greater potential to ultimately turn into a *relationship*.** But the truth is that there are digital tools that can become even more productive than conventional meetings if they are implemented with ease (see, for example, Crowdcast).


When we talk about collaborative tools, we are thinking beyond tools for merely sharing documents. **Sharing documents does not necessarily mean collaborating**, although it is true that having a document sharing system is often a necessary condition for collaboration, but it is not a sufficient condition.

We need low-cost tools that will remotely connect us (we already have these) to help share documents (we have these) and break down group challenges into connectable individual tasks (we are beginning to have these). But above all, **we need systems to define rules and roles, and to identify collaborative progress by measuring the on-going success that is being achieved.** We need to apply the cloud metaphor (the digital accessible anywhere) to that of collaboration. **We need collaboration clouds.**



Simplify sharing to focus on collaboration

bu.mp



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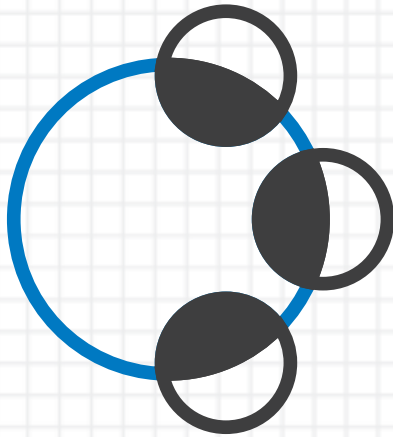
Bump your phones together.

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6 Co-creation

REINVENTING THE VALUE CHAIN

The linearity “à la Porter” of the value chain (design prior to operations, and these prior to sales) is no longer useful in many sectors, because competition has accelerated (shorter product life cycles) and because the risk of launching something that does not connect with the market has become increasingly greater. **There is literally no time to think before producing and seeing if the market is going to accept what is produced.** Consequently, the best innovation teams are triads consisting of design professionals (what to make), operations (how to make it) and customer relations (for whom to make it and how to sell it). The tempo of the value chain has to be managed in radically different ways. **Prototypes have to be produced quickly and it has to be facilitated that any new idea can be tested quickly, thus converting the teams that devise and develop these into startups within the companies welcoming them** (as Eric Ries proposes with his “lean startup” concept).

Moreover, the fact that we have moved from a market dominated by demand (there is demand for everything; if you do things right, someone will buy from you) to a market of excess supply (there is everything, and in excess; the demand has trouble choosing) forces the **incorporation of the customer much earlier into the production process.** The customer must be part of the idea process (co-creation of product/service between company and customer) and, additionally, the company has to decide to produce only when the customer confirms that he or she will buy.

In short, **demand plays a much stronger role in today's economy and this forces us to rethink the value chain.** The potential customers of a product or service can today act as protagonists in defining the product (*“I'd like this to exist”*), choosing the supply (*“would you like to have this product?”*) and its eventual production (*“we'll produce this if, and only if, you say you'd like to have it and promise to buy it if we make it”*).

The image shows a screenshot of a Kickstarter campaign page for a project titled "Pulse Sensor: an Open Source Heart-rate Sensor Rocks". The page is from the year 2011, as indicated by the URL "http://kick.stmias911". The campaign is led by Yury Gitman, an Open Hardware project in Brooklyn, NY. The page shows that the project has 491 backers, has raised \$18,418, and is 0 seconds away from reaching its \$3,000 goal. A green banner indicates "FUNDING SUCCESSFUL". The project description includes a video of a hand holding the sensor, which is a small circuit board with a green LED. The page also features social media links for Like, Facebook, and Twitter, and a section for "ABOUT THIS PROJECT".

That which we promise to buy is produced

www.kickstarter.com

THE FUTURE OF MANUFACTURING

Manufacturing is essential. Because **by manufacturing solutions in the form of objects, we confront new problems that have to be solved, and this forces innovation.** Manufacturing implies a lot of intellectual work, as opposed to what we might have thought. The exploitation of natural phenomena in the form of technology, devising prototypes to help test new ideas, the constant trial and error dynamics that are typical of manufacturing, these are among the largest sources of knowledge for mankind. In short, **we cannot separate R&D from innovation in manufacturing.** A country cannot innovate without a manufacturing base.

On the other hand, the service element of many industrial companies is also growing, thus converting themselves into **“industrial services” companies.** For example, more than half the revenues of Rolls Royce come from the real-time maintenance of “its fleet” of engines installed in the thousands of planes flying every day.

Moreover, manufacturing can today take advantage of the large accumulation of “components” that is already available, combining them in new ways to serve new needs. It is what Steven Johnson has dubbed the “adjacent possible”: technologies that can be used as “materials” for new technologies, in a process of creating constant value. This allows for manufacturing in places and at times that were previously impossible. **Advanced, light production technologies make possible the local production** of all manner of products. This is why bicycle manufacturers are appearing in San Francisco (www.sfmade.org) and all manner of small workshops in New York (www.madein-nyc.org), incorporating the city brand as a value (pride of place). And companies like Local Motors are redefining how a car is devised, designed and manufactured, with **a production system combining “craft workshop”, “custom made” and advanced manufacturing.** A system integrating various skills within a collaborative model that will redefine the industry.

The screenshot shows the homepage of 'THE Forge', a community platform for Local Motors. The header includes the title 'THE Forge' and the tagline 'Local Motors Co-Creation'. Below this, a section titled 'HOW WE CO-CREATE' lists four roles: Industrial Designers, Engineers, 3D CAD Modelers, and Fabricators, each with a brief description of their role and a small icon. At the bottom, there are links to 'Visit The Forge Community', 'Sign Up', and 'Start a Project'. The footer features logos for 'CAR & DRIVER', 'WIRED', 'POPULAR SCIENCE', and 'Popular Mechanics'.

Local manufacture of cars co-created by users

www.local-motors.com

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP PRODUCTION

Interestingly, the most advanced technology will help us in a return to basics: producing the things we need by ourselves. First, because **we are once again valuing handmade and not machine-made goods** (imperfection is nice, a sign of humanity) and, second, because we appreciate having custom-made solutions at the right time and at an affordable price.

Individual production, **spurred by low-cost 3D printers** (such as Thing-O-Matic by MakerBot), helps us to glimpse a future in which an individual or group makes what they need without having to resort to a company. We can even make fully customized clothing, as proposed to us by Continuum Fashion. Moreover, the existence of open source hardware (such as Arduino circuit boards) convert any person with knowledge, skills and a small number of tools into a potential engineering services company.

The future is TTT: **Think & Tink to make Things**. To arrive at this, we will have to rethink training and direct it more towards “making things by hand” in order to create

prototypes, to learn more by doing rather than by reading or watching. It is no surprise that the DIY phenomenon is attracting the attention of a growing number of people (see, for example, the magazine *Make*, makezine.com, or the fair Maker Faire, makerfaire.com), and that hacker culture (combining the existing in new ways) is invading all sectors (and that restless people throughout the world, for example, are using IKEA furniture to design new furniture: IKEA hackers, ikeahackers.net).

Moreover, **making something yourself provides comfort**: having to make something increases the value you give to the result. The effort constructs a bond with the constructed object. It is what someone has dubbed the “IKEA effect”. **We want to produce things ourselves in order to enjoy them more.**



THE CUSTOMER IS THE COMPANY

We have already seen how customers are becoming increasingly more important when determining what to produce and how to serve them. The customer is no longer somebody outside the company. **Stating this is very easy, but it is not as easy to digest.** Understanding the full extent that the final goal of any company is to understand the problems of people (as citizens) and meet their needs (as consumers), and not simply to program them into buying everything we suggest as monetizable automata. This is no trivial matter. To begin with, **we must understand the company not as “a machine for making money”, but as “a system to achieve a goal”** (or better still, a mission). Charles Handy reminded us of this in his legendary article “What is a business for?” during the moral crisis after the Enron financial disaster.

If a company’s function is to provide people with value propositions that solve their problems by giving them solutions, the active participation of customers in the company becomes critical. You can start with something seemingly “cosmetic”, such as claiming that the products

it sells are what the people have decided (something that, for example, the computer chain Best Buy did in its “you asked for the perfect laptop” campaign for its Blue Label Laptops). Or freely and widely absorb the ideas that people propose (the BMW Guggenheim Lab in New York is seeking to redefine mobility in cities).

