

DECEMBER 2021

CORPORATE

INVESTMENT TIMES
ONE WORLD . ONE EDITION



CORPORATE INVESTMENT TIMES



While Every journey that we undertake inspires us to become someone better, some journeys become a legend and inspire others... and more importantly some journeys inspire our own for generations to come.

"I want to inspire people. I want someone to look at me and say, "because of you I didn't give up."

Publishing your journeys that inspire those to come, for generations that are going to come

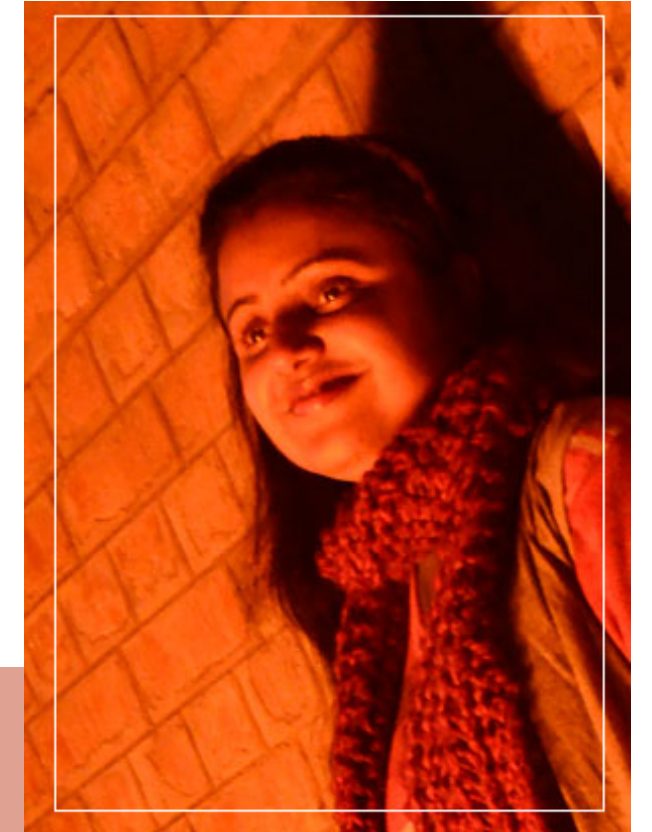
Corporate Investment Times

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Rima M.



2021 DECEMBER

The Cover



SBAR

A true utility token
based on a physical
business model
in an industry we
all love.

"Hear ye, hear ye, all ye beer lovers, come listen to our wonderful christmas crypto fairy tale, in a world where people wildly use digital tokens ... without even knowing it".

Here is an unique tale that could only be given birth in Belgium, the country of beer. An all-tiny territory, lodged in the very heart of Europe with over 300 local breweries. The mother country of Stella, Duvel, Chimay, Chouffe, Rochefort and countless other cherished house names recalling laughter, and good time spent with family, and friends.

There, in the heart of Bruxelles, the capital city, was a visionaire, an inventor fascinated by nature, science, new technologies, cryptos and of course beers! He worked over 15 years on creating the most ingenious and remarkable beer table. A jewel of creativity and technology. A table that would forever change the



economics of the beverage industry. This visionary is called Vincent Callebaut and he created the 'SelfBar'.
Hyperlink to www.selfbar.be

An extraordinary inventor

Vincent Callebaut thought of a business model, in sync with nature, where ecosystems thrive, everybody lives in harmony with each other, benefiting from each other. With the SelfBar everybody is a winner: The consumers enjoy a new way of helping themselves to enjoy beers; the bars/ restaurants /events/ stadiums receive the beer tables for free from SelfBar to be operated; the breweries/ distributors are being paid on time on a daily base if needed using the blockchain technology; the holders of SBAR tokens see great returns as the world never stops drinking and the machines are used each day.

A genius creation that will sparkle a revolution

The SelfBar is a revolutionary drink dispenser machine, able to serve any drink (beer, wine, coffee, juices, soda, water, or else), that is cash-less and 100% self-service.

To use it, consumers charge a credit on small RFID cards, and help themselves directly to their favorite drinks. As they pour drinks, a screen on the machine is letting them know how much credit they have left.

It is like being at the gas station, they help themselves, glass by glass, when they want, as much as they want. The experience of serving your own beer like a pro, looking at the screen scrolling down is second to none.

Consumers can charge their card using cash directly at the point of sale or using a convenient payment app, on which they can also see on a map where all the SelfBar tables are in the world.

New Technologies all-over

Speaking of apps, the operators of the beer tables also have their own app in which they can see the level of beer left in the kegs, the temperature and beer pressure of the drinks with IoT sensors. The machine is using AI to differentiate the beer from the beer foam and charge the clients adequately for each.

The table operators can change the price of the drinks at any time they want and the SelfBar tables operations are summed up at the end of each day in a log file, making accounting and payments a breeze.

A next gen' digital voucher to beer consumption : the SBAR - A true utility token

The cherry on the cake is that the machine can be operated using either cash money or the SBAR - a pure utility token - a next gen digital voucher for beers! The owner of SBAR can exchange them for drink credits to be used on the SelfBar machines.

At the time of publishing, the value of a SelfBar next gen' voucher convertible to drink credit is 1.5 Eur per SBAR token. SelfBar points-out that the value of the next gen' voucher may mostly increase in time, in parallel to the increase of the cumulated margins of his company.

Over time, the more the machines will be used all over the world, the more margin they will generate for the company, and as a result, the more the digital voucher value will increase. If you own some SBAR token now, it might be worth keeping them (can you stay one day without drinking, knowing the money is in your pocket?), their increase may soon allow you to offer the next round 'on the house'!

It is also interesting to note that SelfBar will need to purchase back itself the SBAR tokens on a regular basis from the market to guarantee the security and transparency of its operations. The SelfBar tables operations logs are all recorded each day in the blockchain. SelfBar also proposes to their partners to be either paid in fiat currencies or in SBAR tokens.

For those reasons, the company will re-invest parts of its income in SBAR tokens,

greatly supporting the token liquidity, and the market price.

The SBar operations are recorded on the Polygon blockchain with very low transaction fees. At the time of publication, 5 million tokens have been mined and sold through a private ICO, organised by Talium Assets France. Some are already available on the secondary market on the crypto exchange platforms LA Token (https://latoken.com/exchange/SBAR_USDT) and Bitblinx (<https://trade.bitblinx.com/sessions/market-view?symbol=SBAR-USDT>).

Over time, more tokens will be issued, following a strict tokenomics agenda that you can find in the project white paper, in parallel with the increasing number of SelfBar machines deployed around the world. At most, there will be a maximum of 250 millions SBAR





tokens issued.

A social and ecological project

Vincent Callebaut wishes for everyone to profit from the SelfBar invention. First, he wants to help the bars and restaurants owners whose life has been made tough by the covid pandemic. For this reason he provides operators with free SelfBar tables, they do not have to invest in the heavy tables capex.

Also, by using the SelfBar machine, their operational

margin is also increased up to 5 fold. He is also fighting hard against water waste. In normal times when drinks are poured it is close to 25% of the quantities that go directly to the drain. With SelfBar the wastes are reduced to nothing. Selfbar is making its money by taking a fixed margin on the volumes that would normally go to the drain.

Finally, SelfBar is helping local charities, directly where the tables are located, by giving away 3% of its

operating margin. So when using SelfBar machines, you are always doing a good deed.

Easy scalability of the business model

The SelfBar expansion model is extremely scalable. The machines are built by leading beer pump manufacturers around the world and are distributed via a newly established international franchise network relying on those same manufacturers to penetrate the markets.

Indeed, the SelfBar tables manufacturers have all the contacts in the bars and restaurant world, they know the breweries and the distributors. The key argument for them in convincing all actors to acquire SelfBar tables here is that the machines are paid for by SelfBar, preventing any capex investment to be done on their side. This removes the main barrier to entry in the market.

A disrupter is born

The SelfBar table is disrupting the conservative drink industry like a storm. Requests for machines are pouring in from all over the world.... Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the United Kingdom, Romania, Columbia, Vietnam, United Arab Emirates, Ivory coast.

The machines are presented to the market via participation in fairs and a large European road show. Asian, African, American road-shows will follow in 2022. The first distribution franchises are being set up as we speak. The company is confident it will be able to deliver 15 000 machines by 2025. And this is only the beginning. Selfbar is less than a year old !

The whole world is drinking

SelfBar is wishing a Merry Christmas to all of you, drink responsibly and offer SBAR next gen drink tokens to your loved ones. An original gift, sure to make everyone happy, tipsy and why not... rich !





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For Investors relations, Table orders, Candidacy for SelfBar franchises, Press.

LA Token : https://latoken.com/exchange/SBAR_USDT
Bitblinx : <https://trade.bitblinx.com/sessions/market-view?symbol=SBAR-USDT>
Coingecko : <https://www.coingecko.com/en/coins/selfbar>

www.selfbar.be

Stacking is available on LA Token.

For more information on how to order SelfBar tables, how to become a franchisee or how to purchase SBAR token
contact : info@selfbar.be

Follow SelfBar and the SBar token on our all Social networks : <https://linktr.ee/selfbar>



**THE WORLD
WILL ALWAYS DRINK**

SBAR
NEXT'GEN
VOUCHER



**WILL
ALWAYS
RISE**



DIMITRA

The Paradigm Shift

How Data is Modernizing Agriculture



A leading agriculture software platform aimed at assisting small holder farmers to manage their business.

Jon Trask

Founder, and CEO

Enabling Modern Farming for the Many

Ten thousand years ago, the earliest farmers would forego herding livestock to stay home and raise crops. Today's modern smallholder farmer must often grow crops, manage livestock, and hold down a full-time job.

It made sense to Jon Trask when a client once asked him if it could track livestock. Having worked on hundreds of projects in the food and consumer goods supply chain industry, he saw a gap in the \$8.5 trillion global agri-business industry.

He learned that there are 608 million farms in the world. Smallholder farmers account for





Getting Farmers the Capital They Need

Another important Dimitra module allows certification of crops for bank loans. The module makes it easy for farmers to apply for bank loans and insurance while generating reports for lenders and insurance companies.

If farmers borrow a certain amount of money to plant a crop, they can use this module to record their actions in preparing, fertilizing, and caring for the field. This information protects them in the event of crop failure.

Built-in satellite analytics capabilities can also provide farmers with images of their fields. By combining this data with farmer observations and sensors, satellite technology can record and track the performance of a variety of farming activities. Farm productivity scores can be calculated based on how well crops are produced and cared for.

Preventing Agriculture Industry Fraud

Dimitra is helping farmers win the fight against falsified inputs. This happens when a fraudulent person buys high-quality inputs and mixes them with lower-quality inputs.

For example, someone might cut a 40-pound bag of seed four or eight times with a lower quality seed. They might then sell the seed as if it was all high-quality at full price in the market. The low-quality seed will have a multiplier effect on farmers' income by reducing their yields.

Dimitra has developed a tool that uses machine learning and images to evaluate seeds processed and packaged in certified factories. Seed quality is then assessed throughout the supply chain to ensure quality. Images of seeds are used for serialization, packaging, and evaluation. These can then be compared to certified goods recorded on the blockchain.

Creating Accountability on a Global Scale

Another challenge Dimitra solves is the management

570 million of them but contribute one-third of the world's food. That's 3 billion subsistence farmers with a few acres of land.

Satellite Solutions: Giving Farmers a View from Above

Satellites orbit at an altitude of about 36,000 km above the Earth's surface. This technology offers many opportunities for data-driven agriculture. Having the availability of satellite data on registered farms provides powerful monitoring and control capabilities that farmers previously lacked.

The Dimitra platform integrates with national business registration databases, which provide a wealth of farm information. This information is coupled with satellite data and analyzed to provide actionable data for farmers to utilize and set smart and sustainable goals for their farms.

Dimitra uses dozens of machine learning models to assist with analytics. Their platform uses geofencing, which also makes weather tracking possible. This information can be combined with all types of animal and crop information to improve yields, increasing

profits.

Preventing the Costly Problem of Cattle Rustling

Stolen livestock is one of the biggest challenges facing the Asian and African agricultural industries. As a result, multiple countries around the globe have adopted the Dimitra platform to help solve their livestock problems.

Thieves steal millions of cattle every year on farms globally. Unfortunately, it is easy for them to remove livestock IDs and create false documents. Dimitra's solution solves the problem by encrypting breeder data and animal registration on the blockchain.

To avoid removing the animal's identifying information, sensor-based technology is placed in the animal's rumen. Or a tag-based technology hidden under the animal's skin. An affordable identifier for determining ownership of cattle at a border crossing is a nose print or photographing the animal's nose.

The identity of any animal suspected of being stolen can be confirmed by its digital record. These tracking features are built into the Dimitra system to help farmers manage the safety of their livestock.



of livestock export records and certificates. For this, their platform can be used to create a digital twin on the blockchain for each herd of cattle, including farm and breed identification.

When animals are sold, their export health certificate proves that the animal's health meets regulatory requirements. The certificate data is derived from all data stored on the animal during its lifetime. These digital documents can then be used for compliance, shipping, and proof of delivery.

These systems track diseases which are then recorded on the blockchain. These tracking capabilities will have a massive impact on the export chain by ensuring the quality of millions of animals exported from one country to another.

The Dimitra Token: Helping the Underserved Succeed

Agricultural growth is one of the most powerful mechanisms for ending extreme poverty and sharing prosperity. Compared to other sectors, agricultural growth is two to four times more effective in raising the living standards of the world's poorest people.

But the challenge is that the world's 570 million smallholder farmers don't have much money to spend on technology. The Dimitra ecosystem provides a solution by connecting technology companies with farmers through Dimitra tokens. The Dimitra Token is an ERC-20 based token launched on the Ethereum network.



DIMITRA

The Dimitra Token delivers great utility within their ecosystem and the ongoing growth of their platform creates a compounding effect on the network for years to come. Token holders help drive platform growth, ecosystem development, and expedite the delivery of our app to millions of farmers.

For every \$5 raised in token sales, Dimitra gives a smallholder farmer access to technologies they otherwise could not afford. This solution will help free farmers and their families from a life of hunger and poverty.

Better Farming for a Better World

Agriculture has been a part of human history for over ten thousand years. The need to solve global problems like malnutrition, hunger, and poverty has never been greater. Modern technologies like satellites, IoT, and blockchain can help.

Dimitra offers a vision of data-driven agriculture. They bring together farmers, banks, businesses, financial institutions, and technology developers for mutual success. Through the Dimitra ecosystem along with Dimitra tokens we can help smallholder farmers thrive, as agriculture is an essential aspect of everyone's life. Jon Trask and the Dimitra team look forward to doing their part.

Join the Agricultural Technology Revolution

You too, can play a role in ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity by investing in the Dimitra token. Imagine the impact created with this increase in revenues in communities around the world and the positive ripple effect it will have on the global food system.

To learn more, visit dimitra.io/token

Jon Trask



Founder, and CEO

Jon Trask is the CEO and founder of Dimitra Incorporated. Dimitra is an agricultural platform for national and state agricultural programs that makes it easier for farmers to adopt modern technology. With inspiration from working on his grandfather's farm, he was motivated to make technology available to farmers globally. As a result, Dimitra is building a global community of farmers, farmer associations, input suppliers, growers, and markets to support unserved smallholders.

The Dimitra team is in 60 countries and expanding across Asia, Africa, the Middle East, North America, South America, and Europe. The technology they provide includes Blockchain, Satellites, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, drones, robotics, and others to make farming more effective.

According to Jon:

"Every smallholder farmer, regardless of economic standing, should benefit from simple, beautiful, and useful technology. Because when farmers thrive, so do economies."

The company's namesake is Dimitra, based on the goddess of agriculture that brought knowledge of cultivating the land and producing successful harvests for the people of ancient Greece.

Her mission inspires the Dimitra team. Their goal is to honor the tradition of delivering agricultural knowledge to the world by empowering farmers with technologies that haven't been accessible until now.

The Brief

INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION with Pascal Bornet

Talks about #data, #technology, #deeplearning, #intelligentautomation, and #artificialintelligence

You have just published a new book called Intelligent Automation, why did you write that book?.

First of all, let me give a bit of background on the book. I have written it with two co-authors, Ian Barkin a successful entrepreneur in the field of Intelligent Automation, and Jochen Wirtz, vice dean at the University of Singapore, professor of service marketing. The book is the outcome of 18 months of research, including surveys across over 200 Intelligent Automation experts, and it leverages the lessons learned from over 500 intelligent automation transformations across decades of experience.

