

Your friend is literally the trend

 By [Anice Hassim](#)

19 Jan 2012

2012 will bring fundamental tectonic shifts to the balance of power in technology choices. Many of these will be driven by the people and for the people - in 2012 the trend, literally, is your friend. Smart enterprise will embrace this change but big business will very quickly have to learn to shut up and listen to what the consumer wants.



On the trailing edge, we'll mark the final death of primetime, and on the leading edge - we'll watch Africa take its place on the global app stage:

1. **First African app star**

In 2012, the density of activity in terms of brands wishing to take advantage of the rapidly increasing pace in which people are adopting post-PC devices, particularly in emerging markets in which many African countries find themselves, will lead to the first African startup to invent and find success from a globally adopted digital platform.

We might well see the next Instagram or Foursquare come out of Africa - or quite possibly a major player to compare with the likes of Facebook.

2. **Windows gets cool for the first time (but Microsoft is still Microsoft)**

Microsoft has been making a huge noise showcasing its mobile strategy in 2011, leading to this: the year that Windows 8 arrives. Windows 8 is a complete rethinking of the platform, from mobile to desktop to server.

Microsoft has been engineering its tablets from the ground up, one of the few new generation platforms that have been created in this way from a security and user interface perspective. The OS and its devices are going to be sought after and actually quite 'cool', but we're not sure that Microsoft will ever usurp the title of 'cool kid on the block' from competitor Apple.

3. **Apple kicks open the enterprise door with iPad and goes mainstream**

Apple seems to be becoming all things to all people and this year finally gets acceptance in business, becoming a viable first-tier choice for enterprise solutions.

The iPad has made a significant impact on the boardroom, and we'll see IT scrambling to educate and upskill, not only to retain their relevance in enterprise, but to support the devices technically and to stay ahead in terms of advice and hand-holding.

4. **The year of realtime/mobile**

The impact of the freedom that mobile devices such as the iPad bring is evident in the many of the citizen protests we witnessed and participated in last year. The social revolution that Twitter and Facebook helped engineer show us clearly that the information cycle is going realtime and egalitarian.

News is not owned by big media anymore, which can no longer control how the story gets reported - news gets straight to the public while its happening.

5. The death of primetime - cutting the cord

This disintermediation of media is also responsible for the death of primetime. Television has been fractured. Primetime is now your leisure time. You watch what you want, wherever you are, and whenever you happen to be free.

6. The reinvention of gaming

Consumers restructuring their leisure time will also lead to the reinvention of gaming. As personal devices approach the speed and power of console devices, consoles need to redefine themselves in terms of their experiential environment.

In terms of their technical definition, the Playstation needs to offer a level of immersion and experience that is not replicable in a low-end mobile device like an iPod Touch or iPad.

This might imply that consoles go up the price curve - think holodeck-type entertainment. Whatever it does, it will need to separate itself clearly and definitively from the handheld personal screen.

7. The world uncovers the first digital hula hoops

Looking back, we have enough of a timeline to see that not every idea will work out - even in digital. Even good ideas are difficult to make a reality with insufficient adoption numbers and/or lack of buy-in, and often end up being logical dead-ends.

Sometimes, a system simply outgrows its original 'reason for being' and has to take a step back and reinvent itself - it's part of the innovation process.

After the first digital decade at the end of 2010, we can now start to see the first digital hula hoops - those platforms that seem so important at the time and turn out just to be fads. Facebook is one of them, and this year it will start to be abandoned by users in search of a more resonant and meaningful way to connect.

8. Personal telemetry

People are starting to see the ways in which the social layers and recorded data can be manipulated to bring meaning and usefulness to their lives - as in the case with personal telemetry.

Whether that data is for fitness eg jogging or health eg heart rate monitoring, consumers will start tracking themselves in ways that they can visualise and analyse later in terms of progress of their personal goals. We'll be able to access more of these little devices in the form of bracelets and gadgets that will measure data points and transmit the results back to your phone [*and from there to your social networks of choice - managing ed*].

9. The death of spinning storage media

Yes, we still use them grudgingly, but we're finally in the year when, increasingly, those 'futuristic'-looking discs are going to be legacied to quaint anachronisms. Shuttling entertainment or data on spinning media (CDs, DVDs or Blurays) is just impractical and this year will be increasingly irrelevant with cloud storage and on-demand content.

10. Public APIs and big data

Citizenry will demand services, and city government will realise that one of the ways to answer, by exposing public data and APIs in ways that they can leverage for free, is to unleash the creative talent of citizens themselves to create

app services and platforms. (Shout out to [Shaun Trenergy](#) and [Paul Cartmel](#) with a local private initiative that does just this).

11. Hyper-local

For database and post-PC services such as Siri to work effectively for you in your region, it means that your local data has to be created, mapped and curated. For example, asking Siri to show you pizza places around you won't work unless a service such as Yelp has been aggregating that particular data.

Therefore, as users find the need to have such facilities, hyper-local services such as Yelp will start to boom, as content providers scramble to match up APIs with the user-demanded data sets.

12. Siri defines a new computing interface

As data becomes fluid in 2012, Siri changes everything. It allows you to use a computer without a screen or any traditional methods of interaction, thereby opening up access to users who might not previously been able to use a computer - and who knows what innovation may come from that!

For more:



Bizcommunity Special Section: [Biz Trends 2012](#) - sponsored by Aegis Media

Bizcommunity Search: [2012 trends](#)

Bizcommunity: [Biz Trends 2012 twitterfall](#)

Twitter Search: [#biztrends2012](#)

ABOUT ANICE HASSIM

Anice Hassim is the CEO, Founder and majority shareholder of the immedia ecosystem. He is a speaker and educator around digital trends, strategy and marketing, and helps brands better understand and negotiate the digital space. Contact Anice on tel +27 (0)31 566 8000, email him at anice@immedia.co.za and follow him on Twitter at [@anicehassim](#).

■ [Design Indaba 2016] An Indaba dabba doo - 18 Feb 2016

■ [BizTrends 2016] Heading for a 'privacy apocalypse' - 2 Feb 2016

■ A culture of curiosity: how to grow, nurture talent in the post-PC generation - 30 May 2012

■ [2012 trends] Your friend is literally the trend - 19 Jan 2012

■ Is your digital agency about thought creation or regurgitation? - 18 Oct 2011

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>