We must learn from customers in terms of what they want, but above all we should **learn from what they do.** When they do things, how they do them and how much do they want to pay for them. How they vote with their feet by going to what they like, and how much they pay for what pleases them. Moreover, if you understand how they live, in an integral manner, your proposals may be more useful. It is what, for example, the Belgian pharmaceutical company UCB proposes: to be a company “focusing on patients”, some of whom by openly talking about their lives are “ambassadors” guiding the company’s research. **You have to be important to your customers in a truly authentic manner.**

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Jerome and Raffaele, living with epilepsy

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26-Jan-2012
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www.ucb.com

THE CUSTOMER CO-CREATES

Today, it is possible for customers to create with the company. **We have digital tools available that can convert anybody into a potential designer**, in such a way that co-creation is unfolding across a wide spectrum of possibilities.

Perhaps co-creation is limited to **choosing among various available options**. For example, you can choose the color of your helmet (www.3dhelmetsnzi.com) within a limited series of designs, or the same goes for sports shoes (www.munichsports.com). This is a flexible manufacturing scheme in which the machinery has a “library” of options of the components it must integrate, which are manufactured according to the order list. Customers can also **suggest improvements** in a product’s specifications. Such was the case, for example, in the new Mio car project by Fiat in Brazil (www.fiatmio.cc).

But we can also find tools, for example, that provide a **wide scope in terms of designing** your own room (see dwr.mydeco.com or www.blophome.com). At another level of

participation, customers can **design innovative solutions** beyond the limits of flexible manufacturing “libraries” (there are examples of “competitions” in which customers design their proposed solutions; see the case of sole design for Nike at www.nicekicks.com/tag/future-sole). Moreover, customers can also **suggest products**, such as combining available “components” in new ways, as Lego allows its fans to do (designbyme.lego.com). Even from an aggregate collective decision, customers can **determine what is made** among all the possible proposals presented by the manufacturer (the most popular designs are manufactured, as in www.stylefactory.com). Or finally, a customer may **suggest manufacturing a new product**, and this is done if it receives enough support from customers who promise to buy it.



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Make Your Wishes Come True

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Have an idea? Create a Wish!!

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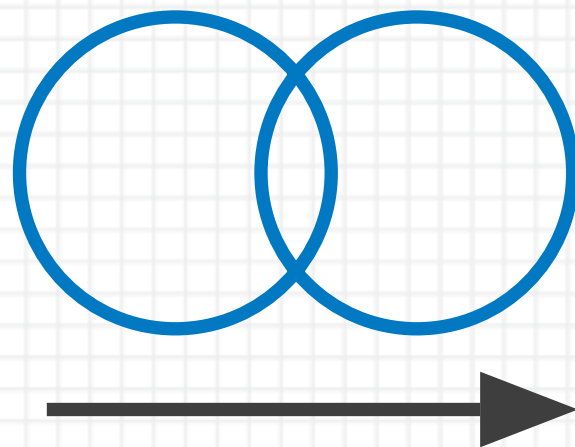
3.



Wishes with 1000 supporters
can become LEGO® products

The customer suggests, others join in, the manufacturer produces it

lego.cuusoo.com



7 Co-learning

FINALLY, COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

In his book *The Wisdom of Crowds*, James Surowiecki reminds us that **collective decisions are better than individual decisions** in many situations. Thus, while another author, Eric Bonabeau, warns us of the risk of the herd behavior of a society with excess information (ours), Surowiecki promises us a better world if decisions are made *collectively* (and in many cases, *informally*).

An exciting intellectual challenge is presented here: **will “network technologies” construct greater intelligence as a result of the connection of new “neurons” (network nodes)** or, conversely, will the “neurons” simply be dumbed down because they will be limited to copying what dazzles most? In other words, will the network’s result be the achievement of a greater “collective intelligence” or the reign of “gregarious imitation”?

Surowiecki provides an interesting clue concerning **under what conditions a group achieves a better result than an individual**: when the *diversity* and *independence* of the nodes are guaranteed. Any distortion of these two factors corrupts the final result. **A univocal, conducted (manipulated) crowd cannot make a more intelligent decision than an independent, reasonable individual.** Given the tendency of our media today, I do not know if they help to increase the diversity and independence of the criteria of citizens or, conversely, are amalgamating our thoughts.

Applying all this to an organization makes the challenge even more impressive: should we continue to rely on the decisions (the “judgment”) of a few (“those who think”) or must we **develop decision-making mechanisms based on the development of an entire organization’s collective intelligence?**

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CROSSING REAL KNOWLEDGE

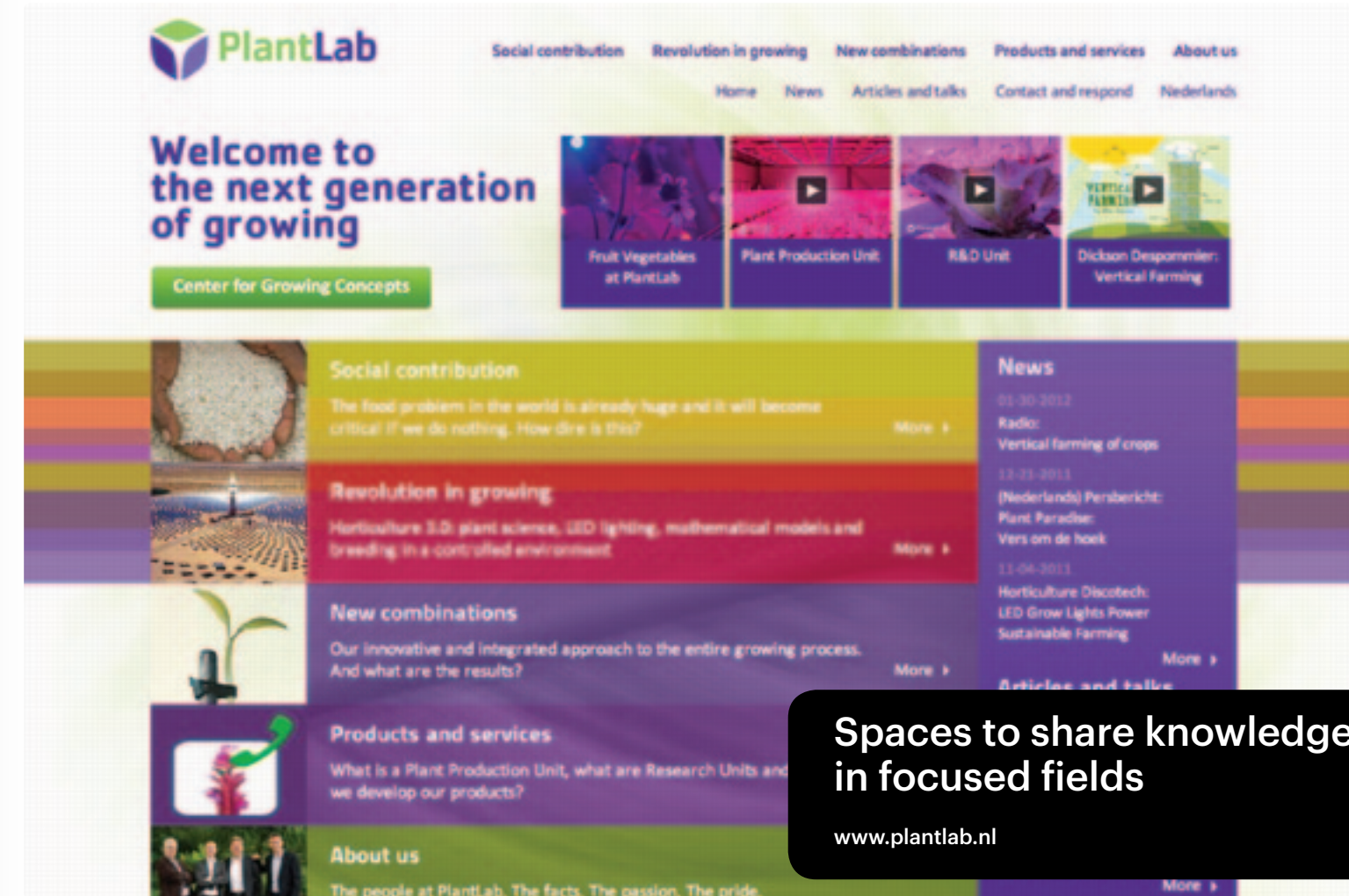
What do we really want in business training? **Well, to be able to draw from the necessary knowledge when it is needed.** We are heading towards a situation dominated by a demand for knowledge, as opposed to mere supply, because markets are more complex and fast: when a problem arises, we would like to be able to resort to explicit (documents) and tacit (people) knowledge bases in order to help us to solve it. This will probably force us to make a profound change in the current standards of business training.