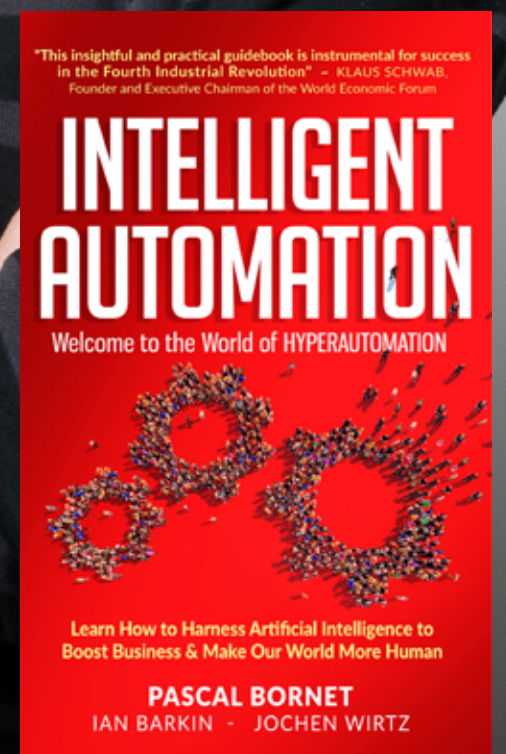
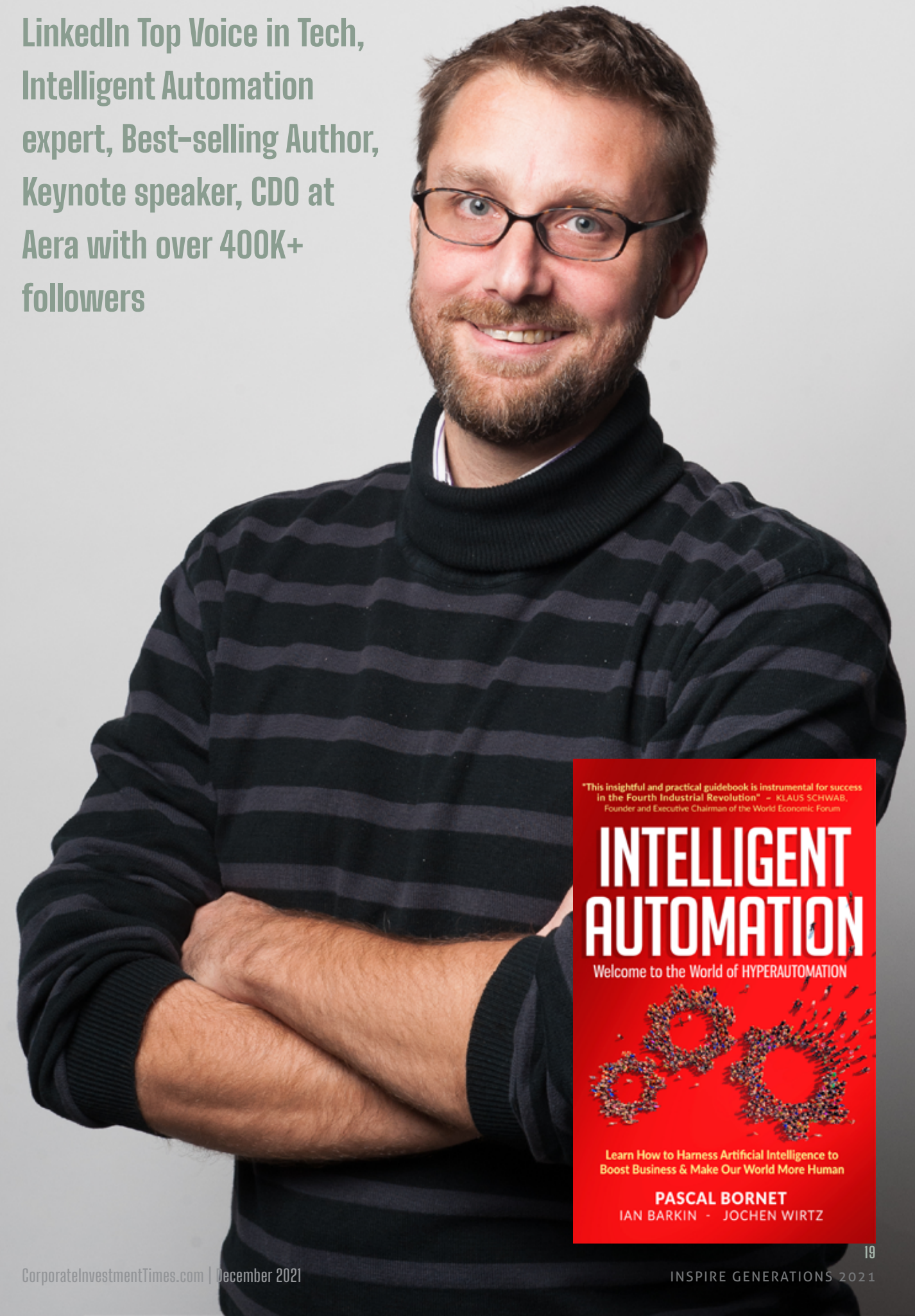
By the way, when referring to intelligent automation, I will use the acronym IA to make it shorter.

Now back to your question, why this book?

First, it is about sharing a passion, a conviction that we can make our world more human with intelligent automation.

Then it comes from a necessity—a need to inform and educate. Today, according to Deloitte, only 50% of the organizations have started their journey into intelligent automation. This shows that many companies are not yet aware or ready to unleash the benefits from IA. In addition, we often hear misconceptions that need to be clarified. They go all the way from IA can do everything with no training of my people, to “IA will steal my job”.

LinkedIn Top Voice in Tech,
Intelligent Automation
expert, Best-selling Author,
Keynote speaker, CDO at
Aera with over 400K+
followers



These are the reasons why the profits from the book's sales will be donated to charities in charge of educating people in needs to these new technologies.

To reach this objective, the book gives answers to questions like:

- What is Intelligent Automation (IA)?
- How have leading organizations been able to harness the full potential of IA, at scale, and generate massive efficiency gains in the range of 20 to 60%?
- How can IA save 10+ million lives per year, triple our global budget for education, eliminate hunger, or help protect our planet?

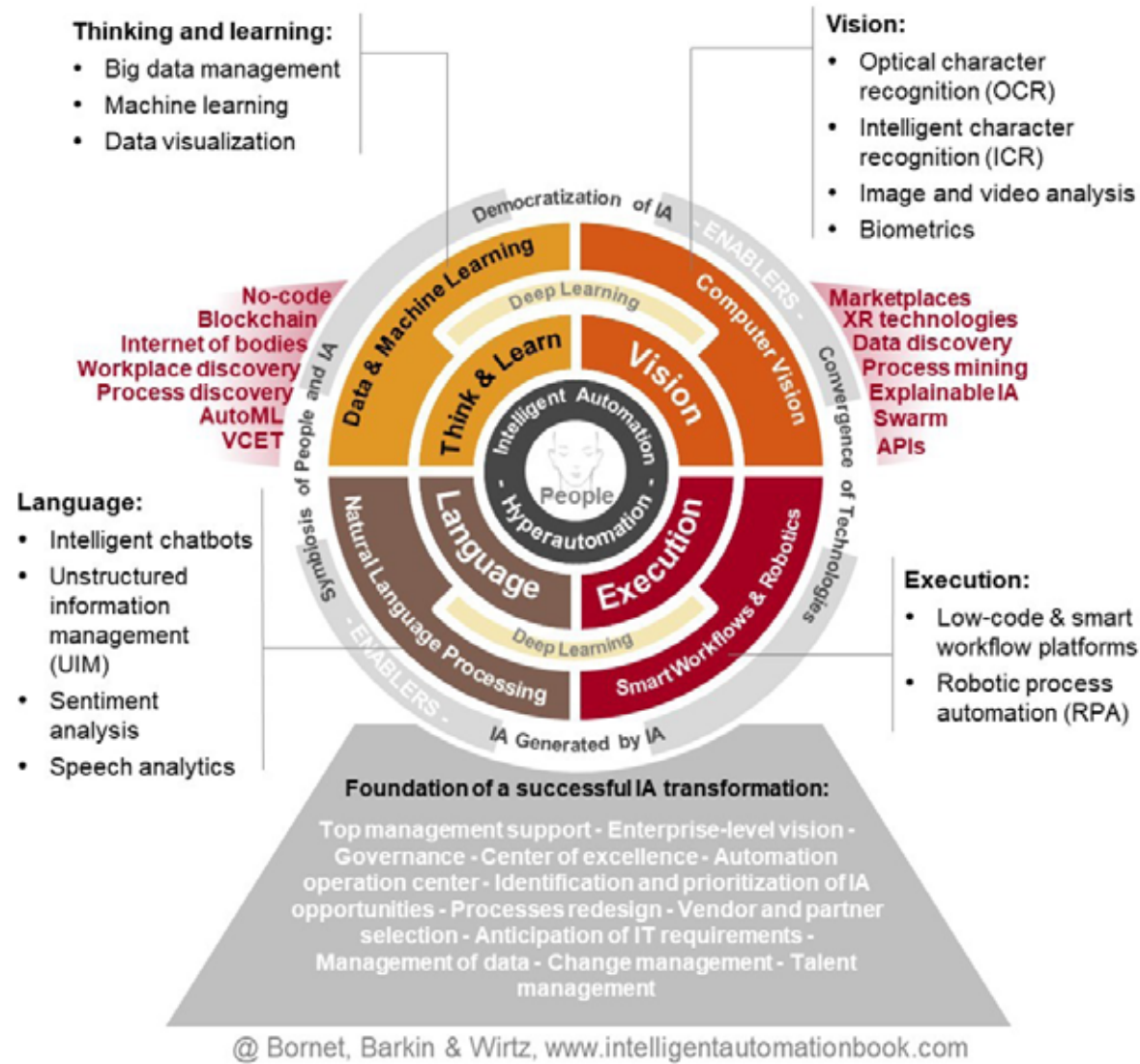
The book is for everyone:

- CEOs or executives who want to understand what they can expect strategically from IA, how to build their roadmap, their business case, build their capabilities and ensure the success of their transformation.
- Project managers, developers, analysts, who want to understand the critical success factors in implementing technologies, leading practices in managing such a project, example of use cases, war stories... driving change management, communication, training.... Improving customer and employee experiences
- For everyone interested in the benefits generated and expected from IA on society, lives, education, health. Anyone who is interested in the future of work, and what it means for our society and for the future generations.

What is Intelligent Automation (IA)? How do you define it?

It is one of the most recent and impactful trends in the broad field of artificial intelligence.

The roadmap to a successful Intelligent Automation transformation



- Thinking and learning:**
- Big data management
 - Machine learning
 - Data visualization

- Vision:**
- Optical character recognition (OCR)
 - Intelligent character recognition (ICR)
 - Image and video analysis
 - Biometrics

- Language:**
- Intelligent chatbots
 - Unstructured information management (UIM)
 - Sentiment analysis
 - Speech analytics

- Execution:**
- Low-code & smart workflow platforms
 - Robotic process automation (RPA)

Foundation of a successful IA transformation:
 Top management support - Enterprise-level vision - Governance - Center of excellence - Automation operation center - Identification and prioritization of IA opportunities - Processes redesign - Vendor and partner selection - Anticipation of IT requirements - Management of data - Change management - Talent management

My co-authors and I, supported by the insights shared by more than 200 IA experts, have defined Intelligent Automation as a combination of methods and technologies involving people, organizations, machine learning, low-code platforms, robotic process automation (RPA), and more.

You might have heard about it through the use of different terms like Hyperautomation or Cognitive Automation. These words are synonyms.

It is aimed at automating end-to-end business

processes in a computerized environment. It delivers business outcomes on behalf of the employees. It works hand in hand with them to deliver faster, better, and cheaper services, significantly improving employee and customer experiences.

For example, IA supports the automation of most work activities in "Procure to Pay": from the selection of vendors (using machine learning), the sending of orders (leveraging workflow platforms), reception and processing of their invoices (with natural language processing), up to the payment of these vendors (with RPA).

How is Intelligent Automation related to Industry 4.0?

It is in the middle of it. While I4.0 involves all types of automation, both physical and intelligence-based, Intelligent Automation focuses only on the latter, which we also call the automation of knowledge work. IA focuses on automating the work done by knowledge workers, whose principal capital is knowledge. Examples include programmers, physicians, pharmacists, architects, engineers, scientists, designers, public accountants, lawyers, and any other workers whose line of work requires them to "think for a living."

As opposed to manual labor, which is material-based (common

in manufacturing industries), knowledge work is information-based and commonly found in service industries. Simply put, IA is the "white-collar" version of the "blue-collar" industrial automation, which started in the 19th century. We demonstrate in the book that, today, knowledge work represents more than 80% of the global workforce. Hence we expect the impact of IA on our world to be as significant as the

one of the previous industrial automation revolutions.

In which industries and fields has IA been used so far? And what have been the impacts?

Key business impacts include the improvement of business efficiency by 20 to 60%, the increase of client satisfaction by 50%, while improving significantly employee's experience by automating or avoiding about 60% of the mundane tasks.

In terms of applicability, it is universal. IA provides strong benefits across functions and across industries. To demonstrate this, in the book, we have built the largest publicly available library of 500+ IA use case. It covers 8 business functions (for example, supply chain and marketing) and 5 industries (including, for example, banking and health).

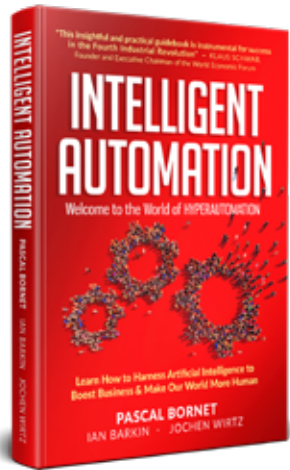
While service industries (i.e. banking, insurance, telecommunications) have been leading in the adoption of IA, all industries are concerned, as all companies have at least support functions which can benefit a lot from IA (e.g. finance, supply chain or procurement).

In what stage of Intelligent Automation's adoption companies currently are?

According to a Deloitte survey, IA already has an adoption rate of over 50%. This rate is expected to increase to more than 70% in the next two years. If this continues, IA will have achieved near-universal adoption within the next five years.

Because of its unique characteristics, we estimate that IA will be able to reach a level of adoption and sophistication in the next five years which took

INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION



industrial automation over 200 years.

What are the most challenging things when adopting Intelligent Automation?

SCALING! It is easy to succeed at implementing a proof of concept or a pilot. But when it is about scaling the transformation within an organization across several departments, functions or divisions, it usually becomes very complex.

While 50% have started their journey in IA (according to Deloitte), only 15% have been able to implement it in more than 3 functions or divisions (according to McKinsey)

How can companies succeed in scaling IA?

According to our experience and research, companies that were successful had all implemented 5 initiatives:

To start with, they have implemented two fundamentals:

1. Always put people in the center of an IA transformation: IA is built by people, for people. Without people there is no IA. Without IA there are still people.
2. Start with a healthy and robust foundation: management support and sponsorship, capability building and change management
3. Thirdly, combine the IA technologies to create synergies, and be able to automate complex end to end processes. We have seen many companies

limiting their impact and scale as they were only limiting themselves to use only machine learning or RPA.

4. Democratize IA by using technologies, such as low code platforms, that require limited coding or programming skills to build IA applications. They make IA accessible to most business users with limited training. As a result, they accelerate the transformation speed, drive higher ownership and acceptance of IA, and allow the shift of the company culture to more digitalization and automation.
5. Leverage technology to implement IA faster and on a broader scale. We call it "IA generating by IA". Today, ironically, IA transformations are extremely manual and human-intensive. And this limits their capacity to scale. The use of IA technology to support the implementation of IA transformation is critical. For example, process discovery, process mining, or data discovery, are technologies that help to automatically identify and assess use cases. AutoML helps to automate parts of the transactional work of data scientists, helping him to automate faster.

How have IA transformations been impacted by COVID-19?

Intelligent automation used to be a factor of competitiveness, where the companies which had implemented it were able to gain market share by selling cheaper and better products.

With the current COVID 19 crisis, we have seen IA become a factor of survival, a business imperative. Indeed, companies that are not digitalized and automated enough can't survive in our new world. Companies that can't sell products and services online, collect the cash online, motivate their employees remotely, and manage their operations remotely with minimal human intervention are only alive thanks to government subsidies. Despite the devastating aspects of Covid-19, the pandemic has helped the world understand the importance of digitalizing processes enabling remote performance and automating them to rely less on the human workforce and improve them.

How does IA improve employee's experience?

According to a Gallup research, 85% of employees worldwide are not fulfilled by their work, because

it is too manual, repetitive, and tedious. IA solves a large part of this issue by freeing up employees from repetitive and transactional tasks (e.g., keying in invoices in an accounting software). And it refocuses them on more value-added and exciting tasks (e.g., the ones involving insights, creativity, relationship). It also augments them, transforming them into superhumans able to generate insights from millions of data in a few seconds (e.g., identifying a tumor on an X-Ray in a few seconds). According to our research presented in the book, 30% of the current scope of work tasks can be augmented, while 70% can be either automated or eliminated (e.g. unproductive meetings or emails). Businesses that take drive initiatives to enhance employee experience are four times more profitable according to HBR.

How does IA boost the customer experience?

Building trust, satisfying and retaining customers is critical for businesses. Unfortunately, this is often a blackbox. 96% of unhappy customers don't bother complaining, and 91% of them will simply leave and never return. IA helps to create innovative and customized products, and highly responsive, omnichannel customer services available 24/7. Based on our experience with IA, companies can increase the level of their customer satisfaction by over 50%, while reducing the contact center workload by over 50%.