Knowledge exchange spaces could be one solution, but they are faced with problems that are not technological, but psychological: why do I have to run the risk of revealing what I know if it robs me of my greatest value in the organization? Worse still: and if what I know is not what I should know and what the organization actually pays me for? Systems based on the voluntary description and contribution of knowledge in organizations are faced with this mistrust. Collaboration in organizations is being hampered by a lack of clear rules for sharing and recognition in order to encourage collaboration.

Some tools have proposed simple solutions, such as, for example, **an automatic system determining the “knowledge profile” of professionals** in an organization based on “reading” all their written output. Obviously, concerns have arisen here from the fear of intruding into the privacy of individuals.

One of the tools that is apparently proving to work better in knowledge sharing is **problem/solution markets** such as InnoCentive: somebody with a problem puts a price on the solution, thereby encouraging experts who are likely to find one.

“Prizes” handed out as challenges for solving problems have also proven to be useful, encouraging rivalry between groups scattered throughout the world. The initiatives of the XPrize Foundation prove that **the attractiveness of an economically substantial award can mobilize groups that end up jointly investing more resources than can be obtained by only one winner.**



Spaces to share knowledge
in focused fields

www.plantlab.nl

PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Cognitive experts tell us that we only learn what we think, that we learn what we must process to understand and that later this remains as something understood in our permanent memory. This is **perhaps why we learn more when we have to solve a problem.** When we are confronted by it without the necessary knowledge, and to solve it we have to seek this knowledge, process it, mentally digest it and understand it. It is only then that we learn profoundly and permanently.

The PBL (Problem-Based Learning) pedagogical model is based on “*using problems as a starting point for acquiring and integrating new knowledge*”. According to this method, small working groups collaboratively learn how to solve a problem after it has been posed, analyzing its context, suggesting ideas, determining the information already known by group members, looking for unknown information, de-

fining the problem precisely, refining the information that helps solve it accurately and, finally, working on how to present the results obtained.

As seen from this model, **learning is thus a social, collaborative activity**. Everybody contributes what he or she knows and analyses issues that most interests them. The learning focus becomes centered on coordinating the information search and the final knowledge architecture arising from it. Based on this model, and other similar ones, various initiatives propose focusing educational strategies on the collaborative “search” (inquiry, quest) for answers and solutions to real problems. Perhaps this will also be the best way to learn in an organization: **structure learning and training strategies around collaborative projects founded on real problems** (or opportunities) to solve (PBL: Project-Based Learning).



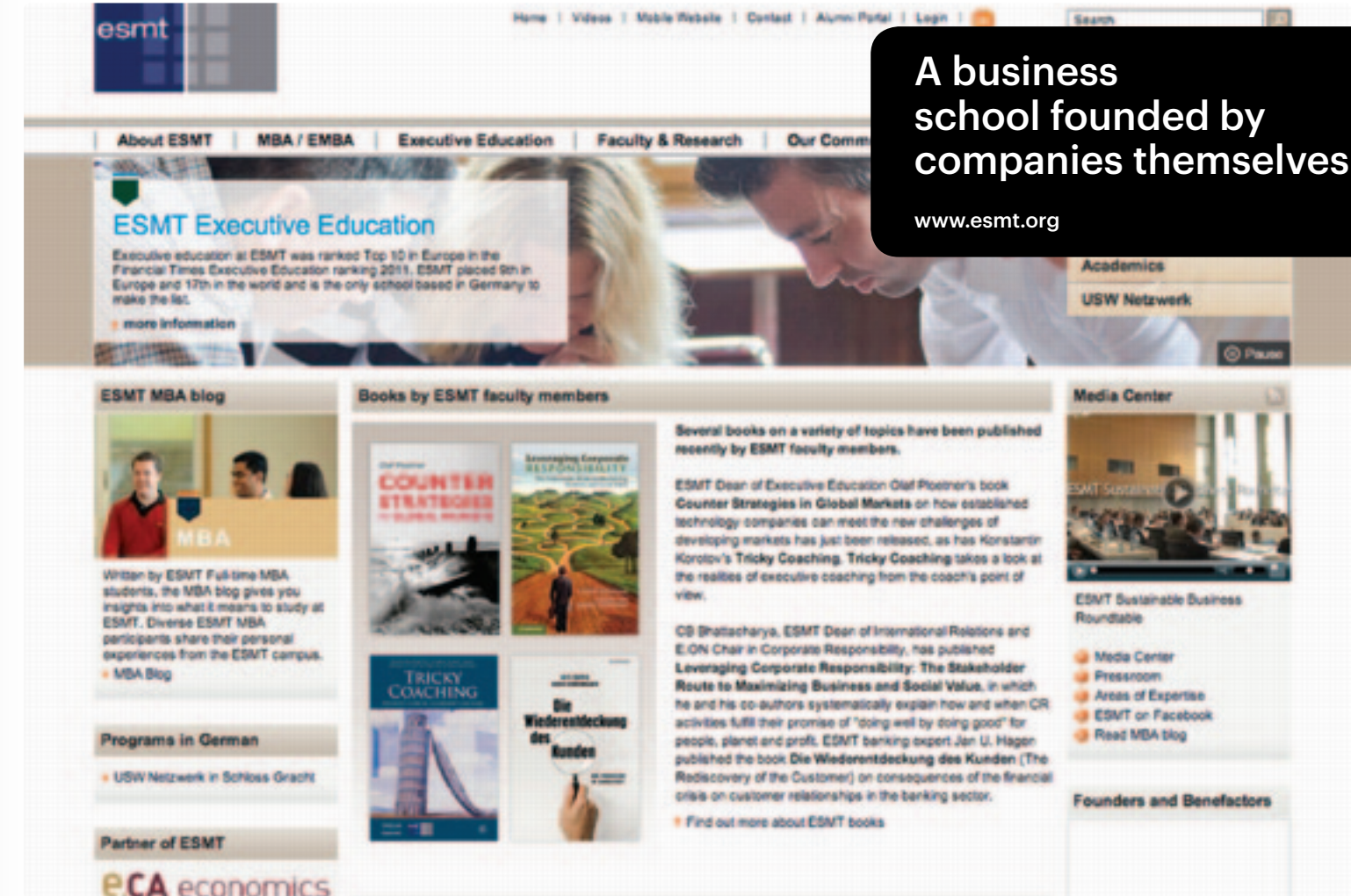
TOWARDS A CO-BUSINESS SCHOOL?

What if training moved from something dominated by supply to something driven by demand? What if a corporate university forgot about inventing programs or trying to translate what is offered by a business school to its needs, and instead **structured its training program around actual projects**? A business school should perhaps be more a place to meet knowledge needs (“what we need now”), discover new models and methods (“the alchemy of business models”, for example; see businessmodelalchemy.com) and **organize ideas and knowledge around new projects based on the construction of prototypes by combining the skills of multidisciplinary teams**.

I have met dozens of executives who have a lot to explain, but have found neither the place nor the manner to do so. It is possible that they do not possess special communication skills, because it is one thing to do something very well and another to know how to properly communicate it in a rela-

tively pedagogical manner. But it is also true that **when you have to explain something in an understandable manner, you ultimately learn about it better**. Jean-Pol Martin has defined an educational method based on this that he calls “learning by teaching”. Seneca already wrote in his letters to Lucilius that we learn when we teach: *docendo discimus*, “by teaching we learn” (*Epistulae morales I, 7.8*).

Perhaps we will see a training system in the future in which the directors of a company, or several coordinated companies, will transmit knowledge to their colleagues in a completely practical manner. In fact, business schools founded directly by business associations already exist. But we must progress further and invent a business school that **combines the needs and knowledge of its teams** to learn from joint problem solving, **discovering new shared opportunities** through rapid prototyping. In short, a co-business school.



A business school founded by companies themselves

www.esmt.org

CO-AGES

Experience is truly essential. **The knowledge resulting from experience has a differential value.** Anybody with children who has wanted to encourage them knows how different learning can be when they have to do something with their own hands, when they have to solve a problem, when they have to repeat something over and over again until it comes out right. **Age is relevant in terms of being an indicator of experience,** at least nominally.

Experienced workers are essential assets in any organization. I remember being explained the case of a construction company that had to turn to a person who had already retired because he knew exactly how they had solved a problem for which they could not find a solution now. Anyone who has worked in knowledge management knows **the difference between explicit knowledge (what is documentable) and tacit knowledge (what is only in our minds, what cannot be condensed into a document).** It has been said that people who can detect a fake painting simply by seeing

it are resorting to nothing more than their intuition based on accumulated experience. This is very valuable.

Moreover, a study by the Kauffman Foundation found that, from 1996 until today, Americans between the ages of 55 and 64 had started more companies than those aged between 20 and 34. This **negates the garage myth**, for it is not recent polytechnic graduates setting up new companies, but professionals with experience taking advantage of a niche not covered by the company they had worked for to launch a new value proposition onto the market. The ageing of employees must be understood as a process to be managed, rather than as a sudden fact. You have to train yourself to becoming older.

Given that experience is very valuable, it is essential to bring together, combine and intersect juniors and seniors, so that the latter become mentors to the former and the former instill new energy into the latter.

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First steps with the mentors

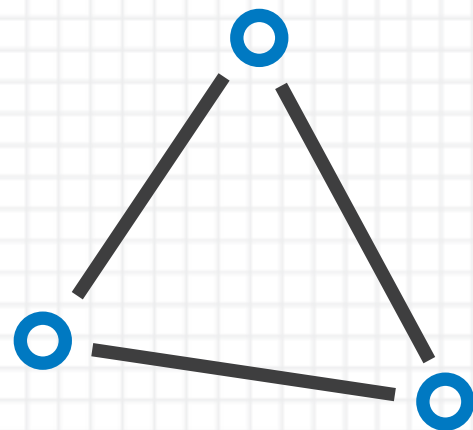
The 2010 protégés have begun their year of mentoring with renowned masters in their field. In a series of interviews, the protégés talk about their early experiences with their mentors.

READ THE INTERVIEWS

- Lee Serie, Dance Protégé
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8

Networks and markets

THE TYRANNY OF THE SOCIAL NETWORK

Social networks have so greatly entered our daily routines and have become as normal as catching a bus that **daring to comment on their potential harm is viewed as a symptom of anachronistic behavior.** And yet, in the same way that I once seriously doubted the usefulness of Internet “portals” at the time (does anybody remember them and the huge amounts of money they moved?), I would dare to suggest that social networks may end up being viewed as the tentacles of an invisible tyranny. When you see your children glued to social networking pages at the end of a tiring day at school, with no other goal than seeing what others have been saying in a competition for the most pronounced absurdity, you cannot refrain from thinking that if this is the collaboration we are heading towards then perhaps it is better to remain in a world of individuals.

My words may sound strange in a book focusing on the power of collaboration between people, but they must be understood as a call to **“another” use of social networks, directed more towards developing collective action, solving problems, constructive socializing, and not the artificial socializing** of thousands of isolated screens in front of those lonely souls craving for company. A French friend of mine once told me: *“my mother does not under-*

stand that, with so many calls and social networks, I spend so many weekends alone and, worse still, feeling lonely”. It is a paradox of the network society that we are becoming increasingly connected, but a growing number of people are feeling lonely.

It is not that networks cannot provide “social value”: their potential in this sense is immense. But the value they bring *versus* the one they impede has not yet been calculated. In addition, **there should be concern about the use that network owners (for it is a fallacy that networks belong to everybody) may make of the information they have about us:** you can currently give a present of a book to a Facebook friend with the certainty that he or she will like it (as it is on his or her list of interests).

I do not believe it is daring to claim that **a growing interest in traditional social relationships will emerge from social networks:** people who meet to share the happiness of unique moments. We will return to dinners with friends, as we will return to making things with our hands. **The network revolution will make us more human, because we will return to our origins.** History is a spiral staircase: we always return to the same place, but a few steps above.



The screenshot shows the homepage of 'A Table for Six Australia'. The header features the logo and a navigation menu: Home | Events | Membership | Platinum Area | Blog | Testimonials | What is A Table for Six. Below the header, there's a promotional banner with the text '3 Men 3 Ladies and a restaurant'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains a 'Subscribe to Win' form with fields for First Name, Last Name, Email, Postcode, and Gender (with a dropdown menu showing 'Female'). The right column features the heading 'A TABLE FOR SIX AUSTRALIA DINNER EVENTS FOR SINGLES' and several paragraphs of text promoting the service, including links to 'Terms and conditions-link', 'View our Events page', and 'Enquire about membership'.

A dinner is the best way of interacting with people

atableforsix.com.au

PERSON = SENSOR

The fact that we always carry a transceiver device, a mobile phone, makes a revolution possible in **the way we capture data from our real-time surroundings**. Thus, for example, our mobile device can act as a “sensor” for road traffic, in such a way that countless data on countless users, processed and presented in an intuitive way, can help you to be informed about road traffic conditions and make real-time decisions.

In other cases, it is not the device that does something autonomously, but people who use it to be informed about the state of their surroundings: thus, thousands of people *tweeting* about delays on a railway line becomes **a network sensory system that is better than that of the line itself**.

Moreover, gathering information about how a group of tourists perceive different parts of a city (what excites them,

what upsets them, what reassures them, etc), **measured by changes in some of their physical variables** (heart rate, breathing, sweating, etc), can help to create a perceptual map of the city that is completely different from the one a local tourist agency could ever conceive.

Web 2.0 is the Internet of people connecting with each other (that of social networks). The Internet of the future will be about things: all objects on the Earth connected to the Internet (most likely beginning with the devices of cities in the prevailing smart city model).

But the fusion of these two networks will result in the Homo Sensor network: each person voluntarily or involuntarily generating data to make life flow better in cities (in other words, on the planet, which soon will be a network of cities.)



An information system generated by people

rodalia.info

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Professional networks are a good example of “potential productivity”. They are platforms that help to connect with specialized professionals anywhere in the world, with **search engines that allow for fine tuning between talent supply and job demand**. Moreover, belonging to a professional network encourages you to keep your skills profile and personal services offer organized and updated daily. But it would be desirable to have some way of ensuring that the qualifications a person has are in fact the real thing. Nonetheless, networks make up a huge system connecting professionals, **an Internet of talent** comparable to the Internet of documents (Google) that has only just begun. A substantial part of **the economy of collaborative talent towards which we are heading: an economy of independent professionals** (freelancers). A system for sharing real-time knowledge as never before has existed.

As a very specific example of its possibilities, networks fluidify relationships with **professionals in the diaspora** (and diasporas will continue to grow in the coming years):

the “daily” nation of millions of people can be any place on the planet (to which circumstances have led that person to live), but their emotional ties, their nation “home”, may be anywhere else. **These links predispose them to collaborate with professionals contacting them from their place of origin**. One clear benefit of being present in networks is locating talent in the diaspora when doing business in another country.

Following another line of thinking, professional networks are **changing the way in which companies “recruit” their professionals**. The search can be more “fine tuned” here, more accurate and more in real time, seeking and locating professionals for a specific task at any given time. Networks also allow help to maintain contact with candidates who have not been hired despite being contacted. **Networks are the platform for the ongoing management of relationships with candidates** (CRM: Candidate Relationship Management). They comprise a latent base of talent, potential human energy.



Image of the Med & Learn group created by Julio Mayol and Jaime Otero

Apply social networks to share knowledge

www.facebook.com/groups/medandlearn


TOWARDS MARKETS BETWEEN PEOPLE

Social networks connect people, at least potentially they do. A very basic form of connection is simply **exchanging information**: each becomes the editor of his or her life and explains what he or she wants to inform about it (sometimes unwittingly providing too much information). **The Internet thus becomes a report of our day-to-day**, the place to “post” what happens to us. “We live by publishing ourselves”, which is how an entire generation of digital natives (the Facebook generation) are living.

This shared report **encourages communication**, two-way information: person communicates with person. Unfortunately, **much of the communication that invades the Internet today is a juxtaposition of monologues seemingly disguised as dialogue**: a flow of recommendations on “what you have to see” that can become a state of constant distraction (always on), without necessarily having a positive impact on our lives. **Constant interruptions that make concentration difficult**. A constant stimulus on our emotional brain (“System 1”, according to Kahneman) that steals time from the eventual intervention of our rational brain (“System 2”). But the day when networks seriously help in new ways to connect

people who can and want to complement and intensely communicate with each other in a two-way manner, **we will have made a significant leap in the history of human relationships**.

But ultimately, the most interesting thing about social networks is their **potential for transactions**: people looking for something “trade” with people who have something to offer, without this implying a conventional form of mercantilism. **A new form of barter, sometimes of sophisticated services, made possible by the “long queue” comprising every human on this planet**: whatever you may be looking for, whatever you may be offering, somebody on this planet is on the same wavelength. Moreover, if an effective form of machine translation appears, the explosion of productive connectivity between people may eventually convert the current organization-based economy into a historical anecdote. **The future is markets between people, because networks drastically reduce the transaction costs of the relationship between supply and demand**. Companies exist because hierarchical organization has hitherto reduced transaction costs, but this need not always be the rule (Coase theorem).