How does IA save lives?

According to our research, IA has the potential to save

millions of lives every year by supporting clinical trials and disease diagnosis, and avoiding medical errors. In developing countries, it can help reduce deaths from preventable causes (e.g., 1.6 million people died from diseases related to diarrhea in 2017) and compensate for the shortage of 4.3 million physicians globally, by enabling remote diagnosis. For example, IA application Tissue Analytics instantly diagnoses chronic wounds, burns, or skin conditions just by taking a photo from a smartphone.

How can IA save money, and reallocate it to better uses?

In addition, IA could have the potential to realize a \$10 trillion of cost savings yearly, by reducing frauds, errors, and accidents. Indeed, IA not only makes transaction processes more efficient and reliable, but it also generates log files for every action, creating transparency and ease of compliance. Such a vast amount of money would allow us to double our global budget for education, help restore our planet from pollution, or even eliminate hunger!

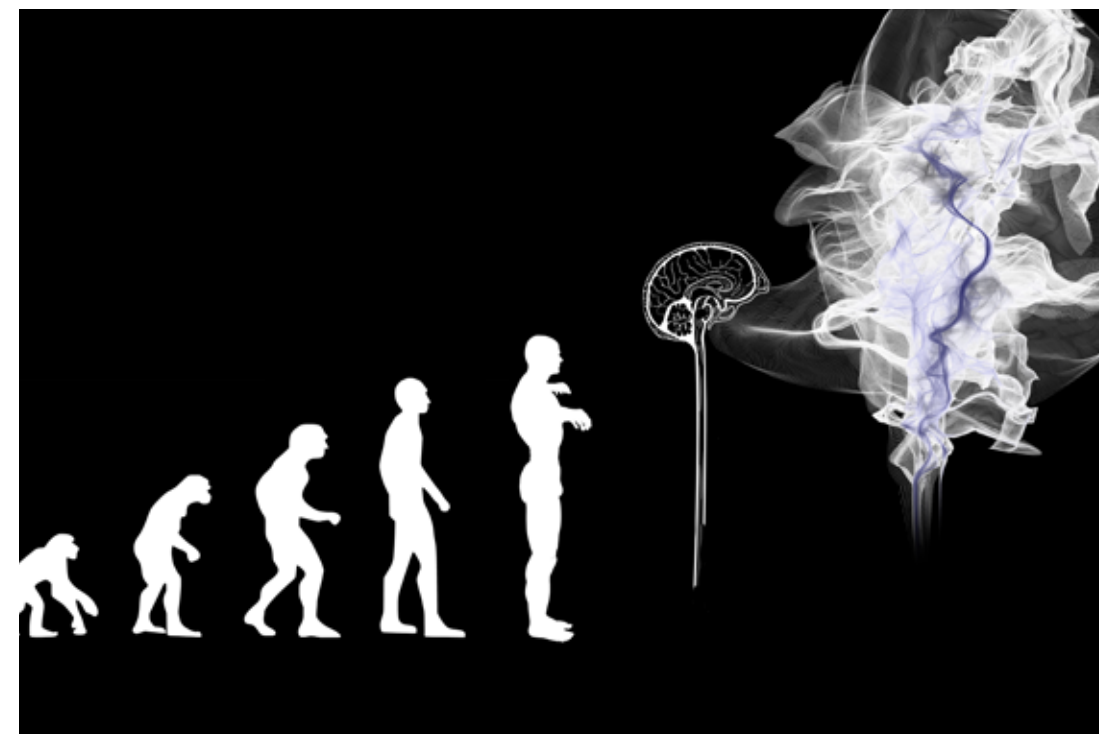
How can IA help to reinvent our world?

Generalizing the use of IA in our world is not without risks. To prepare our world to effectively translate the key benefits of IA, our societies' roadmap should include some imperatives.

First, education needs to be adapted to fit the skills

expected in the future. It has to focus on people's competitive edge; that is, on tasks machines will never be able to do (well). In my view, the most crucial of these skills are creativity, adaptability, and "learning how to learn".

Second, according to economists, the use of digital technologies over the last decades has resulted in increasing wealth inequalities amongst people. To remedy, it seems necessary to consider implementing wealth-





Pascal Bornet

A recognized global expert, author, thought leader, and pioneer in the field of Intelligent Automation (IA).

Bornet received multiple awards in the fields of technology and artificial intelligence. He is ranked as one of the top 10 global experts in AI and Automation by various research and consultancy firms, and he was awarded Global Top Voice in Tech in 2019.

He is the author of the Amazon best-seller and first reference book on the topic of Intelligent Automation: "INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION: Learn how to harvest AI to boost business and make our world more human". Acclaimed by the profession including Gartner ("An essential reading"), HFS ("Masterful insight, this book is more relevant than ever") and Forrester ("This book needed to be written") <https://intelligentautomationbook.com/>

Bornet is also a senior executive with 20+ years of experience in digital transformations. He founded and led the "AI & Automation" practices at McKinsey and at Ernst & Young (EY). He is currently in the leadership team of Aera Technology, an innovative startup.

Bornet is a lecturer and keynote speaker. He published articles in Forbes, Bloomberg, The World Economic Forum, McKinsey Quarterly, the Times, Japan Times, Business Times, AI magazine, CIO Advisors and several other reference media. He is ranked as one of the top global experts in AI and Automation by reference organizations like Analytica or Thinkers 360.

He is a member of the Forbes Technology Council, Senior Advisor for the Institute of Robotic, Automation and Artificial Intelligence (IRPAAI), a Board Member and a Senior Advisor for several organizations, startups, and charities.

Bornet is also an influencer. He is passionate about making our world more human with Artificial Intelligence, Automation, and Technology in general. He was awarded Global Top Voice in Tech in 2019 with 400k+ followers on LinkedIn, Twitter, and other social media.

sharing mechanisms such as Universal Basic Income.

On top of this, IA's impact on employment needs to be monitored very closely. Similarly to the previous industrial revolutions, an optimistic scenario holds that IA will enable the creation of more jobs than we have today. Conversely, a pessimistic scenario suggests that, due to the fast pace and other specifics, IA will massively reduce the number of jobs available. While the actual scenario will most likely be hybrid, to mitigate risks, we need to be prepared to deal with both scenarios. We owe this to our children and future generations.

Enabled by the above initiatives, IA could help us consider building a new, more human society. One that involves a new, more engaging definition of "work", and

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that would give us the time to refocus on what matters the most in our lives: family, love, taking care of the others, and our planet.

What is the book about, what does it cover?

The book covers the following:

- What is Intelligent Automation (IA)? Why has the use of IA been expanding so rapidly? What are

the benefits it unleashes for people, companies, customers, and society?

- How can IA increase the resilience of our health and economic systems to safeguard people's lives and livelihoods even in times of pandemics or crises?
- How have leading organizations been able to harness the full potential of IA, at scale, and generate massive efficiency gains in the range of

20 to 60%?

- How can IA save 10+ million lives per year, triple our global budget for education, eliminate hunger, or help protect our planet?

Who is the book for?

- CEOs who want to understand what they can expect strategically from IA, how to build their roadmap, their business case, build their capabilities and ensure the success of their transformation.
- Project managers, developers, analysts, who want to understand the critical success factors in implementing technologies, leading practices in managing such a project, example of use cases, war stories... driving change management, communication, training.... Improving customer and employee experiences
- For everyone interested in the benefits generated and expected from IA on society, lives, education, health. Anyone who is interested in the future of work, and what it means for our society and for the future generations.

About my two co authors:

Ian Barkin is Chief Strategy & Marketing Officer at SYKES. He is a globally recognized thought leader and veteran in the IA space. Barkin co-founded Symphony Ventures, a pure-play IA consulting company providing cutting-edge services across all sectors. In 2018, the company was acquired for US\$69 million by SYKES, a NASDAQ-listed global leader in Customer Engagement Services.

Dr. Jochen Wirtz is Vice-Dean MBA Programmes at the National University of Singapore Business School, and Professor of Marketing. He is a well-known and highly acclaimed author with more than 20 books published, including "Services Marketing - People, Technology, Strategy". His research has been published in over 100 academic journal articles, and he received over 40 awards.

Edge computing is a model in which data, processing and applications are concentrated in devices at the network rather than existing almost entirely in the cloud.

Edge Computing is a paradigm that extends Cloud Computing and services to the edge of the network, similar to Cloud, Edge provides data, compute, storage, and application services to end-users.

Edge Computing reduces service latency, and improves QoS (Quality of Service), resulting in superior user-experience. Edge Computing supports emerging

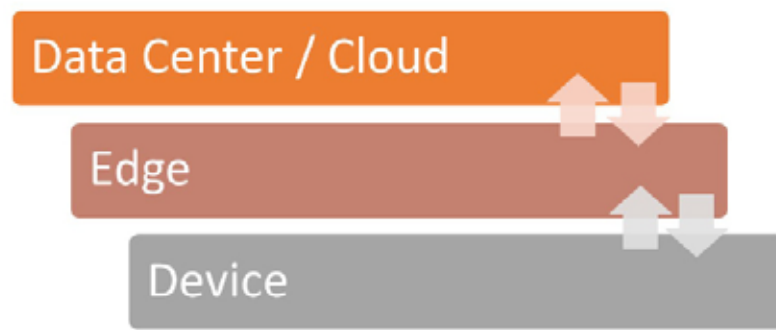


The Paradigm the Edge Computing Paradigm

Ahmed Banafa

No.1 Tech Voice to Follow & Influencer on LinkedIn|Award
Winning Author|Expert:IoT-Blockchain-Cybersecurity|Speaker

Talks about #ai, #iot, #blockchain, #cybersecurity, and
#cryptocurrency
San Jose State University
Lehigh University
San Francisco Bay Area



- True support for mobility and the Metaverse. By controlling data at various points, Edge computing integrates core cloud services with those of a truly distributed data center platform. As more services are created to benefit the end-user, and Edge networks will become more prevalent.

- Numerous verticals are ready to adopt. Many organizations are already adopting the concept of the Edge. Many different types of services aim to deliver rich content to the end-user. This spans IT shops, vendors, and entertainment companies as well.

- Seamless integration with the cloud and other services. With Edge services, we're able to enhance the cloud experience by isolating user data that needs to live on the Edge. From there, administrators are able to tie-in analytics, security, or other services directly into their cloud model.

Benefits of Edge Computing

- Minimize latency
- Conserve network bandwidth
- Address security concerns at all level of the network
- Operate reliably with quick decisions
- Collect and secure wide range of data
- Move data to the best place for processing
- Lower expenses of using high computing power only when needed and less bandwidth
- Better analysis and insights of local data

Real-Life Example:

A traffic light system in a major city is equipped with smart sensors. It is the day after the local team won a championship game and it's the morning of the day of the big parade.

concept of Metaverse applications that demand real-time/predictable latency (industrial automation, transportation, networks of sensors and actuators). Edge Computing paradigm is well positioned for real time Big Data and real time analytics, it supports densely distributed data collection points, hence adding a fourth axis to the often-mentioned Big Data dimensions (volume, variety, and velocity).

Unlike traditional data centers, Edge devices are geographically distributed over heterogeneous platforms, spanning multiple management domains. That means data can be processed locally in smart devices rather than being sent to the cloud for processing.

Edge Computing Services cover:

- Applications that require very low and predictable latency.
- Geographically distributed applications
- Fast mobile applications
- Large-scale distributed control systems

Advantages of Edge computing

- Bringing data close to the user. Instead of housing information at data center sites far from the end-point, the Edge aims to place the data close to the end-user.
- Creating dense geographical distribution. First of all, big data and analytics can be done faster with better results. Second, administrators are able to support location-based mobility demands and not have to traverse the entire network. Third, these (Edge) systems would be created in such a way that real-time data analytics become a reality on a truly massive scale.

A surge of traffic into the city is expected as revelers come to celebrate their team's win. As the traffic builds, data are collected from individual traffic lights.

The application developed by the city to adjust light patterns and timing is running on each edge device. The app automatically makes adjustments to light patterns in real time, at the edge, working around traffic impediments as they arise and diminish. Traffic delays are kept to a minimum, and fans spend less time in their cars and have more time to enjoy their big day.

After the parade is over, all the data collected from the traffic light system would be sent up to the cloud and analyzed, supporting predictive analysis and allowing the city to adjust and improve its traffic application's response to future traffic anomalies.

There is little value in sending a live steady stream of everyday traffic sensor data to the cloud for storage and analysis. The civic engineers have a good handle on normal traffic patterns. The relevant data is sensor information that diverges from the norm, such as the data from parade day.

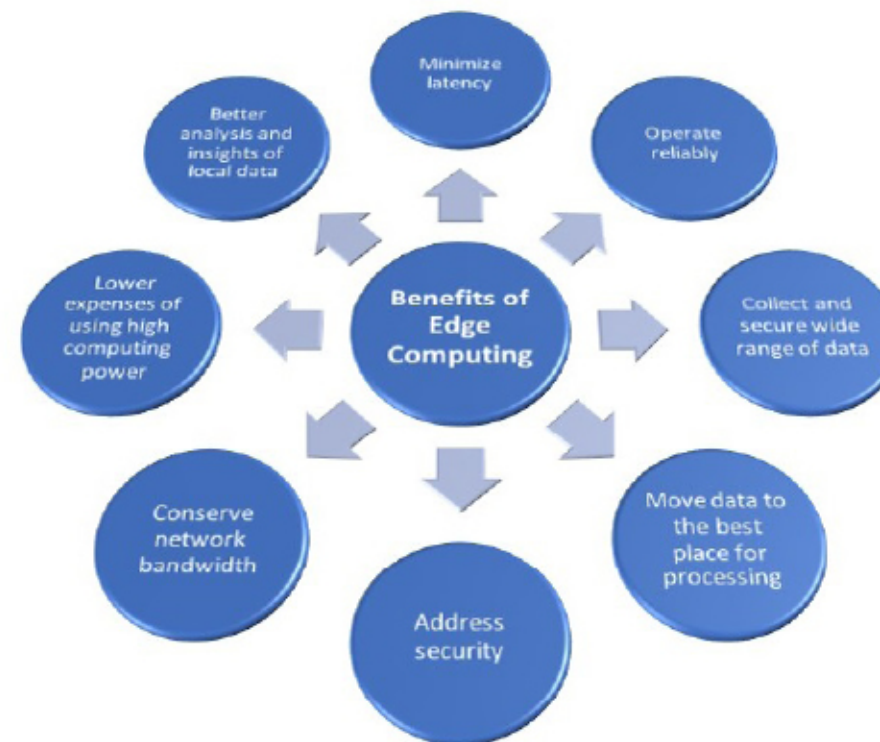
Future of Edge Computing

As more services, data and applications are pushed to the end-user, technologists will need to find ways to optimize the delivery process. This means bringing information closer to the end-user, reducing latency and being prepared for the Metaverse and its applications in Web 3.0. More users are utilizing mobility as their means to conduct business and their personal lives. Rich content and lots of data points are pushing cloud computing platforms, literally, to the Edge - where the user's requirements are continuing to grow.

With the increase in data and cloud services utilization, Edge Computing will play a key role in helping reduce latency and improving the user experience. We are now truly distributing the data plane and pushing advanced services to the Edge. By doing so, administrators are able to bring rich content to the user faster, more efficiently, and - very importantly - more economically. This, ultimately, will mean better data access, improved corporate analytics capabilities, and an overall improvement in the end-user computing experience.

Moving the intelligent processing of data to the edge only raises the stakes for maintaining the availability of these smart gateways and their communication path to the cloud. When the Internet of Things (IoT) provides methods that allow people to manage their daily lives, from locking their homes to checking their schedules to cooking their meals, gateway downtime in the Edge Computing world becomes a critical issue.

Additionally, resilience and failover solutions that safeguard those processes will become even more essential. Generally speaking, we are moving towards localization to distributed model away from the current strained centralized system defining the Internet infrastructure.



Being a thought leader

the space of data science and AI

Aishwarya Srinivasan

AI & ML Innovation Leader, LinkedIn Top Voice 2020 with over 260k Followers

The term data science was coined very recently, in 2008 by DJ Patil and Jeff Hammerbacher.

Data science as a field is the amalgam of mathematics, statistics, programming and subject knowledge. There has been a lot of confusion on how data science and AI relate. Here is my simple way of explaining it. Data science is as much a subset of AI as AI is a subset of data science. How?

When we are trying to build any AI system with data, we need basic data science techniques to explore, evaluate and derive intelligence from the data. Similarly, when you are trying to build data science models, you could be using AI algorithms to power your data science models, like deep learning algorithms.



Data science as a field is more of an extension of what was known as data analytics for around a century. The history of data analytics can be dated to the 19th century when Frederick Winslow Taylor used data methods in time management exercises.

Over the last decades we have seen multiple facets of data science such as predictive analytics, prescriptive analytics, cognitive sciences, augmented reality, big data analytics, natural language processing, computer vision etc.

With the integrated applications of artificial intelligence and data science there are multiple job roles which have evolved. There have been a lot of skill sets that have evolved from research to industries.