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Markets between people in a “long queue” of services

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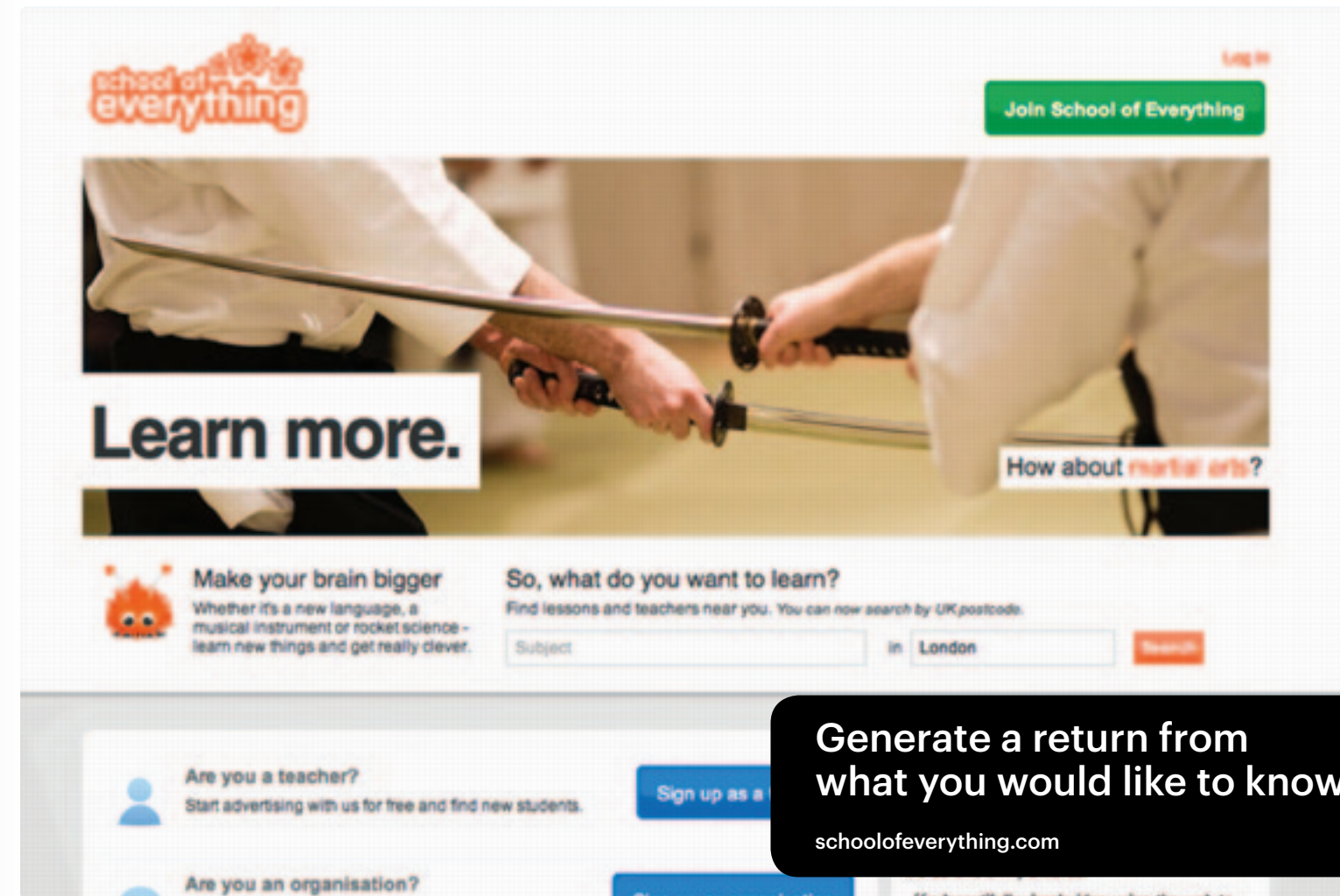
PERSONAL ADDED VALUE

We all know a lot about something we are passionate about. It may be Romanesque art, making croquettes, taking photographs of windows or working out some cycling trails. We seek spaces that attract us intellectually to feel alive and survive our annihilatingly routine environments. And we love explaining these things. Millions of YouTube videos are small tutorials explaining how to do something. And when the quality of what you offer increases, it begins to make sense to charge for it. It is no wonder, then, that places like the School of Everything or Skillshare are booming, “course” markets on all manner of subjects where the teachers are not academics. Although there are also people universities where knowledge is organized more formally, such as the University of the People, where retired teachers contribute their knowledge for free to thousands of students.

Skills markets may provide a supplement to the impoverished incomes of the middle classes, especially in the West. People with a “normal” job in the morning can increase their incomes in the afternoon or evening

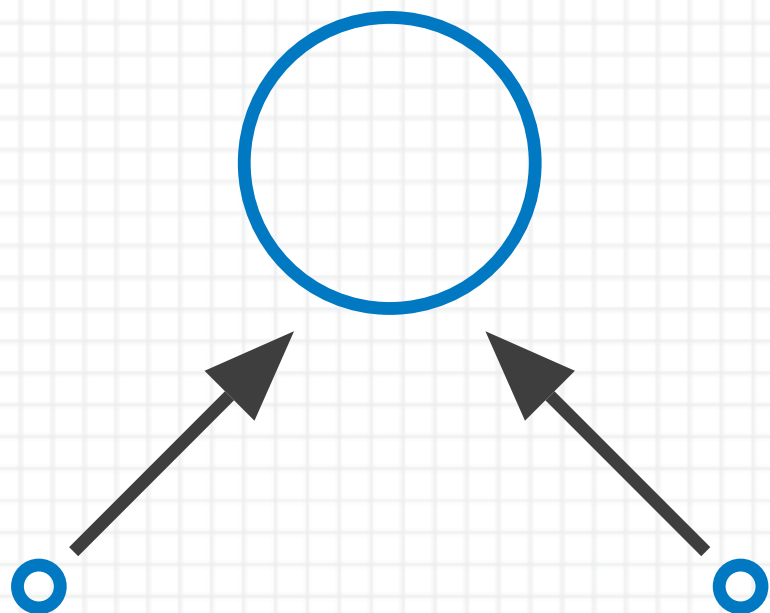
by explaining what they know to others for a reasonable price. Thus, **it may be that millions of new “one-person businesses” will appear**, creating value from “informal” knowledge (“what I know how to do from practice, without having a qualification to prove it”). They are the “startups of you”, a form of self-employment in which the product is knowledge and the market is the world. One of these is Nightowls, entrepreneurs who start doing business in a co-working space at night after they finish their normal job.

The question we need to ask ourselves, therefore, is **what added value can we provide that will be seen as such and be monetizable?** We have to organize ourselves to learn continuously until becoming experts in what we are passionate about.



Generate a return from what you would like to know

schoolofeverything.com



9 Collaborative consumption

SHOPPING CLUBS

While not exactly a collaborative consumer experience, the emergence and success in recent years of **shopping clubs demonstrates the growing power of consumer associations**. In this case, it concerns generally digital spaces in which “members” can acquire (brand) products at lower than usual prices. These outlets usually follow **fast growth strategies, especially those with a purely digital base**. There are some companies in this area that do not hesitate in investing heavily in attracting customers, **in a speculative phenomenon** that recalls other moments in dotcom history, even losing money in their sales in order to accelerate turnover growth and attract funding in successive rounds.

A collaborative aspect of outlets is their **connection to social networks: people recommend products to their friends through their “walls” in network sites**. This link between interpersonal communication and product recommendation in shopping clubs has the potential to initiate an economic space with a level playing field that is very differ-

ent from the conventional in terms of product design, logistics and customer service. One of Bill Gates’ ideas could be applied here when he spoke of financial services: if Gates stated that *“banking is essential, banks are not”*, it could be said here that *“trade is essential, stores are not”*.

Moreover, the evolution towards shopping groups can be glimpsed, making their collaborative strength a major bargaining power. Groups that agree to make a collective offer to a manufacturer (“if this were the price, this is how many of us would buy the product”; see the example of everybodycar.com) or even hordes of people that simultaneously appear in an actual store to push for lower prices.

One final idea: **promoting local currencies that are only accepted in one neighborhood in a completely legal manner**, so that the money generated in the area remains there. A kind of shopping club with its own currency that has an impact less on brands than on local stores (see the example of London’s Brixton Pound).



The growth of shopping clubs
privalia.es

THE ECONOMY OF SHARING

One of the digital revolution's unintended consequences is **that it no longer makes sense to own some things** because it is extremely easy to participate in a market that facilitates sharing. Why own a car if I can obtain one whenever I need at a much lower cost? Why buy a yacht when I only use one a few weeks a year? And what about a second home? There are many products, or even services, that we buy in the most natural way today that we could **consume more collaboratively in the future**. Electric car stations in cities that make taking your own meaningless?

Public bicycles in cities are an example of shared mobility: they are for everybody and the system working well depends on everybody. In fact, this is one of the main difficulties of an economy of sharing: that all users sharing goods are aware of the need of taking care of them so that

they last. The tragedy of public goods (*“they are nobody’s because they belong to everybody”*) will have to be built upon **a new culture of respecting what is shared**. The new basis of this culture of sharing should be: *“it is mine because it is everybody’s, which is why I demand that everybody else takes care of it too”*.

We will change to hiring many of the things we have today because the time periods that we use them is minuscule. **Perhaps we will rent everything for short periods of time**. The care and maintenance of shared assets will perhaps become an important source of economic energy in the future. We will thus generate new resources from today’s underutilized assets. All this facilitated by social networks (connecting people) and instantaneous geopositioning (connecting things).

The image shows a screenshot of the Avancar car-sharing website. The header includes the Avancar logo, navigation links like 'Per què carsharing?', 'Com funciona', 'Tarifes i plans', and 'Treba', and a 'zona soci' button. The main content area features a large yellow banner with the text 'Com tenir el cotxe que vulguis, quan vulguis i per al que vulguis.' and 'Cotxes per hores o dies'. Below this, there's a photo of three people on a beach and a red car. To the right, there are three smaller promotional boxes: 'apunta't al carsharing', 'NECESSITES AJUDA O INFORMACIÓ?' with a phone number, and 'Avancar amb Zipcar + carsharing'. A black text box in the top right corner of the screenshot reads: 'Having a car when I need one' and 'www.avancar.es'.

Having a car
when I need one

www.avancar.es

THE FUTURE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS IS SHARING

Sharing is no longer simply “nice” and “modern”. For millions of middle-class families, especially in the West, **sharing will become *the way to make ends meet, and even to survive***. Because simply the cost of daily living today has become huge. I recall an old fisherman explaining to me that when he was a child, his father used to go out to sea every day for his daily bread and butter. Today, **when we get up every day we begin to pay simply to function as citizens**: electricity, water, gas, transportation, security, etc. Soon we will be paying for the air we breathe if we want it to be of a certain quality.

Faced with the cost of living, but also faced with the absurdity of owning for the sake of owning, **many proposals are appearing for the sharing of resources**. Cars that are filled to share the cost of petrol and motorway tolls (car-pooling such as Amovens). People sharing their cars with others when they are not using them; that is, during most of the week (see the example of SocialCar). Having a sofa

to sleep on when you visit a city and thus not having to pay for a hotel room (see Couchsurfing). Renting your house when you are not there (such as Airbnb). Renting all manner of tools that you will only use once: do you really need to own a chainsaw to cut trees? (see Zilok). Clothing in good condition or toys that your children are already ignoring (Thredup). All this thanks to the ability provided by the Internet in quickly organizing markets between people. And revitalizing the neighborhood among people living nearby to each other: the Neighborgoods initiative is a fantastic name, a space for neighbors to exchange things.

The middle class should extract the maximum value of what they can acquire. It is perhaps the only solution for its survival in an environment that is becoming more expensive. But the result may be economic and ecological rationalization: using without owning, thus contaminating less. **The challenge is to make this the basis of a new socially sustainable economic system.**

The screenshot shows the Zilok website interface. At the top, the Zilok logo is displayed with the tagline "Zilok - Rent anything. On-line! Rentals from Businesses and Individuals." Below the logo are navigation tabs for "AUTO", "TOOLS", "PARTY", "ELECTRONICS", "LEISURE", and "LUXURY". A search bar is present with the text "SEARCH FOR something to rent", a "What?" dropdown menu showing "drill, camera", a "Where?" dropdown menu showing "San Francisco, 10003", and a "Search" button. To the right of the search bar is a "NEED SOMETHING?" section with an "Ask for a" button. Below the search bar, there are two main sections: "Top Rentals" and "Recently Rented on Zilok". The "Top Rentals" section lists categories: "Car Rentals", "Power Tool rentals", "Vacation Rentals", "Events rentals", and "Venues rentals". The "Recently Rented on Zilok" section lists several items with their rental prices: "PS3 System" (Lawrenceville (08648)) at \$ 25.00 / DAY, "Nintendo Wii System" (Hayward (94544)) at \$ 25.00 / DAY, "Wii games" (Oakland (94607)) at \$ 25.00 / DAY, and "Snow Tire Chains" (Portland (97203)) at \$ 5.00 / DAY. Below these sections are two more categories: "Rental from Professionals" and "Rental between Individuals". The "Rental from Professionals" section lists "3' CAPACITY CHIPPER / SHREDDER" (Danville (94526)) at \$ 89.99 / DAY and "16' CHAIN SAW - Electric" (Danville (94526)). The "Rental between Individuals" section lists "Pressure Washer 3400 PSI 30' Of hose 5 Tips" (Angleton (77515)) at \$ 89.99 / DAY and "Sennheiser ew135G2 Wireless Microphone" (San Jose (95148)). On the right side of the screenshot, there is a black overlay with white text that reads: "Convert into an asset and revitalize what you have, but do not use" and "us.zilok.com".

Convert into an asset and revitalize what you have, but do not use

us.zilok.com

COLLABORATIVE PRODUCTION

Beyond that of making the most of belonging to a huge group to lower prices, or share resources, the **re-vival of consumer cooperatives** can also be seen today. Moreover, cooperatives whose aim is to form a shopping group that encourages a change in the ways of production. Perhaps a particularly illustrative case is the consumer and energy production cooperatives (and in this order: first, the group seeks better consumer prices to later dare to promote new, more ecological and/or efficient forms of production).

This proactive consumer activity makes even more sense when they view themselves as citizens: how many problems do we have to face every day that seem to have no solution because nobody in the conventional market dares to provide a solution for them? A perhaps slightly bold example can be found in education: an industry that is criticized from all sides, without the “system” allowing transformations from within. Only from changes promoted

from the “outside” in those activities that do not affect, do not disturb and do not upset the status quo will we be able to see innovations that ultimately affect the heart of the system. In this case, “education consumers” (mothers and fathers) have little to choose from in the market, whether they join forces or not. There are no shopping clubs possible in this area. **The only solution for innovation in a system that is not very eager for it is to get down to constructing something new, proactively creating a solution that goes beyond existing supply.**

The same will progressively be applied to other fields in which market agents have no reason or sufficiently attractive stimuli to supply something. **This will lead to a strong revival in the idea of the cooperative as a system that unites interests,** locates and mobilizes resources, experts, tools and technology to enable the production of services that are more in line with actual demand and increasingly demanding (group) customization.



Begin with
consumption to follow
with production

www.somenergia.cat

MEANINGFUL EXCHANGE

We have so far discussed renting, co-owning or sharing resources we had earlier purchased. In all these cases, the resource is usually an object (car, tools, sofa, etc). But what is making increasingly more sense is **sharing the world's scarcest, non-producible resource: time**. Time is the last frontier in the economy because we find it difficult to manipulate, extend and transmute. It is not strange to imagine, then, that the management of time as an “object” in this urbanization of time we discussed before will mobilize countless intellects and resources.

In the meantime, **time banks are emerging as solutions to the most varied problems** in those areas where there are either no services available or they are too expensive for most citizens. *“You can paint my room while I take care of your son.” “I’ll teach you Spanish if you teach me German.”* Or more sophisticated still: *“My son is bored in a hospital on the East Coast and I need somebody to keep him company until I can see him on the weekend.”* These types of exchange, in

some cases even unidirectional, **solve situations for which conventional markets have not (yet) found profitability**.

We can also cite the **increasing use of the Internet to search for a partner** (the world’s cities are becoming large clusters of singles). This is perhaps the supreme exchange, in terms of what is being sought is **an exchange of what is difficult to buy: affection**. The sophistication in this field is remarkable, and helps people in very specific situations make connections in ways previously unimaginable; for example, people who cannot lead a “normal” sex life, usually for medical reasons, without this making them renounce the search for a sentimental partner.

Finally, **exchanging the meaning of our lives**. Explaining what makes us get up every day, sharing “what moves our lives”. The sublime exchange of optimism, which stimulates our impulses and cannot be paid for by anything, even if we wanted to (see This I Believe or StoryCorps).