With the recent advancements in the field, specialized roles have emerged in databases, data warehousing, data mining, cloud computing, big data, business intelligence, and machine learning. Each of these roles require specialized skills along with knowledge about the business for which the application is being built.



Every industry has adopted data science and AI systems at least to some extent. Depending on the risk portfolio of the business the level of penetration of the applications can differ. For example if we were to build a recommendation model for e-commerce business, the risk appetite for the business will not be very high, as recommending a few products in which the user doesn't show interest won't pose a heavy penalty on the business.

Whereas if we were to build a financial model to make trading decisions, the risk appetite is low or almost null, as now we are playing with billions of dollars of money. In this case, using artificial intelligence might have to clear a lot of guardrails before anything gets into production.

For any organization to bridge the gap between engineering and business, they need thought leaders. Thought leaders are essential to understand the business, AI applications, and the economics of building such systems.

Thought leaders are also responsible to democratize the use of the technology and make it more universal. In the very recent past, many packages, softwares and technologies like automated machine learning, integrated machine learning packages have emerged which intend to create "Citizen data scientist".

A Citizen data scientist is someone who works in a field that doesn't require knowledge of mathematics, statistics or programming, yet is able to build models that cater to the business use-cases of the organization. With time, organizations are going from prototyping AI applications to putting them to production. This is where thought-leaders play a crucial role.

Thought-leaders don't just work for an organization, instead

they are leaders for a field, building eminence using creating thought-probing conversations to the community and spreading experience based knowledge about the field.

In the recent decade, professional social media like LinkedIn has helped the data science and AI community tremendously by helping people find the right kind of jobs, helping companies find the right kind of talent, spreading knowledge, mentoring, creating content etc.

The mode of knowledge sharing has completely transformed from having monthly journals and research papers to sharing online articles and blogs. This has expedited the process of sharing content across boundaries much faster.

In 1998, the term "open-source" was coined in Palo Alto, California by Eric Raymond and Bruce Perens. The goal behind open source was to make the source code of the softwares free and accessible to all over the internet. With this anyone could propose changes to the software and build customized applications.

Aishwarya Srinivasan is an AI & ML Innovation Leader at IBM. She works cross-functionally with the product team, data science team and sales to research AI use-cases for clients by conducting discovery workshops and building assets to showcase the business value of the technology.

She is an advocate for open-source technologies; previously a developer advocate for PyTorch Lightning and a contributor to Scikit Learn. She holds a post-graduate in Data Science from Columbia University. As a LinkedIn influencer and thought leader she writes articles about data science and AI, conducts educational talks, live sessions for people who want to pursue their career in data science.

She has a LinkedIn follower base of ~250k and actively engages in community-building activities and builds awareness for the AI community. She was spotlighted as the LinkedIn Top Voice 2020 for Data Science & AI, which features Top 10 Machine Learning influencers across the world.

She has founded a nonprofit organization called Illuminate AI that aims to provide

mentorship, career guidance, and educational support to thousands in the community. There are about 5000 members in the Illuminate AI community with whom she shares career talks, offers mentorship, offers educational resources, organizes technical deep dive learning sessions along with interview preparation sessions.

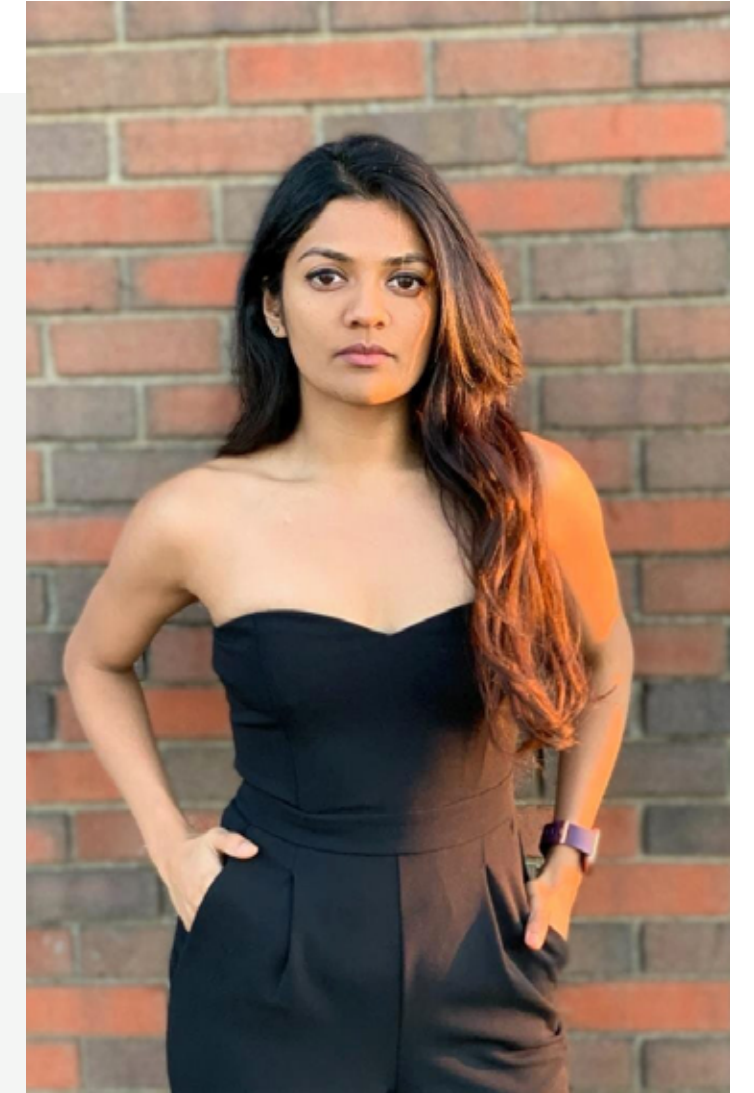
She is also a board member for nonprofit organizations like AI for Good Foundation and AI Education project. She is an ambassador for the Women in Data Science community originated from Stanford University for 3 years.

As an ambassador, she organizes events and conducts sessions to spread awareness about opportunities women can attain in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

She aims to spread awareness in societies where women are underrepresented and present to them opportunities to grow, be strong, make an impact, and be a role model for other women.

One of the major advantages of open source software was the competitive advantage. Through the late 90s and early 2000, a lot of inventions took place because of the open source technology as people were not reinventing the wheel anymore and re-using the existing technology and building upon it. This tremendously expedited the technology boom.

Currently there are hundreds of open source packages in python, R and other programming languages for building data science and machine learning tools. There are millions of users who are using this technology to implement data science models.



One of the major advancements was encapsulating the mathematical and optimization element in the package and giving users a high level experience of programming and implementing machine learning models for business use-cases.

As a thought-leader one has to drive exactly these kinds of inventions in the industry. A thought-leader is very crucial for an industry to grow as a whole with relevant technology and research. Here are some of the major responsibilities of a thought-leader.

Crossing Paths with a Leader

It is always such a great pleasure to cross paths

with Fred Mouawad, 4th generation Co-Guardian of Mouawad, The legendary jewellery house of royalty, high society and celebrities.

On this occasion we met in Dubai, followed by Abu Dhabi, where Mouawad was the Educator sponsor of the Abu Dhabi Art.

At the event it was showcased the stunning headpiece designed by the incredibly talented Salama Khalfan, and meticulously crafted by the master jewellers of Mouawad, featuring a stunning

Cecilia Paolino-Uboldi

International Partnerships Director |
Global Speaker | Board Advisor

Fred Mouawad

4th generation Co-Guardian, Mouawad



enchanting customers with elegant jewelry and timepieces since 1890

MOUAWAD

The future of leadership
when empowering
people is your mission

range of embedded diamonds and emeralds.

While we were discussing and exploring the stories and deep meaning behind their jewel's masterpieces, I had the opportunity to learn more about Fred's passion to empower the youth!

Indeed, engaging, and inspiring young people is a vital part of life, not only for their self-development and wellbeing, but for the communities that they are part of.

Leadership and developmental scholars highlight the need to enhance youth leadership skills, in many of their studies. However, there isn't enough research that covers youth perception of how role models influence them and their future leadership development. So, it is important to address these gaps to start developing an understanding of youths' perspectives. In order to provide them with the right support and guidance.

That inspired Fred Mouawad to create CI Talks, which

is a vehicle that facilitates role models, experts from professional fields and influencers who share their experiences in ways that youth can relate to. Founded at the beginning of 2021 and releasing its first video on 4th March of that year, CI Talks is a trademark belonging to CI Talks Global Corp.

The company has set its sights on producing videos targeting the Thai market before it expands to other countries where it will roll out the same formula; content created by locals for locals. In preparation for this, pilot videos have, during 2021, been released from Lebanon and Indonesia.

With its tagline "Stories That Spark Change", CI Talks is on a mission to create and deliver content that can open minds, inspire, and catalyse people to take action to help them grow and make a positive impact on the lives of those around them. At the heart of this is the brand's ability to expose the younger generation to mechanisms that activate self-improvement and encounters that are a catalyst to build a growth mindset. By creating a role model-driven framework for youth development in areas of self-acceptance, motivation, mental health, and leadership.



In Fred's words "The 21st century so far has been characterized by frequent disruption and rapid change. The pandemic has only helped to exacerbate this situation, accentuating the level of uncertainty still further for those at pre- or early career stage of their lives.

Now, more than ever, is the time that the younger generation needs inspiration and guidance to broaden their horizons, motivate them to learn and challenge any stereotypical views that they may have. Embracing diversity and difference.

We live today in a multicultural world which the internet amplifies every second of every day. YouTube provides us with access to videos on demand originating from all corners of the world, in a multitude of languages and depicting umpteen stories. Facebook, Instagram and TikTok enable anyone or any age to follow anyone or any age anywhere in the world.

Diversity comes in many forms, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, age, culture, socioeconomic background and onwards. Each of these can contribute to an individual's unique experience of the world.

Diversity and difference bring with it curiosity. It can dissolve preconceived stereotypical perceptions and it broadens our perspective in many ways. The more culturally exposed we are, the more unique each and every one of us becomes. Furthermore, the more diverse our social network and circle is, the more perceptive we have to be and the more learning we have to do.

Every culture and nationality see the world differently. Their perspectives vary and points of view can be contrasting. Their knowledge, skill sets, and experiences are not a mirror image of our own. Diversity brings with it wide ranging outlooks, perspectives and points of view. This inevitably means that each individual will approach any given problem differently and that can lead to exciting outcomes for businesses and beyond.



Role models can have both a positive and negative influence on the younger generation and who they decide to follow is often dependent on their current mindset.

A young person with a growth mindset will be more attracted to commensurate role models whose values mirror theirs and are fuelled by optimism and determination. Conversely, a young person with a negative mindset will be drawn to role models who also share the same outlook, opinions, excuses and objections about development, life, and progress. They are more likely to align themselves with role models who purport more preventative strategies, but these strategies are no less motivating. They can be about how to avoid failure and the possibility of misfortune. They are peas in the same pod as they both are intent on avoiding their fears at all cost.

Individuals with a growth mindset are much more likely to gravitate towards role models who offer strategies that are in line with their way of thinking. The role models are motivating and driven to forge paths to success.

Positive role models can be in the form of parents, teachers, mentors, celebrities, heroes from sports, and peers. Take Sky Brown, at 12 years old, the youngest Skateboarder to have competed in the Olympics, for example; with his: you can do it approach.

CI Talks invites celebrities and experts who, in many



Fred Mouawad

4th generation Co-Guardian of Mouawad

Global Franchise Architects - a food service company with five brands that expanded to 240 stores throughout 7 countries. With his experience in incubating and growing several ventures internationally, and managing a portfolio of several companies, Fred has developed comprehensive management systems that support each of the individual companies while simultaneously seeking synergies across the portfolio.

Fred grew up in Geneva, Switzerland where he attended boarding school at College du Lemman. He received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Pepperdine University. He is a Graduate Gemologist from the Gemological Institute of America, an alumnus of the Harvard Business School (MBA 1995) and of the Stanford Executive Program (SEP 2012) at the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Fred is a YPO member, Co-Founder of the YPO ASEAN United and SEA Angels Chapters, Co-Chair of the YPO Stanford GSB Program since 2014, Co-Chair of the YPO INSEAD Global Family Enterprise Program since 2019 and served as YPO Southeast Asia Regional Chair FY 2017-19.

He is the recipient of the YPO Alexander Cappello Award in 2016 and in 2020 was the YPO Southeast Asia Regional Honoree for the Hickok Distinguished Service Award. Fred is also part of the Family Business Network in Asia and in 2018 he joined the Harvard Business School Global Advisory Board.

Fred Mouawad is a global citizen, portfolio entrepreneur, and founder of Synergia One Group of Companies. Synergia One is the entity that groups all the companies he founded including the family jewelry business, Mouawad, of which he is the fourth.

The group operates in 16 countries across several industries that encompass gems and jewelry with Mouawad, diamond manufacturing with Premier Diamond Alliance, food manufacturing with Synova, software as a service with Taskworld, publishing with SmartWork Media, and video-on-demand with CI Talks.

He also from 1997 to 2017 founded and led

cases, are already role models to members of the audience (actors, actresses, singers, models, pillars of society and entrepreneurs) who play a fundamental role in the development of people who admire and look up to them.

Role models can help the youth to replace a negative mindset with a growth mindset, to feel good about themselves and help other people, to be inspired to learn new skills and to pursue career opportunities that may not have occurred to them."

When it comes to how those role models help shape the future generation of leaders. Fred tells me that not everyone is a born leader, nor can everyone be a leader. But role models do play a very active role in shaping future leaders because ambition cannot exist in absence of motivation.

Teaching, mentoring, advising, and encouraging is often enough to cause a change in behaviour, especially when individuals are able to identify with a leader as a role model. Particularly today, the younger generation wants to make a difference; socially and environmentally. They come into the fray with fresh eyes and unique strengths that can shape a better future and world for everyone.

I do indeed echo Fred's words. The need for youth mentorship has never been more urgent. Organizations of all sorts realize that with today's uncertain, complex, volatile, and ambiguous environment, the future leaders need new skills and organizational capabilities that are not those that helped their forefathers succeed in the past. There is a clear recognition that the future leader's development should not be restricted to the future C level of the organizations. It is about empowering each and every individual which will play a role across the organization to be ready and willing to take decisions that align to the organization's culture and strategy. It is about the mindset of collaborative problem-solving, responsibility and accountability. And for that it is important to arm them with the necessary rational, technical and communication skills.

However, the traditional education system doesn't



adequately prepare future leaders for the challenges that organizations face today and those that they, most likely, will face in the future. The traditional education programs focus largely on discipline based skills like strategy development or financial analysis and not so much about relational, perceptual, interpretative or affective skills. Which leads to a proactive and coherent style of management.

Traditional executive education programs aren't fit for purpose. There is an increased demand for collaborative programs in which individuals work as a group, completing tasks and assignments together, improving participation, while increasing engagement and conversations, known as cohort based courses. Throughout this experience, the students learn to focus on group-based learning that is delivered within a specific time, resulting in improved participation, increased engagement, and conversations. This type of education programs are instrumental to the future success of the individuals and organizations.

Nowadays, start ups are filling the gaps that traditional educational institutions aren't delivering; With a mix of interactive and social platforms, online courses, and a whole variety of learning tools. These new entrants enable individuals to pick up from a series of skills, as and when required in the context in which may be particularly relevant to them and their job.

With the rapidly shifting landscape of service

MOUAWAD

providers, universities and business schools are joining forces with advisory firms, management consultancies and digital start ups to offer comprehensive education that is customizable to provide the necessary skills development.

In the future, with the constant development in digitalization, learning opportunities will reach more and more people, democratizing education.

Learning is becoming more personalized, socialized, and contextualized.

Providing certifications that attest a specific training or skills learned which are proliferating as a legitimate and effective way of learning and developing new skills.

Millennials are very tech savvy and familiar with social media-based interactions. They favour online group discussions, joining forums to learn and share ideas. Therefore, the need to be physically at an educational institution may be wearing thin, in any case. Online and modular learning will also greatly reduce the cost of the studies.

Nonetheless lasting and meaningful behavioural change is quite a complex process, that requires timely personalized guidance. For that reason, coaching & training start ups are pivotal at providing interactive activities that encourage communication feedback while building collaborative capital, and developing relationships of trust.

Online training material is ubiquitous and allows individuals to choose modules of education at any level of granularity required. Which are cost effective and fulfil the specific objective in a singular and effective way, accessible from anywhere

So, what does the future hold?

Learning becomes more adaptative,

while learning platforms and content gets constantly created. With individuals selecting specific skill sets to develop and to demonstrate proficiency in a more affordable way. Benefiting from a great choice of targeted digital offerings that relate to each individual's needs and interests. With traceable authenticated digital certifications that map the individual's learning journey and his accomplishments and achievements.

Meanwhile, the increased competition is forcing

incumbents to improve on their comparative advantage, as open online learning providers, which are fully digital and easily accessible to all, gain sophistication. Even accessing renown University professors, further diminishing the value those traditional institutions and education programmes once provided.

To stay relevant traditional educational institutions, need to become competent curators and architects of effective learning experiences of flexible recyclable content. To guide individuals and organizations on best practices to develop and test new skills, in the form of blended and personalized development programs, that leverage the physically present classes only when necessary.