OUR STORY

2date4love.com is a hopeful reminder that love, companionship and intimacy are within reach!

Twelve years ago, I was diagnosed with Stage IV cervical cancer. My life took a dramatic turn in a direction I didn't expect. With the help of my doctors, I won my battle against cancer. My body, however, has never been the same. I am still the same passionate woman who loves life and thrives on excitement. I still have all the same sexual desires I had before cancer, except the treatment took a toll on my body. I'm no longer able to function sexually the way I used to and this has proven to be an enormous challenge when it comes to dating.

When the topic of intimacy is raised, I fear that once my partner knows my limitations, he may lose interest, so dating was eliminated for some time until I decided to launch a website for everyone with these limitations, no matter the reason. Despite these challenges, I still want a romantic relationship and I know there are many men and women just like me who want to be accepted and loved for who they are. I am now committed to helping myself and others find lasting love.

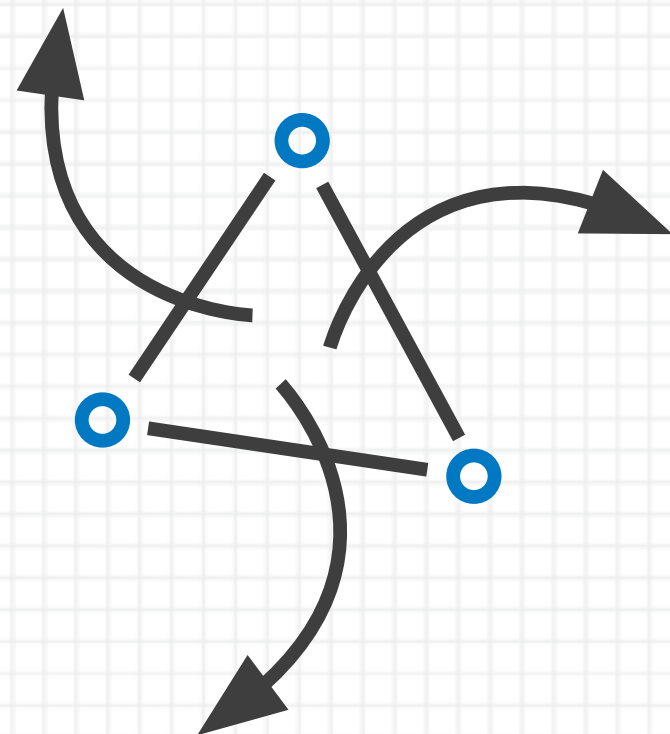
I invite you to join me and start to live love like your life!

Laura B.
Founder

2date4love.com

**Search for an “other”
with whom to exchange
affection**

2date4love.com



10 Co-society

PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

One of the most comforting things in life is to receive help when you need it, especially if the person helping us is a stranger. **Acts of mutual support and help reconcile us with Humanity.** Being helped is nice, but even more comforting is to help others. It is no wonder, then, that families in some countries in crisis where family networks are strong are suffering economic hardships less than those countries where individualism has destroyed the potential for “social capital”. Moreover, the fact that lost items are being handed in to lost property offices more than ever in times of economic hardship shows to what degree humans feel solidarity with the suffering of others.

People’s support now also helps us to consider developing productive economic activity that does not require conventional companies. Consequently, there are many Internet initiatives connecting people with a proposal (*“I want to make this idea a reality”*) with those possessing the resources. We can see examples of this **crowdfunding** when making

a movie (see the case of *The Cosmonaut*), manufacturing a product (such as Quirky, where two good ideas are selected each week to move into production: “social development of a product”) or publishing a book. Therefore, readers give money to books that promise to be more interesting at Unbound, which means editors take fewer risks by publishing only what people have promised to buy. There are even bands financing their recordings in this way. Indeed, perhaps **new laws are needed to guarantee the rights of these small investors (known as “micro-angels”)**, who today are considered to be donors more than partners: SMEs could fund themselves in this way if such a law existed.

This micropatronage converts any citizen into a potential investor, with amounts that do not represent any significant personal risk. This is extending into the economic field what we are already seeing in the social when an NGO launches a specific campaign to raise aid after an unexpected catastrophe occurs somewhere in the world.

The image is a screenshot of the Verkami crowdfunding website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Verkami logo and links for 'proyectos', 'qué es verkami', 'FAQ', 'empieza tu proyecto', and 'iniciar sesión'. A search bar is also present. The main content area features a large blue banner with the text 'Apoya ideas diferentes y artistas innovadores' and a description of Verkami as a crowdfunding platform for independent creators. Below this, a specific project is highlighted: 'Documental "La Sonrisa del Nomada" sobre Alvaro Neil el Biciclow'. The project shows a progress bar indicating that 2,320€ have been raised out of a 2,229€ goal, with 10 days remaining. The project description includes 'edition, production, remasterization' and 'blablalation tatala'. At the bottom, there are four buttons: 'EXPLORA LOS 11 PROYECTOS', 'EL BLOG DE VERKAMI', 'PREGUNTAS FRECUENTES', and 'EMPIEZA TU PROYECTO'. A black overlay in the bottom right corner contains the text 'Crowdfunding to finance ideas' and the website URL 'www.verkami.com'.

EVERY PERSON A SOCIAL AGENT

We already know about the success of social initiatives that comprise **mobilizing many people to do something in a particular space and time**. These are known as “flash-mobs”, ranging from the most absurd (meeting in a particular place to jump like a kangaroo) to the most beautiful (forming an orchestra, instrument by instrument, in the lobby of a station). We have also seen negative versions of this idea with “flashrobs”: **hundreds of young people conspiring to carry out acts of vandalism in a city**, protected by the strange idea that the effect of a multitude will guarantee the anonymity of their unlawful acts. This only once again confirms that any positive social idea is capable of degenerating in the short term.

But **the potential of networks to convert any citizen into an agent for collective improvement is huge**. The basis for such a movement could be purely Kennedyesque: “*ask not what your society can do for you, ask what you can do for your society*”. We are basically “moral animals” at heart: what distinguishes us from other species is a certain sense (so-

cially acquired, not innate) of what is “good” versus what is “bad”. It is good, for example, to **mark on a map, by using your personal sensor (your mobile phone), any problems you may encounter in your city requiring repair** (see reparaciudad.com). For example, places where there are architectural barriers preventing people with “other capabilities” (and not disabled) from circulating freely. Or to point out when a recyclable container is full and must be emptied (thus saving municipalities a lot of resources in non-optimized routes).

We can all be social agents. More than ever now, because telecommunications make it easier for us. Unfortunately, there are social barriers that limit these types of actions: for some reason that requires more study, **it is not very “sexy” to look after shared things in many countries**. It is not attractive to think that **all of everybody’s problems will end up being your own problems**, and vice versa. Perhaps you will become addicted only when you try the “benefits of being good”. Try it!



The image is a screenshot of the LibreDeBarreras website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: '¿Que es?', 'Accesibilidad', 'Barrera Arquitectónica', and 'Listados'. Below this, the main heading is '¿Que es LibreDeBarreras?'. A sub-header reads 'Presentación de LibreDeBarreras.es 2011'. The main content area is titled '¿Como participo?' and features a cartoon illustration of an elderly man with glasses and a camera, standing next to a blue square icon containing a white wheelchair symbol. The text below the illustration says: 'Localizando Puntos Accesibles', 'Identifica lugares como aparcamientos adaptados o bordillos sin escalón.', and 'También puedes añadir comentarios o valoraciones personales.' The LibreDeBarreras logo is visible in the bottom right corner of the page.

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GOOD CITIZENS

I cannot help it: every time I come across a piece of paper on the floor, I pick it up and take it to the nearest trashcan. A few years ago, bored as I was sunbathing on the beach, I organized a specific crusade against trash and ended up “recruiting” many other swimmers. These are voluntary acts done involuntarily (social impulses) that would make our cities look superb if carried out by thousands of other people. **The question is not forcing citizens to keep their cities clean** (they say that simply throwing “some paper” on the ground is a punishable offence in Singapore), **but getting them to do it voluntarily** because they understand that the best way to maintain collective capital is to think of it as your own property (someone once wrote that the way to recognize the owner of a small business is to pay attention to who picks up the paper from the floor).

When we talk about these issues, we always end up resorting to our children’s education as the panacea. But I do not think it is necessary: educate your own children to respect shared things and do not expect anyone else to do it. Perhaps one day they will need to organize themselves

collectively to solve a personal problem that can only be solved as a group: see the case of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, which, in addition to fighting for each family drama, with people’s names and surnames, demanded a right to justice without which no country can progress socially and economically.