As Aristotle once said, "the mind is not only knowledge but also the ability to apply the knowledge in practice."

Cecilia Paolino-Uboldi

International Partnerships Director | Global Speaker | Board Advisor

Cecilia is a vibrant businesswoman and a remarkable relationship builder, passionate about connecting people and enabling businesses to achieve their goals by optimizing their network of partners and customers.

Fluent in Spanish, English, French, Italian, Portuguese, and German. She has built up an enviable network of companies and individuals across industries and organisation types, from start-ups to global corporations, including business leaders, politicians, and royalty.

The common thread throughout her career has been the desire to improve and facilitate business'

relationships. Improving communication channels of collaboration by making a tangible difference addressing the challenges of accessibility, skills development and improved diversity and inclusion.

With vast experience scaling up businesses from start-ups to FTSE 100 organisations.

She serves as advisor in several boards of disrupting start-up businesses and is currently the Director of the International Strategic Partnerships at Carnival Corporation & plc.

Cecilia wearing the Miss Universe Power of Unity Crown





Decrypting the Future

Larisa B. Miller

CEO, Phoenix Global; CEO & President
Keystone Farm Future;
Exec. VP STP Capital Partners

What COVID-19 has shown us is that the way we work has changed forever.

Our business communities are no longer within the proximity of where we live, as technology and our hyperconnectivity allow us to cater to a global marketplace. Our physical office spaces and satellite offices, which required many of us commute from suburbs to urban centers, will never occupy the same square footage or have the hundreds of minions working side-by-side in cubicles, as in pre-COVID days. Our staff meetings, committees, working groups and project teams will no longer need to reserve a conference room for facetime, rather, we can gather via a Zoom link.



REIMAGINING the Future of Work





Given the dichotomy between the old and new models for business, how do we build vibrancy in our 'new' business communities? How do we anticipate the needs of our workforce when we struggle to anticipate the disruptions in supply chains, the shortage of middle-skilled trade workers and the shifts and fractures due to the economic and societal shifts that are causing our global markets to fluctuate daily? All of these questions can be answered when we look at how the portrait of the future of work will be painted. We have done a horrible job of preparing the future for our youth, so how do we prepare our youth for the future? We must discard the things we knew to be true about the past in order to create what will be true about the future, and this all begins with education.

To be a vanguard of business moving into this new era of commerce, where technology, ESG (environmental, sustainability and governance) and flexibility will define business success, it is imperative that we anticipate the changing paradigm of the workforce. The integration of technology as the nucleus of industry is forcing businesses to recognize that every industry is now a software industry.

AI, real-time machine learning, robotics, cloud

computing, virtual reality and automation will be as commonplace in our workplaces as the typewriter, personal pager and fax machine once were. The skills needed for employment are changing. Our administrative assistants are becoming virtual, our bookkeepers are being replaced by online accounting software providers – even teachers will be forced to share their apples and desks space with artificial intelligence robotic educators. But this is not bad!! That's called PROGRESS.

The Stone Age did not end because we ran out of stones, as many thought leaders have noted, it ended because of progress. More rapidly and deliberately than in generations past, the progress of today is driving the evolution of careers. In the bygone eras of industrial and technological revolution, progress was derived from and dependent on our professional career pathways (i.e. college educated workforce), but we are seeing a notable shift in this paradigm towards trade professions – a shift which needs to be regarded and embraced.

For all professions, skilled vs. unskilled, professional vs. trade, college vs. vocational education, the reimagining of the future of work will require a collaborative restructuring of our thought-processes, beginning with education. The educational system,

shaping the workforce of tomorrow, must recognize, with the longevity and life of our skills having a shorter span of relevance, our workforce will be required to regularly upskill.

We must create an educational system that continues long past secondary and post-secondary education, making professional development an integral part of our workforce KPIs.

Life never stops teaching, so we have to accept that we can never stop learning. Education and work must intertwine and coexist in the institutional mindset shaping the future. There will be no upward mobility in the workforce for skills with a short lifespan and no access to professional development. Therefore, as business leaders, we must prioritize the integration of the classroom into our business operations, offering our employees an institutional campus where they can learn, unlearn and relearn as innovation and technology continue to accelerate.

Every business must become a learning institution. Every employee – regardless of which rung of the career ladder on which they are standing, must also be an apprentice. The days of a front-loaded education which will carry us through our career years to retirement are in the rearview mirror.

Where only a few short years ago it was long regarded that the best jobs and the most stable careers emerged from, at a minimum, a four-year degree, we are now seeing that our white-collar professionals are perhaps most susceptible to elemental redundancy due to AI, robotics, and cloud computing.

There is an exponential rise in trade professions, and those who pursue vocational/technical career pathways are best positioned to service our universal needs – computer scientists, coders, plumbers, electricians, graphic designers, and the like, who can respond to real and constant need.

While technology enhances the performance of our



white-collar professionals, there is a growing need for trade service providers. Historically, the status or stigma of having or not having a college degree has created a divide between those who have access to education, and those who have access to work. Guiding our youth towards a college education is likely not going to be the 'north star' to career success and longevity as in years past.

Skills-based education rooted in emergent technologies will run toe-to-toe with professional, degree-based occupations, removing the stigmas associated with vocational trade school education, forcing us to rethink the value of a 4-year degree program. Many jobs which require a degree as a qualification for consideration never actually require that degree to execute the job.

With the cost of education rising higher than inflation, and access to post-secondary, university education becoming more and more prohibitive, our secondary school education system must equalize the career path planning to balance professional careers and trades, allowing vocational education and apprenticeship to be a viable and respected way-forward for youth at all levels of ability and academic achievement.

In this 'era of reset', our middle-skilled employees, those without costly 4-year degrees but possessing valuable trade skills, are positioned as the critical need segment of the workforce. For too long in the United States, graduation from a four-year college or university was the barometer for success. As parents, we imagine our children growing up to be college-educated professionals, somehow seeing this as the definition of the American dream, a.k.a., success.

While we will continue to need college-educated professionals, this measure of success, however, needs to change. In this world where energy poverty, food insecurity and the need for basic human services is rising along with our burgeoning population, we have to shift our mindset, break the stigmas of trade, and recognize that the successful workforce of tomorrow will regard doctors, plumbers, lawyers, electricians, engineers and farmers as equally valuable, equally prestigious, and integral to our environmental, social and economic stability.

We must discard the things that we knew to be true about the past and create the things that will be true about the future, and this begins with the reimagining of education. Success isn't about a piece of paper framed on the wall.

Rather, success is a quality of life derived from job satisfaction, societal contribution, and the ability to address our basic human needs. Farmers feed us, electricians allow us to keep up with our increasing demand for power, and welders are integral to the infrastructure that keeps our societies mobile and operational.

In order to craft the solutions of the future and not be shackled to the problems of the past - to be vibrant and sustainable in this era of disruption and transformation, we must discard the formerly regarded caste system of professions and accept the regrowth of our human and professional development capabilities, equalizing the classifications of skills and education.

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GLOBAL BUSINESS EDITIONS
WORLD'S TOP NEXTGEN INVESTMENTS MAGAZINE

A Journey to Inspire

BADR AL-TOWAIJRI

Co-Founder, Chief Investment Officer & Vice Chairman
United Kingdom



My name is Badr Al-Towaijri. I was born in Saudi Arabia but spent most of my life in the US.

I studied my double degrees bachelor, Executive MBA, and worked at one of the conglomerate investment banks in the US. I came back to Saudi back in 2008 for family reasons and at that time, I felt that I left behind a huge career and missed a great opportunity to be one of the best investment managers in the world. However, I believe Karma comes back to you 100 times better and more.

My first job in Chicago and my first boss, gave me a huge self-confident that I can be



whoever I wanted to be if I work smart and hard to accomplish my goals and dreams.

After coming back to Saudi, I landed a great job working for one of the biggest investment banks as a Senior Public Equity Fund Manager. In no time, I was the top performer in terms of performance and track record. I won couple of regional and global awards and I was recognized as one of the top portfolio managers in the region.

Four years down the road, I realized that I missing something. I knew everything about the



equity market but my contacts and relationships were very limited even though I was born in Saudi but I left to the US in such a young age. So, I decided to move to the Wealth Management Department and expand my professional network because I thought I had enough knowledge from the Asset Management side and now it is the right time to meet and interact with High-Net-Worth Individuals, family offices, Investment banks, Sovereign Wealth Funds, and Government Entities.

I had a competitive advantage over my peers because I used to manage funds and investments, so I was very comfortable speaking about market trends, research, valuations, fundamental and technical analysis, and even psychological analysis about investors in the market.

Adding to that, I was very honest, direct to the point, always put my investors interest before my personal interest, and always protect my investors from bad investments and wrong calls. Very fast, I became their investment advisor and they started to trust me with their investments and wealth. So again, I was a top performer for four years raising billions in different asset classes and exceeding all my managers expectations.

Suddenly, unfortunately, I was hit by a car in the parking lot of my office and I almost died. I had a double fracture in my ankle and had multiple surgeries. I was really heart and had a year in physical therapy to be able to walk again. It was a real difficult time for me. However, I forgave the young guy who hit me because suing him was going to destroy his life and future, and again Karma comes back to you 100 times better and more. During that time, I had an ample amount of time to rethink and reorganize my personal and professional life. There was a sound in the back of my head always telling me that I can do better and bigger things in my life. I am a strong believer in God and my faith didn't allow me to think why is this happening to me in the prime time of my career.

After a full year of recovery and physical therapy which was back in 2016, I decided to quit my job and focus on establishing new companies and ventures. Next year 2022, one of these ventures is going public globally as the first Saudi company to be listed abroad with an investment return of 1000X and this is where my professional nick name Mr. 1000X came from. I am really thrilled and cannot believe that I have exceeded my own expectations.

In the last two decades, I have seen, analyzed, studied, evaluated hundreds of opportunities in the Public Equity, Private Equity, and Venture Capital space. However, I have a very strict criteria, score board, specific parameters that I look for, clear strategies, top teams, and a clear exit strategy to be able to make an investment decision. Basically, I do my homework perfectly.

They say that experience is a number of years that you have under your belt, I say experience is a number of successful deals that you close. It is extremely hard to determine good companies from bad ones especially at an early stage of the cycle, however, after you have been exposed to hundreds of deals from different sectors and different continents, you become an expert for great investments.

Now, it takes me couple of hours which I really enjoy, to judge a company's vision, mission, team, philosophy, business plan, strategy, financials, and projections. But at the end of the day, I choose only the ones that have the potential to change the world to a better place and have a great future.

On the other hand, I have never invested in anything that is morally not right like for example, Alcohol, Tobacco, Weapons, Factories with high carbon rates, or anything that could have a negative impact on people's life or the existence of planet earth. I believe if the intentions are right from the beginning, then God will help us succeed. Also, giving back to the societies and poor people, cleans your soul and keeps you on the right track to achieve even bigger and better results.

On the business front, since 2016, my main focus has been investing directly in small and medium size companies locally, regionally, and globally. Since then, I have created couple of unicorns, took couple of my companies' public, and still taking more companies public locally and globally.

Nowadays, I am an investment and strategy advisor to many Government Funds, Sovereign Wealth Funds, Pension Funds, Family offices, Private Equity Firms, Investment Banks, and couple of sleeping unicorns. Sleeping unicorns, what is that?

Recently, I am focusing, investing, advising, and leading two global companies which I personally believe they have a chance to be unicorns. One of them is in the social media space and the other is in the telecommunication space. I believe there is a huge room to grow and improve in these sectors.

For example, if we analyze current social media platforms, we have had the same applications for the last decade. These companies try to improve their services and technology; however, they can do better.

I believe there is a huge gap between what people wants and their actual needs. I believe this sleeping unicorn could compete against these giants and with God's will, will beat them. Why? because they have the right technology, very advanced intellectual properties, offer new services that is not available in the current applications and they have a very sophisticated team. In addition to that, they have the right intentions to make the world a better place by donating some of their gains to charities, cleaning the social media from bad contents, and building orphans homes in the future. Again, if you have the right intentions from the beginning, God will help you to succeed.

Another example for one of my sleeping unicorns is a telecommunication company that has perfected the traditional way of doing businesses and closing deals which is verbal speaking like before when we use to have conference calls only.

Nowadays, we have too much distractions when we do online meetings and before we had less than what we needed. So, we came up with the right technology and teams to create an amazing application that works on low latency with very clear and digital voice capabilities. Plus, they are adding many new features that competitors don't have in the meantime. Both of these two unicorns/ applications will be available to the public in Q1, 2022 which is very soon and I am super excited!

Finally, I believe what doesn't kill you makes you stronger and Karma comes back to you 100 times more and better.

The Impact Digital Currencies & the least advantaged in society

Robert P. Moore Bernardos

Board Member & CFO at EBISBANK
Arganda del Rey, Community of Madrid, Spain

More than 30 years of cross sector international experience to enable international trade & commerce across borders.

If you eat today, Thank a farmer. Think about it, regardless of how advanced and tech-savvy we grow in every sector, one thing that we strive for at the end of the day is food.

All the economic expansion in the country is apparent only if the farmer's community is taken care of on a primacy basis. There is no way we could withstand without farmers.

Despite the prominent image of farming as a serene and healthy way of life, agriculture has the highest rates of mortality in any industry. Farmer suicides all over the globe is a catastrophe that needs to be addressed to preserve our land and families that lose their only bread earner. It has been more than 30 years, we are losing our farmers due to their inability to repay, crop failure, ineptitude to sell the crops grown, the disappointing culmination of prices, family problems, sense of loss and pessimism.

The farmers of the agriculture sector suffer from innumerable debacles like the use of obsolete technology, impaired education, powerlessness to access the wider range of markets, infrequent profits, outrageous



infrastructure, loss of crops due to pests, no knack of knowledge in the intricate matters, the toll of our farmer's lives due to mishaps or failure to earn minimal revenue are some pressing concerns

The world's most indigent youth live in rural communities whose weak economies offer them few possibilities to obtain decent employment, migrating from rural areas to the cities, seeking opportunities – and their numbers are growing.

The UN estimated that there were 1.8 billion youth globally in 2020, those below 29 years of age, and 20% live in India. This is approximately 367 million. but we must not overlook India has 64% of its population in the working age group.

When I checked the statistics I was ravaged by the over increasing speed of youth increase, not only in India, but in other geographies.

Youth, who are the future of the world, deserve viable economic opportunities and what is better than serving the land. At the same time, the recent youth bulge offers an unprecedented opportunity for practitioners and governments to harness the energy, strength, motivation, and innovation of these young people to bolster economic development and social change, while addressing pressing food production and food security needs.

Promoting, fostering and Scaling up youth entrepreneurship in agriculture is the only abrupt action that needs to be taken care of. Youth comprises more than 18% of the global population, and growing and thus their contribution to the agri-industry will be a game-changer.

Their enthusiasm, practical receptiveness to new ideas and progressive technologies are the key facets that will amplify the development of the agriculture industry.

Besides, they have the guts to seize perils and go against the tide which is badly yearned in the farm sector. Agriculture mandates both brawn and brain in addition to enthusiasm and enterprise which exclusively youth can provide.

World hunger is rising and is another global concern that requires attention.

Globally, about 9% of the world's population – 690 million people, if we are to believe statistics – go to bed on an empty stomach each night. Since 2014, the number of people encompassed by starvation has been deliberately on the upswing. If it persists at this rate, it'll overrun 840 million by 2030. Eradicating hunger and malnutrition is one of the great challenges of our time and we must make every effort to ensure clear objectives are defined and resources allocated to achieve these goals.

End hunger, and achieve global food security is not only a part of Sustainable Development Goal 2 but as a credible person forming part of the global human team, mine too.

You all must be marvelling how I as an individual will contribute my bit to achieve the goal?

Changes don't happen overnight,

There's no button that's pushed to magically alter everything.

There is no option on the screen menu we can select.

Change happens little by little. Day by day. We must connect farmers with the global market and unite hands with assorted ministries of food and agriculture to meet the local supply demand.

But it is only through Youth empowerment, offering them education, sustainable opportunities and a path to the future that this can be achieved.

Much is being said about sustainability, but not only India but Africa faces challenges.

Access to the internet remains out of reach for most people in the continent, where only 29% of the population use the internet at all, much less gigabit broadband. This is compared to 57% of the world's population, and 86% of those in Europe and Central Asia.

Robert P. Moore Bernardos

A dynamic, high-calibre senior international executive with more than 30 years of cross-sector (Telecoms, Financial Services, Insurance, Banking, Logistics and Investors Advisory) experience across Europe, Asia and Africa.

Due to this, he is

- World Peace Ambassador (Spain), for World Peace Tracts (<https://peacetracts.org/>)
- Board Advisor, Asian-Africa Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Co-Chairman, Mission Actions Group (MAG), Association of Family Offices of Asia



He has International public speaking experience as Speaker & moderator in the following events:

- LEAD India Foundation, Empowering Sustainability, covering Agriculture, sustainability, and farmer empowerment on the 90th birthday commemoration of Bharat Ratna Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam. New Delhi, India. October 2021.
- Leaders Without Borders Annual Business Summit and International Honors, Dubai. May 2021.
- International Cultural Diplomacy, Córdoba, Spain. June 2021.
- Executive Forum: 4th Industrial Revolution Challenges & SDG, Madrid, Spain. July 2021.
- Global Annual Investment Congress & Summit: SDG & ESG challenges, Dubai, November.