It cannot be assumed that citizens will be good. You have to pamper them, recognize their contribution and perhaps even reward them (less tax?). But above all, **you have to mobilize them, get them on the same wavelength**, because collective power strengthens individual will until converting it into an effective system. See the example of the call to thousands of Portuguese citizens to remove trash from their country’s forests (100,000 committed volunteers, 1% of Portuguese society). But **these calls need to be honest and credible.** I doubt they would have any effect, for example, if they were part of the marketing strategies of television channels, which inundate the time of citizens with trash TV outside the hours of these moral campaigns. Collecting trash when you are broadcasting trash is immoral.

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of citizens taking care
of what belongs to us all**

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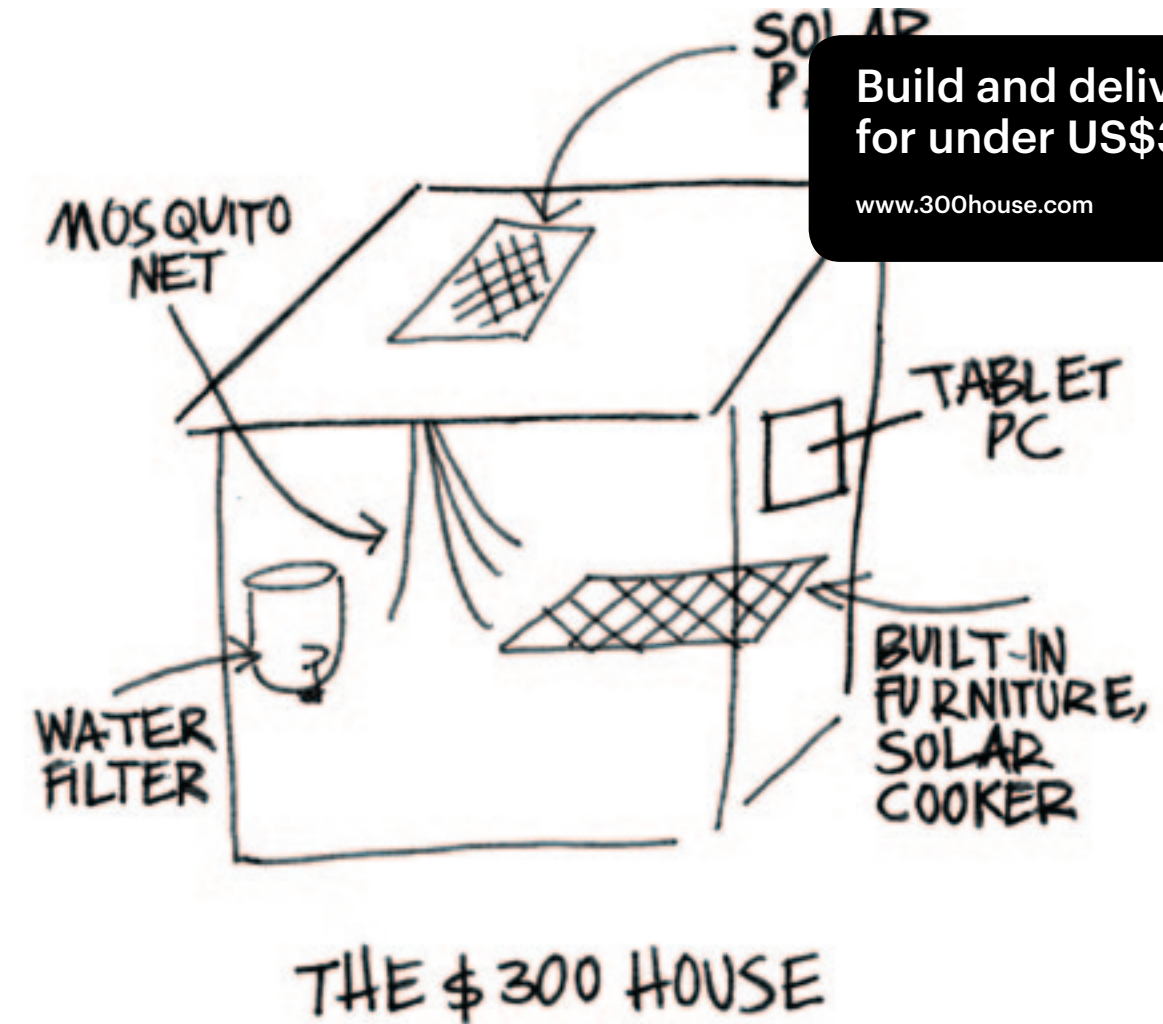
SOCIAL BUSINESS

Muhammad Yunus defines social business as **a business without losses or dividends, designed to meet a social objective within the rules of conventional markets.** They differ from an NGO in that they have to make profits to survive from their activity and not from subsidies, but they must reinvest these profits to continue with their social mission. More precise features fit within this relatively broad definition. In his more specific definition: *“Social business is a cause-driven business. In a social business, the investors/owners can gradually recoup the money invested, but cannot take any dividend beyond that point.”*

In any case, it is about organizations that do not focus on generating profit for shareholders, but on achieving a markedly social goal. According to what I stated earlier, if Michael Porter’s idea of shared value spreads, all future business will have a strong social business component. The final goal of all business should be to meet a need of citizens. **It is about obtaining a “social return on investment” (SROI).**

Traditional businesses, therefore, will have increasingly more social business components. And conversely, social business can learn a lot from “conventional” business (see uncharitable.net).

The **driving force of these businesses is often social entrepreneurs**, some from conventional businesses, applying their knowledge and experience to solve social problems: access to water or energy, more efficient agriculture (social agriculture), work for people with “other capabilities” or people at risk of social exclusion, links between local production and consumption, access to affordable housing, etc. **A dual approach that generates social and economic profit.** The combination of job creation and **use of volunteers** is of special interest in these types of businesses (and potentially micro-volunteering: experienced people contributing their time and knowledge at specific times).



REINVENTING POLITICS

Politics has been defined as “the art of the possible”. **The problem is that the possible does not always solve the necessary.** And what politics ends up doing is often distance itself from what citizens need. It is the criticism that politicians should listen more, that they exist in a parallel universe that does not connect with the reality of people. Moreover, if you add to this equation the lure of populism, telling people what they would like to hear (in order to keep them happy) rather than what they should be hearing (in an attempt to solve their problems), the result is a system whose credibility is quickly and easily diminishing.

Youth movements worldwide (15M, Occupy Wall Street and its global version, Occupy Together, or student movements such as those in Chile) show that another form of politics is necessary; indeed, it is critically essential. And it may even also be possible.

There is a demand for a form of more transparent politics (the WikiLeaks effect) **that treats people as citizens and not consumers**, or worse still, as mere subjects open to tax. A form of politics that disqualifies corruption, in which

commitment is built upon shared visions and not an impossible ideological juxtaposition.

Achieving it is not just a question of will (human energy), but a systematic process with a dash of science thrown in. We must experiment more in environments where risk is limited. And we must **learn from what we experiment with**, applying more of what works and changing that which does not. In this sense, it is possible that **the future is more about cities than states** (in general, nations are cultural and will endure). Politics will have to be reinvented in the short term in cities (or their neighborhoods). And we will have to experiment in them and create mechanisms to extract practical knowledge from these experiments (the city as laboratory).

The critical factor for this: collaboration. **This new form of politics must be more participatory, more citizen-oriented.** But this does not necessarily mean digital assembly. **An excess of democracy is also costly:** see the case of California, where voting for almost anything can convert the government into an irrelevant subject.



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It is a fascinating feeling when you witness something emerging without being quite sure what it is, nor why it is occurring, and even more so when you are not only a witness, but also an unwitting protagonist. This is exactly what is happening to our society and our economy, affected as they are by a powerful yet almost imperceptible change that will lead them from the dominance of the individual (me) to the conviction of the group (we).

Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, and fully immersed in a huge crisis fuelled by the insatiable greed and credit of a consumer society, a score of experiences whose common denominator is collaboration are emerging in the world. The power of “multiplying” the assets already coexisting in our system is evident in personal

(collaborative consumption), organisational (business intersections) or social (citizen activists) fields.

In an era marked by a fascination with networks (Internet, social networking, globalisation), the key lies in realising that what really matters are not the nodes (neurons) in the network, but their connections (synapses).

This book gathers together 50 ideas/examples of why the world is becoming a co-world. As a species we either collaborate or perish, and the same is also true of society. So let us prepare to witness a revolution in which we should also be the protagonists. The road to a collaborative society and economy is inevitable. The alternative is failure.

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