And currently a member of several boards in 3 countries:

- Board member & COO, EBISBANK www.ebisbank.com.
- Board Advisor, Asian-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry. www.asianafican.org.
- FGN Consulting. <https://www.fgnconsulting.eu/>. Robert is advisor, International Consulting.
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- Compagna della Croce Reale. <https://www.crocereale.it/>. Robert is Director, General Chancellery for Institutional, International and Diplomatic Relations and Cooperation.

The difference in these figures is striking and has a negative economic impact on Sub-Saharan Africa – a region which contains many of the least developed countries in the world. Widespread, reliable, high-speed connectivity is vital to support economic growth and development. Without it, the region simply won't have access to the same opportunities that others do.

Too few citizens have digital IDs or transaction accounts – locking them out of access to critical services and e-commerce. Digital start-ups struggle to attract funding and 'traditional' businesses are only slowly adopting digital technologies and platforms to boost productivity and sales. Few governments are investing strategically and systematically in developing digital infrastructure, services, skills, and entrepreneurship.

To become tomorrow's innovators, entrepreneurs and leaders, Africa's youth need to be empowered with the digital skills and access to technology and markets that are essential to thrive in an increasingly digitized global economy. Governments need to find more nimble and effective means of delivering services and interacting with citizens. Businesses need to utilize digitally centred business models to connect with the hundreds of millions of customers previously out of reach due to geography or low income.

Africa has the opportunity to harness the digital economy as a driver of growth and innovation, but if it fails to bridge the digital divide its economies risk isolation and stagnation.

The Digital Transformation Strategy for Africa will build on the existing initiatives and frameworks such as the Policy and Regulatory Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA), the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the African Union Financial Institutions (AUFIs), the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM); and the Free Movement of Persons (FMP) to support the development of a Digital Single Market (DSM) for Africa, as part of the integration priorities of the African Union.

The Smart Africa Initiative has set the creation of a Digital Single Market in Africa as its strategic vision.

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

1. VISION

An Integrated and inclusive digital society and economy in Africa that improves the quality of life of Africa's citizens, strengthen the existing economic sector, enable its diversification and development, and ensure continental ownership with Africa as a producer and not only a consumer in the global economy

2. OVERALL OBJECTIVE

To harness digital technologies and innovation to transform African societies and economies to promote Africa's integration, generate inclusive



economic growth, stimulate job creation, break the digital divide, and eradicate poverty for the continent's socio-economic development and ensure Africa's ownership of modern tools of digital management.

Africa must embrace the digital economy around the five pillars of the Digital Economy for Africa initiative (DE4A); digital infrastructure, digital platforms, digital financial services, digital entrepreneurship and digital skills—key foundational elements of a digital economy. The report also offers specific, actionable recommendations to the government and stakeholders to further its development of each pillar. The DE4A is part of the World Bank Group's support for the African Union's Digital Transformation for Africa, which aims for every African person, business and government to be digitally abled by 2030.

Improve digital infrastructure: Despite having the largest mobile market potential, Africa has minimal fixed broadband infrastructure and connectivity in rural areas, leaving a significant number of the most marginalized segments of the population without internet access.

Strengthen digital platforms: Strong public and private digital platforms support the provision of digital services and a thriving eCommerce platform. However, millions of Africans lack formal identification records to access a range of public and private services.

Increase access to digital financial services: A large number of African adults are without access to a formal account, stalling the country's journey toward financial inclusion. Whereas in other African markets financial inclusion would mostly be driven by digital financial service (DFS) providers, this potential remains largely untapped.

Improve the policy environment for digital entrepreneurship: Despite its large, youthful, and entrepreneurial population, digital entrepreneurship is yet to be fully exploited given its potential to become an engine of economic transformation in Africa.

Close the digital skills knowledge gap: The capabilities and skills required to use various forms of digital technologies remain limited to a small segment of the population. Increases in higher level education and the existence of accessible online training initiatives is bringing digital skills to those able to access them. However, low enrolment in basic education and the poor quality of that education coupled with a lack of digital skills in curricula is segmenting digital skills into a slim share of the population, excluding the poorest from the benefits of the digital world.

DFS products for businesses—particularly SMEs—remain an untapped niche. While multiple providers offer digital financial services for larger corporations, African markets lack digital SME lending, investment, or payment products.

Despite growth in the number of transactions, many mobile payment systems have not been successful. One of the most prominent reasons for this is the high rate of informality among microenterprises and the self-employed. In the absence of formal registration and licensing, such companies are not eligible to open an account with a bank or a mobile money provider and thus lack the gateway for accessing other financial services.

Creating the dynamics to harness the potential the youth across the globe to embrace and make use of enabling technologies will establish the base for new economic developments, and new financial solutions and systems.



Dr. Oriol Caudevilla

a FinTech Advisor and Researcher. He holds an MBA and a doctorate in Hong Kong real estate law and economics.

He has worked as a business analyst for a Hong Kong publicly listed company and has given seminars on Central Bank Digital Currencies and Blockchain in many international conferences and universities.

Introduction to Blockchain.

Even though blockchain is best known for underpinning the operation of crypto currencies such as Bitcoin, this technology can be used in countless other areas, such as banking, Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs), healthcare, smart contracts, financial services, supply chain management, insurance, IoT, video games...

The Use Cases

BLOCKCHAIN IN Islamic Banking And Finance

Considered for long a new technology, blockchain is developing fast, and is quickly becoming a key player in many industries, like the financial one.

In this sense, blockchain is the technology likely to have the greatest impact on the future of the world economy. Just as an example, China Central Television (CCTV) defined blockchain's economic value in 2018 as "10 times more valuable than the internet".

If there was no doubt of the importance of blockchain technology a few years ago, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which has certainly confronted the whole world with an unprecedented challenge, has turbocharged a financial technology (Fintech) revolution worldwide in general, and also a Blockchain revolution in



differentiates Islamic finance from regular finance is the fact that interest charges (riba) are prohibited.

According to the 2018 Islamic Financial Services Industry Stability Report by the Islamic Financial Services Board in Malaysia, the Islamic financial services industry's total value has exceeded the US\$2 trillion mark. The main growth drivers were sukuk (sharia-compliant bonds) issuances. The size of the Islamic finance industry has more than doubled since 2009. Even though Islamic theories of economics have existed for

more than a millennium, the modern Islamic finance industry made its debut only in the 1970s.

When it comes to top countries for Islamic banking penetration, the Islamic banking share of total banking assets is 100 percent in both Sudan and Iran, 57 percent in Brunei, 51 percent in Saudi Arabia, 27 percent in Qatar and 24 percent in Malaysia, to quote some examples. It is also worth noting that the market for Islamic sukuk bonds has become quite strong in several non-Muslim majority states, such as the United Kingdom.

There are approximately 520 banks and 1700 mutual funds around the world that comply with Islamic principles. Between 2012 and 2019, Islamic financial assets grew from \$1.7 trillion to \$2.8 trillion and are projected to grow to nearly \$3.7 trillion by 2024, according to a 2020 report by the Islamic Corporation for the Development of Private Sector (ICD) and Refinitiv. This growth is largely due to the rising economies of Muslim countries (especially those that have benefited from the increases in the price of oil).

Main Islamic Finance Principles.

The next activities are not permitted in Islamic Finance:

1. Paying or charging an interest

Islam considers lending with interest payments as an exploitative practice that favors the lender

at the expense of the borrower. According to Sharia law, interest is usury (riba), which is strictly prohibited.

2. Investing in businesses involved in prohibited activities

Some activities, such as producing and selling alcohol or pork, are prohibited in Islam. The activities are considered haram or forbidden. Therefore, investing in such activities is likewise forbidden.

3. Speculation (maisir)

Sharia strictly prohibits any form of speculation or gambling, which is called maisir. Thus, Islamic financial institutions cannot be involved in contracts where the ownership of goods depends on an uncertain event in the future.

4. Uncertainty and risk (gharar)

The rules of Islamic finance ban participation in contracts with excessive risk and/or uncertainty. The term gharar measures the legitimacy of risk or uncertainty in investments. Gharar is observed with derivative contracts and short-selling, which are forbidden in Islamic finance.

Aside from that, we must bear in mind that each transaction must be related

to a real underlying economic transaction and parties entering into the contracts in Islamic finance share profit/loss and risks associated with the transaction. In other words, no one can benefit from the transaction more than the other party.

Blockchain in Islamic Banking: Use Cases.

Blockchain can actually be a great match with Islamic Finance. This is so because blockchain is decentralized, which directly challenges ideas like central counter-party and intermediary roles that lead to more predictable and fixed risk fundamentals – an approach that is mirrored in Sharia law.

Also, thanks to its decentralized foundation, blockchain lowers the cost and effort to deploy more sophisticated financial systems than ever before, while ensuring easy and even increased compliance with Sharia law – as blockchain products start out compliant, with support to add complexities on top to mirror the role of western financial products, where traditional financial systems in contrast are designed from the ground up to have variable interest rates, changing debt instalments, and produce other outcomes that are unacceptable "gharar" (uncertainty) under Sharia law.

1. Zakat collection and distribution.

Zakat as known among Muslims is one of the pillars of Islam



with the concept of transferring ownership of specific amount of money or property from someone to another, this ownership movement is based on certain criteria and rule regulating everything starting from the amount to be paid and not ended with deciding the eligibility of person to receive the zakat.

Using the blockchain technology will make the whole zakat process auditable, immutable and trackable which means we can track the zakat from A to Z and in this regard the whole process will be transparent which allow to figure out any possible gap or mistake in the system immediately.

2. Smart sukuk.

Sukuk in general plays an important role in Islamic capital market, its market share is increasing and growing in rapid way around the World. With regard to the smart Sukuk it seems to be the future of Islamic crowd funding for business and infrastructure developments.

The new Sukuk technology can be used by the small and medium enterprises SMEs, socimpactial projects, groups to improve their efficiency and transparency and reduce the cost of it.

Therefore, using blockchain technology for issuing Sukuk will reduce its cost, and make the issuance more transparent and effective, as it was proven in the first issuance of Sukuk "blossom finance" which received wide range of acceptance globally.

3. Waqf.

Another potential area to use blockchain technology in Islamic finance is to enhance Waqf utilization, first of all, Waqf draws its inspiration from the spirit of giving contained in the Quran and Sunnah, it is a mechanism for the institutionalization of charity.

In terms of applying the concept of blockchain in Waqf, a new innovative entrepreneurship organization called Finterra was established in Malaysia aiming to develop a crowdfunding platform based on smart contracts to allow Waqf bodies, NGOs, Corporate CSRs, Trusts and other stakeholders to fund their Waqf projects using the Finterra platform. The process of fundraising is managed totally by smart contracts concept which control the start of the project then manage the money execution to right receivers as been programmed in the system through the Finterra Inter-Chain Protocol (Abojeib and Habib, 2019).

4. Payments.

By establishing a decentralized channel for payments, banking institutions could leverage emerging technologies to facilitate faster payments and lower the fees of processing them. By offering higher security and lower cost of sending payments, banks can introduce a new level of service, bring new products to the market, and finally be able to compete with innovative fintech startups.

Besides, by adopting blockchain, banks will be able to cut down on the need for verification from third parties and accelerate the processing times for bank transfers.

5. Know Your Customer (KYC) AND Fraud Prevention.



By saving customer information on decentralized blocks, blockchain technology can make it easier and safer to share information between financial institutions.

Aside from being a time-consuming process,



complying with KYC rules also costs banks money.

Blockchain can help reduce the human effort and other costs involved in KYC compliance. With KYC customer information stored on a blockchain, the decentralized nature of the platform would allow all institutions that require KYC to access that information.

Conclusions.

As I mentioned before, blockchain is undoubtedly changing the world for the better, having become the technology likely to have the greatest impact on the future of the world economy. Its applications go much beyond crypto currencies. Blockchain can be helpful in areas as diverse and relevant as trade finance, healthcare, insurance... There is no doubt that crypto currencies are the most famous application of blockchain technology. Many people tend to confuse cryptos with blockchain, using both concepts as synonyms, when the reality is that cryptos are just one of the many areas where blockchain technology is applied.

When it comes to the use of Blockchain in Islamic Banking and Finance, to make the most of blockchain, banks ought to develop first the infrastructure required to operate a global network using matching solutions. Only a widespread adoption of blockchain will lead this technology to disrupt the sector. But the investment will come with significant returns. Once fully adopted, blockchain is expected to enable banking institutions to process payments faster and more accurately, all the while reducing transaction processing costs. Overall, blockchain-enabled banking applications will deliver a better customer experience and help traditional banking institutions to compete with fintech startups.

Every Islamic financial institution shall ensure the Sharia compliance of any new technology or mechanism, whether it is a blockchain or any of its applications, the use of smart contracts is a good thing for

institutions, but it is necessary to review a mechanism of the contracts and its correct sequence, as well as the mechanism for setting conditions, approving them and implementing them, and other matters that guarantee the safety of the legal side in financial dealings in Islamic financial institutions

The Core



Dr. Jane Thomason

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Thought Leader and Futurist

Chair of Kasei Holdings

with a successful track record of leadership globally and founder and CEO of an international development consulting company which reached \$250 million revenue. She pivoted to Blockchain in 2016, when she realized its transformative potential and she has been a leading voice, writer and advisor on Blockchain for Social Impact since then.

Learn more at <https://drjanethomason.net/>

ETHICS IN THE METAVERSE

Maximizing Benefit and Minimizing Harm



We are living in a Metaverse world - it's already upon us.

But have we really thought about it enough and its implications? Technology gives us new choices, but only ethics can tell us which choices to make. Ethics are standards of behavior that tell us how we ought to act. They commonly consider factors such as concern for the well being of others, respect for the autonomy of others, trustworthiness and honesty, willing compliance with the law, being fair and preventing harm. Digital ethics are not different from conventional ethics but there is huge potential for inadvertent or deliberate automation of unethical conduct at scale.

While originally, the Metaverse was conceived as the blurring of a distinction between physical and digital, Outlier Ventures now propose the defining characteristic of a true Metaverse is that it has its own economy and currencies native to it, where value can be earned, spent, lent, borrowed or invested interchangeably in both a physical or virtual sense, without the need for a government.

According to Outlier Ventures the Metaverse is made up of a combination of DeFi, NFTs, decentralized governance, decentralized cloud services and self sovereign identity. Metaverse assets include: 1. Physical Assets - space, objects, avatars, 2. Economic assets - currency, financial instruments, marketplace, and 3. Content assets - media and data assets.

Cathie Wood of Ark Invest says the Metaverse could be worth trillions and will affect the world in ways 'we cannot even imagine right now.' The Metaverse is not going away and indeed, it is accelerating. In this post, I pose ten ethical questions for the Metaverse. There are sure to be more as the physical and virtual worlds converge.

1. Should we have an open or closed Metaverse?

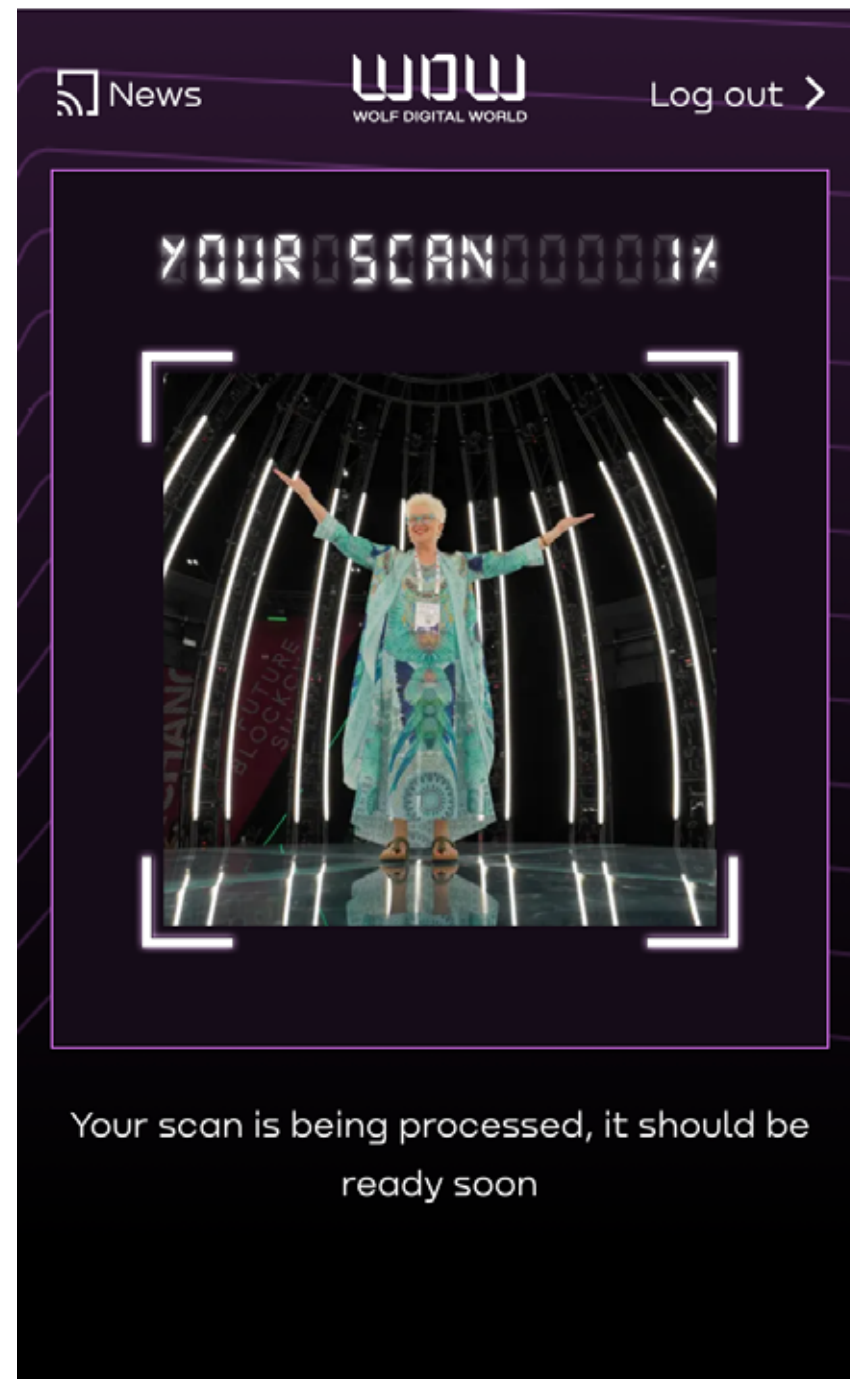
Who will build and control the metaverse? There are two main categories of Metaverse emerging, one developed by closed BigTech platforms like Facebook and the other built on open protocols like Decentraland. Web 3 proponents object to the BigTech offerings in the Metaverse on the basis that it will not take us closer to a more decentralized, equitable online ecosystem.

There are legitimate fears that a Facebook Metaverse will leverage user data for monetisation and track their every move. The alternative is an open metaverse

built on shared open source protocols, open infrastructure, and an open financial system.

2. How open source is open - if you create in the Metaverse, who owns it?

Community owned economies are thriving, innovators are building them, developers are building on them and players are playing in them. Ideally, the governance of these entities is decentralized and the community gets to vote on all important issues. However in an automated code governed economy, no one owns it. This



has regulators scratching their heads.

3. Should avatars have agency?

There are so many ethical questions about Avatars. Scientists argue that people both in the real world and in virtual worlds have rights to freedom and wellbeing and that insofar as avatars can be viewed as virtual representations or modes of presentations of real people and must be perceived as virtual purposive agents, and have moral rights and obligations similar to those of their real counterparts. If they do, and have identification, then they run the risk of personal data being copied, stolen or manipulated. In virtual worlds how do you distinguish between an avatar and a human, and does it matter? If you are in a virtual world killing people, are you a murderer?

4. If you share biometric data in the Metaverse, what data security, privacy, and rights should you have?

In the Metaverse, many people will willingly allow the tracking of track body movement, brainwaves, and physiological responses through wearables. The Metaverse will also increase the number of places that can be attacked. Can people participate without giving up on privacy and ownership of your data? How can we avoid a scenario where people can be monitored, manipulated, and monetised?

5. Should consumers be protected in the Metaverse?

Now with the deployment of digital assets in the



Metaverse, participants will be subject to the same risks present in the rapidly evolving crypto space. Some of the risks include market manipulation, volatility, impermanent loss, liquidation risk, technical risk, and price risk. If the smart contract powering the economy malfunctions, is hacked, or otherwise has a problem, there is no recourse.

While DAOs are still experimental, there can be information asymmetries and a lack of transparency about participant ambitions, motivations, values, or priorities. If you have a problem in the Metaverse, who do you call?

6. Should we mitigate physical and mental health impacts of the Metaverse?

We don't yet know the impact of the Metaverse on health. A recent report suggests that the Metaverse presents challenges for people's





How do we know who is a child? How do we consider the impacts? Regulators have repeatedly examined the effect of video games on children. But what happens when children are virtually immersed into the game, and actually inhabiting the fictional world around them?

9. Should we create an equitable, inclusive and truly decentralized Metaverse?

The beauty of the digital world is that now more than 70% of the global population have access to mobile technology. This opens up possibilities for inclusion, never before available. How do we create an infrastructure that ensures equal access to the Metaverse? The philosophy of decentralization is to develop a Metaverse that is accessible, fair and beneficial to all, no matter who they are, and where they might be.

10. How do we maximize the incredible economic and social possibilities and minimize harms?

Life in the Metaverse could be fulfilling, rewarding and create social purpose. We are also seeing the proliferation of GameFi and NFTs and ways to create entirely new wealth in a purely virtual sense but which puts bread on the table for the poor. 'Play as work', 'play to earn', 'learn to earn', 'exercise to earn' could become a primary income source for millions of people. At the same time, there are massive risks.

Dr David Reid - Professor of AI and Spatial Computing at Liverpool Hope University has called for urgent discussions on how to protect metaverse users. "The metaverse has huge implications - it comes with fantastic advantages and terrifying dangers," he says. "And the market for that is gigantic. Whoever controls it, will basically have control over your entire reality."

physical and mental health. For example people who use immersive technologies can become disoriented and cause injury, even to the extent that because they can take actions that have no consequences in the Metaverse, such as jumping off the second floor or walking into traffic, they may become oblivious to real-world hazards.

While there are no long-term studies, immersive games can lead to depression, isolation, lonely behavior, and even suicide and violence.

7. How will informed consent be possible in the Metaverse ?

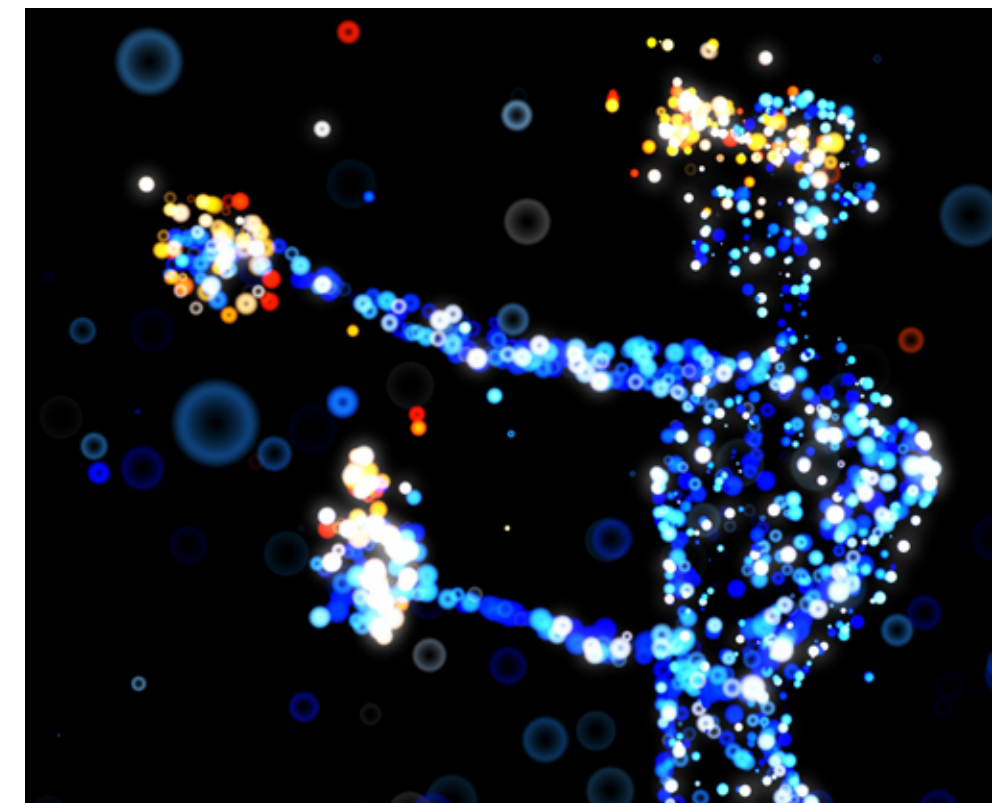
There are currently no laws or legal jurisdiction in the Metaverse. When we talk about informed

consent, it's a major challenge. Firstly a person needs to be informed of the risks, benefits and probabilities of some dangerous consequence. Second, they need to understand, and appreciate that information, and finally the decision needs to be voluntary. How does this play out for people who are incapacitated, illiterate, mentally ill or even children? Due to its digital nature, uninformed consent in a metaverse may include personal, biometric, financial, and emotional data. Already many people freely give consent for their data to be shared across the internet and to multiple organizations and across multiple devices, without understanding that their data may be shared or monetised.

8. Should children be allowed in the Metaverse?

Can we ask the creators of the Metaverse to consider proper safeguards? How can we incorporate core ethical values into the tech stack? Can we connect developers to the ethical outcomes of their decisions and algorithms? Can we establish a professional association for software developers, with a codified ethical standard? How can the community and networks be more active in demanding ethical approaches?

We are building the future. We are entirely responsible for the things we are building. Get the ethics right, and we can ensure that life in the Metaverse is better and more equitable and inclusive than the world we have now.





At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, amid uncertainty about how long it would last and the widespread expectation that people's financial situation would get worse, my mother gave me a piece of advice one night: to cut down my spending, especially anything deemed a luxury, and to limit my purchases of jewelry and accessories to genuine, yellow gold. She wanted me to adjust my habits from acquiring ornaments to accumulating savings. She said: "Do what Arab women do!", meaning I should buy yellow gold only and save it.

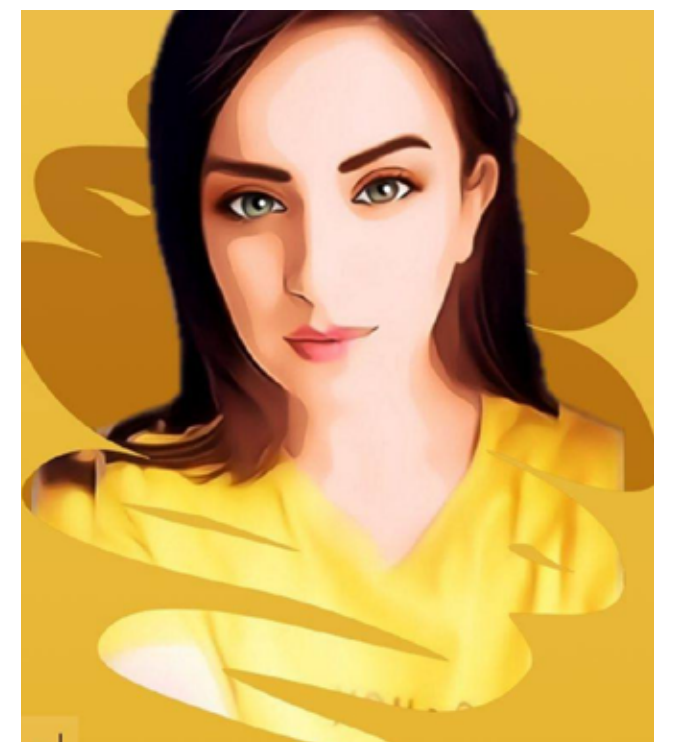
It wasn't hard for me to understand my mother's advice, as well as her motivations and fears. The history of my mother's family and their journey from the Caucasus to Turkey, then to Syria, and finally to Jordan, with all the loss of life and properties, and all the sorrow, has

Gold is Old Arab Women through the Looking Glass

Cady Hekmat

a young Jordanian woman of Circassian heritage now living in Germany. She has a bachelor's degree in English Literature and a master's degree in Linguistics.

Among her interests are languages, cinema, literature, social matters, and humanitarian issues. She is also very involved in women's issues.



made her view the future with fear and suspicion. In her life, she calculated correctly when it came to savings; her accumulated life experience was more precious to her than obtaining a degree in finance or accounting.

In fact, I didn't take my mother's advice as seriously as she expected me to do. I told myself that the times had changed; my life was for sure more stable and safer when I compare it with her life and experiences. However, that did not prevent me from thinking about that advice, because it came at a time when fear was controlling the whole world, and her last sentence "Do what Arab women do!" triggered many thoughts about the Arab society in which I grew up.

Because Arab society is in its origin a tribal society, the mentality and tribal ideas continue to strongly govern people's relations with each other and with the things around them. Therefore, we cannot discuss the relationship between Arab women and gold in isolation from the society's tribalism.

The ancient struggle with the harsh desert on the one hand, and the raids, invasions, competition over water sources and pastures, and the continuous travel on the other hand were all essential elements of the life of these tribes. Such a life required a permanent state of readiness to face all that could be described as dangerous, whether the source of this danger was the harsh desert or the attacks of other tribes for the purposes of pillage, plunder, or revenge. One of the most important aspects of this state of alert was the ability to escape danger as quickly as possible.

The Arab World has always been in turmoil. Wars, revolutions, waves of asylum seekers, and forced migrations continue, even after the stage of direct tribal rule and conflict passed. Because human beings are the product of their environment, their mentality is shaped in a way to adapt to these environmental conditions. All this affected the view and goals of Arab women regarding the possession of gold as a precious metal and made it different from the view and goals of women in safer and more stable areas around the world. In the minds of women who are always threatened with one type of danger or another, it becomes more rational to save their money in the form of gold coins that are easy to carry or wear, and to be able to escape with the lightest and most valuable load possible when necessary.

After settling in Europe and travelling between European countries, I discovered a big difference in how European women (especially German women) regard owning jewelry. I noticed that they are more inclined to buy precious stones, and possess only a limited number of gold pieces, not for the purpose of saving, but rather for leaving them to their granddaughters as a family heirloom. They do not think about securing their own future with gold coins or pieces, like Arab women do, because the State takes care of that and relieves them of the trouble of worrying.

More recently, gold in the minds of Arab women went beyond its traditional importance as a way of saving in times of travel and war, to becoming a sign of the appreciation, respect, and authority granted to her by her family and husband. Gold constitutes the biggest part of the dowry that a groom gives to his bride. The groom presents the bride with the amount of gold dictated by her family, as a guarantee of his commitment, sincerity, and respect for her when he proposes to her. Therefore, this issue has remained a controversial matter and a stumbling block upon which many marriage proposals and love stories collapse. This practice often turns into a competition for the title of the bride with the most valuable dowry, which puts enormous financial pressure on the groom. And here is the irony of my mother's advice at the beginning of this article. In Circassian culture the concept of a dowry, with gold as a major component, does not exist as an important condition for the completion of the marriage process. Like many of her contemporaries and contrary to her cultural roots, she sees gold more from an Arab perspective.

Offering gold to the bride in Arab culture is not limited to the groom; the bride's family also gives her gold as an almost obligatory ritual. While the groom presents gold as a guarantee of his loyalty and devotion to the bride, and as a way of giving her some financial security, her family gives gold to her as a financial aid to the newly-weds, and as a way of displaying the wealth of her family, thus granting her power and material security that the groom must respect and honor. Some of them also give gold as a means of bringing the newly-weds closer to each other. The gold that the bride receives as gifts and grants heralds the well-being and security of the future for both bride and groom, not only the woman.

Today, as Arab women become more educated and

increasingly go out to work, earning their own money, the equation has started to change. New and more effective ways and means of empowerment, as alternatives to storing gold, have become available. Certainly, this affects the extent to which they are now willing to buy or demand gold and to think of it as the only way of guaranteeing their future. It also affects how much they will accept the idea of subordination to their husband and subject to the customs of their tribe. Through their education and work, Arab women are becoming more empowered and more confident in themselves, their abilities, and their capabilities. It is worth noting here that the laws in relation to women in Arab societies are constantly improving and developing, and the openness of people to new ways has increased a lot due to communication with other cultures.

All these factors have made Arab women more able to choose their partners on their own with less interference or pressure from their families. The newly acquired ability to choose her partner necessarily means that she is now on his side in facing the demands of her family to pay dowry when he proposes marriage. After all, she is the one who chose him willingly. Accordingly, women have started to resort to unusual methods and tricks to circumvent the customs and traditions that are sometimes difficult to overcome. One of the most common new tricks designed to remove material obstacles for women who choose a life partner is the purchase of fake gold (called Russian or Italian gold). Despite its low price,

fake gold is very similar to real gold in its appearance and workmanship to the point that it is difficult to distinguish between the two. Thus, by agreement between the newly-weds, this method relieves the groom of paying large sums of money and saves face for the family. These changes in the rights and power of Arab women that have occurred in the last twenty years are causing a significant development in the nature of the relationship between women and men. They are even changing the relationship between women and themselves regarding their self-esteem and appreciation of what they can do.

Women are now changing from security seekers, constantly worried about their future, to givers of security through their financial independence. Thus, the relationship between a woman and a man in the Arab World is moving away from the idea of paying gold-based guarantees before they begin their lives together, something which has become a naive, biased, and cumbersome idea.

As a feminist, I am certainly pleased with this development and I see a lot of positivity in it, even if some see it as marginal. It makes the relationship between the man and the woman, in my view, healthy, logical, and more equal. It lessens the pressures that so often and unjustifiably have negative effects on the relationship and lead to the failure of many of them or the suffering of the two parties in them.





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Metaverse is here to stay, building a parallel universe which will allow us to have a digital version of ourselves which can become the fittest, most beautiful, wealthiest & smartest around, things we usually struggle with in the real life.

Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook made this real when he renamed his giant operation Meta & added all apps & websites under its new hood.

The rules of business will be changed again, and the most successful will be the ones which will be able to thrive both in the real, and the digital world. There will still be a big outcome difference between let's say crashing a car in the Metaverse, and doing it with a real car in our physical world. The world of cartoons is moving from cinema, and TV to an extension of your

IS METaverse THE NEW UNIVERSE? What is in it for you? *The Next is Here*



The metaverse in the current context is used to describe a far-reaching, immersive world that surpasses the common reality and open an unlimited virtual reality. In a metaverse, users have the chance to do a lot more than in everyday reality from interacting with brands on a new, deeper and more immersive level to living experiences beyond imaginary. We are used to think based on the personal development teachings that our limits are only the limits of imagination. In the metaverse you can become very fast who you want to be which may take years in the real world.

The birth of metaverse happened in the gaming world where the play to earn model created a lot of new jobs allowing people to do what they love (play games), and earn money, sometimes very good money in the process. Then NFT's came into the scene, and a new industry gamefy appeared at the crossroad between gaming and crypto.

The social media is moving into this special virtual universe, the metaverse where the eyes are the sun glasses or VR glasses, and the ears the headphones. The Covid pandemic period accelerated this trend, because for many people, during certain periods of 2020, and 2021 they interacted with other people only through a computer, tablet of phone screen.

own Universe, a metaphysics one called Metaverse. I am a marketing, sales, and business development guy so I always look at the customers' habits before making any assumption.

Just look around, and you will see that most people are absorbed by what is happening on their mobile phone's screen. It is the first thing they check in the morning, and the last thing they look at before going to sleep. The barriers between the real, and the virtual world are becoming thinner, & thinner, and very soon they will be merged into a dual experience we all will be a part of.

In order to create businesses that will thrive both in the real, and the metaverse world, we need to test not one but two realities, so it's important to understand what the metaverse is and what changes it might bear in the near future.

Web 3.0 is here, and it is not just the website of money, but one of the metaverse. The new Wall-Street is the crypto world where the startups have the ability to "print" their own coins, and tokens, raise money, and give the early backers, liquidity, and opportunities for fast exits. This new world has many unfair advantages. It doesn't need passports, there are new jobs created which didn't exist before, and everybody can participate. You login with a crypto wallet in platforms where the ideal worlds co-exist, and collide in the same time. It is both a world of known, and unknown, because you interact with people you know in new ways, and also based on new learnings, and patterns, you can interact with new people which may live on the other side of the globe.

The age is less, and less relevant in this space, and the

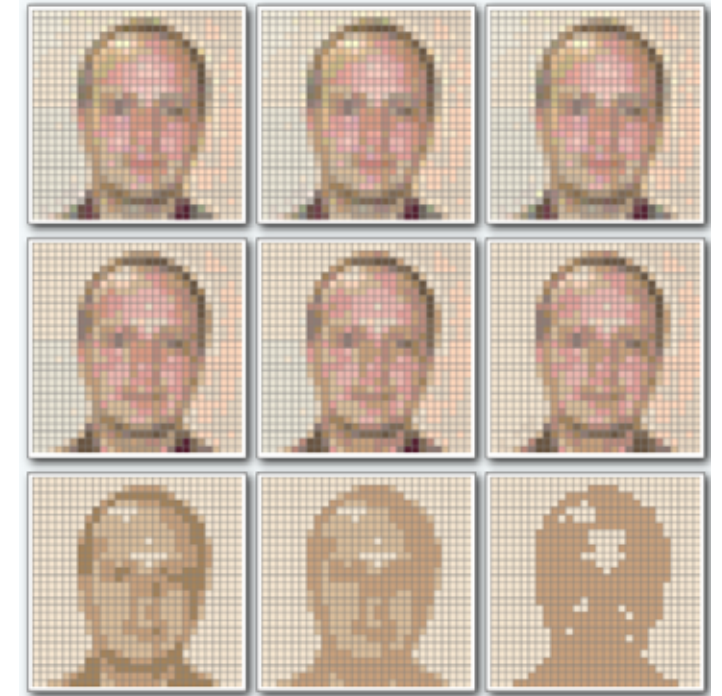
theory relative to the fact that for example people over 40 can find jobs harder & harder is crushed. The 70 years old granny can be the lovely 20 years old diva in the metaverse, can mint NFT's, but only if she takes the effort to embrace new, and learn the ropes. Because I am saying again, and again, out-loud that this new world requires a learning curve not everybody wants to take. I can tell you, it is much easier to live for the weekends, binge on TV, and complain that life sucks, instead of learning something new all the time, and then implement in the real life as much as you can from the best version of yourself you can build in the metaverse.

What is in it for you? A better future where you really take the responsibility about your results, and the learning paths.

I can tell you, and I am assuming what I am saying that the MBA I did 10 years ago is less, and less relevant in the fact-paced world I am part of. But instead of complaining, I am forcing myself to learn new things, and upgrade my knowledge so what is in it for you ... a much better self if you are ready to take the plunge.

With the development of the metaverse, and the business models around it, at the question: where you can find the next big things in the startup world, I start to say ... dive yourself into the metaverse, and you will find them. The metaverse is like the infinite around us. Nobody knows how it appeared, nobody knows where it ends, and what it is beyond it. If you like the idea of having vision boards, the metaverse goes one step further: you can really build the things you want to build in the metaverse, and what you build there becomes like a vision-board.

Lately, shoe companies are starting to build shoes for the characters in the metaverse, car manufacturers, are building virtual cars you can purchase, and also you can buy pieces of virtual land which are far more expensive than the land your house is build on.



People these days prefer to purchase a high-priced NFT, instead of putting together a deposit to own their own home. And one of the reasons is that this became the new vanity which can be shared from the screen of your mobile. The development of Metaverse will help everything to be tokenized, so soon we will ask ourselves if we are not becoming ... robots!





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The Tunings

310 Prisoners of apparent order

Every day we listen more and more to how it is necessary to start working on a project, but nobody knows exactly what that means.

Most people are convinced that these are projects, just calls for proposals, where you apply with an idea. What we really do. We can look at everything about the project, including how you work.

What exactly is a project?

A project is a one-off action that has a clear goal and at the same time clearly outlines the path you need to take, when it starts, which path you need to take, when and where you will reach the goal.

Is not that the way to work?

Imagine that in the morning you are sitting in a car or on a bicycle, totally confused, and you are just starting to drive, and then you pass a bar where you see a friend and have a coffee with him, and when you get hungry you remember that he is close to home, a mutual acquaintance, and that he always has something in the fridge, and then all three of you go to the shop to drink a dozen beers; and you sit by the river and reminisce about your youth... and you never came to work!



Now, one day a year you can afford the excuse that you are sick, but what if every day was like this and all people were like this... you'd be living in total chaos. Although, most of us have that feeling, and then we create a virtual order and float between these four walls, and we make it feel like we are in a regular job ... and the result of that day is worse than spending the whole day with friends.

I have not started writing, I just want to show how we live in an empty space and set ourselves task after task and such tasks without a clear - ultimate goal, just to be distracted because we do not know what we really need to do. That is why some people go to the extreme and organize their private life in a project or, in other words, plan their life to the second. When they say that project work is needed at every turn, even in their private lives. Because only by taking the military route can we remain organized. We human beings have the feeling that we are always getting out of balance and going from one extreme to the other. The result at the weekend is fatigue and very little real reward.

When I write this article, I am constantly referring to human qualities and nature, but we must be aware that it is our qualities that also create processes in the

business environment. And if we have not built up a solid personality, we very quickly submit or surrender to the environment or, if the environment has no clear boundaries, we let our personality come alive in the business environment.

That is why we cannot say that companies are equal to each other, because every manager and every group of employees has different characteristics and from this a different process is created, regardless of the fact that companies have the same activity and the same product.

There was a time when companies resorted to the ISO standard, but it served more for marketing than for the actual organization of work. The ISO standard clearly defined the processes and rules to be followed, but did not interfere with people's nature and habits. To those who introduced it, it seemed perfectly normal for employees to work as they accepted the instructions. Perhaps this really happened, and most thought that by following this standard they would also create order in their personal lives, but human nature is stronger than external factors. Therefore the standard ISO is just an inscription on the wall.

And the companies have once again found themselves in the chaos of a decade ago. The pressure on employees is even greater that more work is needed. And if we take the time actually used and compare it with the company's income, we find that we are still wasting too much time in vain or, as electricians would say, paying for too much "wasted" energy.

So the best form in these times proved to be Project Office. A project office is not just an office where someone carries out projects, but a way of thinking, not one that keeps you trapped in your own thoughts and projects, but a way of thinking that begins to set you free and restore order in your life.

So

what is the crucial point that makes one Project Office better than others? As I said at the beginning, it is a project with a clear beginning and end. So the way of thinking of a project teaches us to set clear goals, to have a beginning and an end.

Why is it important to get things done? If we do not finish the project, this thought - the thought - is spinning around in our head over and over again, and when it flies so "freely" through our subconscious, it creates psychological garbage, which is created more and more every day and kills our creativity or the freedom and peace in our head. Therefore it is important to draw conclusions so that we can move forward.

The project has three phases: Preparation,

implementation and conclusion.

All three phases take the same amount of time, although we are used to 95% of the implementation time. Here I am talking about the natural cycle, spring, summer, autumn and winter. The project preparation is like spring, Implementing Summer and Completing Autumn, and all three cycles are of equal length. Winter is a break, a resting place, because this is also an important part of the project work. There must always be a pause between projects. Especially to rest our thoughts.

When setting up a project work method, the main thing is to eliminate as much empty space as possible from our thoughts and our lives, the "reactive energy".

How do you set up a Project Office in a company?

Setting up a project office starts with the way of thinking. We have to treat the working day as a project.



When we come to work in the morning, we first make an appointment with ourselves, set a goal for the day and define the way to get there as precisely as possible, so we make a daily plan that we try to follow, I am talking about writing down all the activities on your computer or on a piece of paper. Also determine under what conditions... e.g. we need peace, i.e. switch off all distractions (phone, Facebook, Skype ()). We try to stick

to this plan as much as possible, and at the end of the working day we make another meeting with ourselves - we check if we have achieved all the tasks and goals set or not. At the same time, we start working on a plan for the next day, i.e. we make the same plan as you did this morning, so just check tomorrow morning to see what to expect. This means preparing for the day and also finishing it.

What do we do with it? By writing some things down, our mind no longer thinks of all the written information, but has the information that everything is collected in one place and it is no longer a matter of not forgetting something, but of developing new ideas or putting them down in writing. Order begins to establish itself in our mind. So we start doing business at work and no longer take it home with us. This is how we start to reduce negative stress by 30%.



It is basically a training, and we start to repeat this way of working, which takes 15 minutes a day, every day for the next three weeks.

After three weeks, we start planning for the whole week, setting daily targets in the weekly plan, because there is still a daily plan, and after the weekly plan, we move on to monthly planning, where only weekly targets are set, and then to annual planning, which in practice is called the annual plan. .

So the way of thinking of the project is not something new, it is just a way of moving from one form of action to another, more orderly, and at the same time it does not allow us to return to the original chaos, because we are basically shaping our personality or. one could say we are becoming much more mature.

When we have mastered this way of thinking, we begin to introduce the same concept among the employees, or, in other words, let us begin with this concept of leadership. You will certainly say that you have weekly meetings anyway, but it is a system of meetings. Meetings should be divided into three levels.

The first part is intended to solve organizational problems, i.e. what bothers us in the company or hinders us in our daily work, such as communication, lack of materials, relationship with employees. When

we finish the first part, we draw conclusions and also write them down. Maybe someone would say that such unimportant things are for the end; but we must be aware that just such things are like a stone in a shoe, there is no way we can relax to reach the final goal.

In the second part of the course, we will deal with development and marketing activities that are designed to direct our thoughts into the future and thus prepare the mind to overcome more easily the problems we will encounter in the last, third part of the

course.

The third part is dedicated to projects. Here we review all phases, divide the tasks and solve the problems. By first freeing our minds from insignificant problems, we can now solve real projects that are our main concern and will allow us to survive.

Each sentence should not last longer than 15 minutes, i.e. 45 minutes in total. If a project needs to be worked on separately, only the team meets, so that everyone in the team can listen.

our heads so that the mess does not fall back on our environment.

Each Activity under the project must have a clear indication of what its purpose is and how it will affect the objective of the project, who is responsible for it and who will carry it out, how it relates to other contractors and tasks, the factors and tasks on which it depends, when it starts and when it must end. The financial factor is very important: the hourly rate of the person who will carry out the project, the price of the material and all other costs and profits.

Project management is an orderly way of working. It is clear who does what and what their responsibilities are. The individual is fully responsible for his work.

We do the course twice a week, we divide the tasks on Monday, we check the implementation on Thursday. On Friday we do not plan anything, but leave a day to realize things that are important for existence but not vital, and so we slowly prepare for the weekend.

Of course you will ask yourself, but who works only four days today, because if you want to survive, you have to work 24 hours. That is not true!

It is necessary to put the human being, that is, oneself, in the foreground. We must not subordinate ourselves to business, because business is for us, not us for him. And we really must learn to enjoy ourselves more. And the project-oriented way of working and thinking teaches us exactly that.

To distinguish between private and business life and to be much more efficient in business.

Namely that there is too much empty space in business and private life. The above theory of colleges did indeed develop from the flowing of a river in nature. When the river flows, it is drinkable and clear, when it is dammed, it has a bad smell and taste. It is the same with the flow of information. If we do not have the information we need to work or live smoothly, we begin to create an unrealistic picture, and this creates an empty space in our lives (This is a dynamic communication model, which is described in more detail in the book: "Between things and doing is all ocean").

So as soon as we have mastered this way of communicating with our employees, we start thinking in a project-oriented way. And only now can we start reorganizing or setting up a Project Office. Because this is how we created the basis, and with the slowly changing habits, the environment was not even aware of it. Everything else is now just a technical set-up.

We see that everything happens in our heads, so we first have to create order in



Setting up a project office is actually a process of reorganizing any organization. The process is similar whether the project work is introduced in a company or in a public institution, community and the like.

A time-consuming and expensive process

The first step is to "clean up" and edit, which includes an analysis of the work process to show us the time constraints. We first have to start with ourselves, create order and set up an organized approach according to common guidelines.

Setting up a project office in a fixed environment is a time-consuming and expensive process. That is why we have to tackle the reorganization step by step. First, a so-called project management office, sometimes known as an investment management service, must be set up. Here, projects are prepared with the relevant departments and then implemented. In this case, the project office has the role of a supervisor and assistant.

Gradually, the way the project works is moving from large investments to regular work. This organizational form of the system is suitable for large companies and state and municipal administration. For small companies or those in the process of being established, it is advisable to reorganize the project at a certain point in time or to start project work as soon as they enter the market.

Far beyond Scandinavia and Japan

The success of a project-organized company also depends on external factors. In practice, however, it can quickly collapse here. After all, the state should also create the conditions for project operation: Change laws, accelerate administrative processes and simplify administrative procedures. As reality is still far from what we would like to see, we will certainly not find a company in Slovenia that would work entirely according to the rules of the project office.

However, this should not be an excuse for not introducing improvements. Nevertheless, such work can change a lot if we only mention the effective delegation of tasks, the assumption of responsibility and the rethinking of employees. In Europe the conditions for a project office are successfully created

by the Scandinavian countries, in Asia by Japan.

The project plan must be very precise

Each Activity under the project must have a clear indication of what its purpose is and how it will affect the objective of the project, who is responsible for it and who will carry it out, how it relates to other contractors and tasks, the factors and tasks on which it depends, when it starts and when it must end. The financial factor is very important: the hourly rate of the person who will carry out the project, the price of the material and all other costs and profits.

All these are data that we have to enter into the plan. It is best to make the plan in the form of a table and add a column for realization during the execution. This way we have a realistic picture of the project all the time and see where the deviation comes from. Let's not forget to set milestones to review the subgoals and measures in case of deviation from the plan.

A project is a one-time undertaking, it is a series of tasks aimed at the same goal, it is limited in time with a known beginning and end.

For and against the project office

Advantages

Order and transparency of processes

Lower costs

Secure transactions

Simplify processes

Relief of the employees

Weaknesses

Long introduction due to changes in thinking

Chaos if everyone does not follow the rules

Emotionally feel like we are running out of gas

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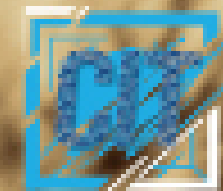
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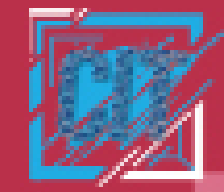


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