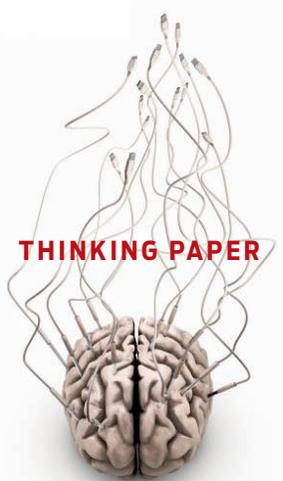


A call to action for innovation and collective empowerment

The end of apathy, the rise of responsibility



By ANDREW NACHISON | The world's economy has collapsed. Unemployment, poverty and insecurity are on the rise everywhere. Military conflicts simmer or rage in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Gaza and elsewhere. And economists say things are going to get worse.

Who could blame a finance minister for feeling a bit woozy?

The conventional story of our times is that a series of miscalculations and bad bets snowballed into a series of small and then massive failures of personal and high finance — all of which swiftly and spectacularly shattered the myth of limitless growth. Mysterious levers of power and finance were gamed for too long, the intertwined global economy was overextended on unsustainable consumption and impossible

Who will lead us to a better future?

- Small business/entrepreneurs **63%**
- Science/technology leaders **52%**
- People you know **38%**
- Yourselves **36%**
- Blogs/social networks **32%**
- Non-profit groups **32%**
- Government **31%**
- Religious leaders **28%**
- Traditional media **13%**

risk. The greedy and sometimes criminal overlords of finance, along with complicit and incompetent regulators, managed to muck up just about everything for just about everyone.

That's the blame story, with more to go around, and it's still being written.

But something much deeper was also unfolding at the same time: the next chapter of humanity.

The New Now

While the marketers and lords of commerce were playing with our futures, the future itself was emerging in ways that broke dramatically from the past. Technology, economics and human creativity converged to shape the post-collapse era, the connected and empowered culture we call the New Now.

Three shifts that began more than a decade ago, and which I've been modeling with business strategy clients and discussing in corporate and public speaking engagements for more than five years, are now playing out:

Know-Trust Networks have shifted and remain in perpetual flux. These are the systems we use to determine and express trust – in information, in institutions, in each other. Our trust in old, established, authoritarian institutions and systems is giving way to trust in more transparent personal and social networks – and in ourselves.

The Digital Everything.

Information, ideas and knowledge flow everywhere, always, infinitely reconfigured through virtual, digital and mobile networks that ignore geographic boundaries and physical limitations of distribution.

The Individual. Commerce and communication have been atomized. The individual exerts unprecedented power and control over our media, communication, social and economic experiences. This extends to how we learn, how

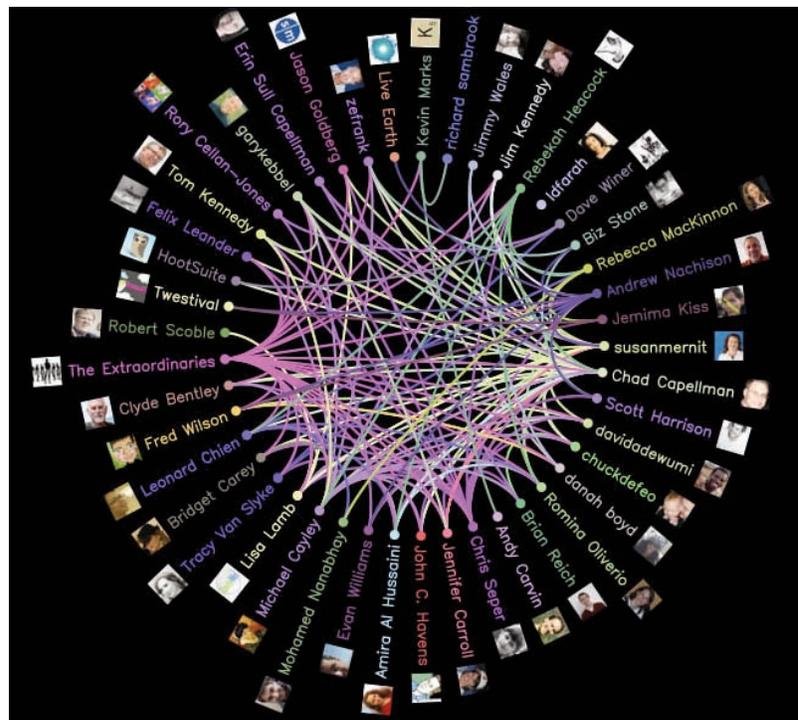
iFOCOS/ ZOGBY POLL

Dissatisfied with leadership:

- Corporations, business leaders 81%
- Government 74%
- Mainstream media 71%

Look for news & information:

- Internet 46%
- Online news sites 40%
- Television 25%
- Radio 14%
- Newspapers 12%



TweetWheel visualization of how followers of @WeMedia connect



we organize our lives — and with whom we assign and manage our trust relationship. This crushes business models premised on control. Big business, big media and government are out. Small businesses and entrepreneurs are in.

Society itself is reorganizing around knowledge and communication networks. Everyone has or will have a capacity not only to consume media in many forms, but to BE media - to create, share, aggregate, remix and redistribute information anywhere. It's a world of We Media, and We is big. It's citizen journalists and mommy bloggers, political dissidents and extremists, museum curators, advertisers, artists, governments and entertainers, along with everyone else, including big media institutions that play an essential role in how we know what we know. It's also scientists, entrepreneurs, tech companies, manufacturers, retailers, healthcare providers, NGOs, social activists, non-profit organizations, creative individuals and others who used to be thought of as something other than media. Now we are all media.

The 20th Century was structured around institutions. The 21st is reorganizing around empowered individuals. The 20th tolerated, nurtured and required obedience to authority. Institutional power defined everything – governance, food, transportation, energy, diplomacy and information was controlled by institutions.

The 21st is structured around individuals and our networks — around people we know. As power itself is distributed and dispersed, we place greater faith and find greater responsibility in ourselves. Who will revive the economy? We will. Who will make peace? We will. Who will build and support sustainable communities? We will.

The American ideal of rugged individualism gives way to the global necessity of creative self-reliance. It's not quite anarchy, but it's a networked experience and an era of personal responsibility and power that's far different from the systems or authority and subservience that we have known and served in the past.

Me, Us, Here, Now

The connected culture of We Media, enriched, emboldened and empowered by technology and communication networks, is organized around four pillars of experience: Me, Us, Here, Now.

Me: It's about the individual — discrete humans, and discrete social units, like small businesses, independent contractors or terrorist cells. In the New Now I have far more control over my commercial, social and political engagements than ever before.

Us: We are connected. Individuals everywhere produce, share, distribute and evaluate information and produce knowledge that itself is shared and distributed throughout the networked culture. Our destinies are inextricably connected. Individuals combine when needed — to elect a political leader, to build a school, to feed and cloth families in need.

Here: Communication and knowledge flow across digital space and time, but we ourselves are fixed in places. Home and geography still matter — from the cleanliness of our air and water to the safety and security of our communities.



Now: Communication, commerce, trust and culture unfold in real-time. We may be built for comfort, but the culture is sifting toward speed.

In the connected culture we can no longer claim ignorance, innocence or powerlessness. Great forces of authority, perception and commerce compete for our attention and submission. What's changed is that we can compete back. And we are.

Welcome to The End of Apathy

Observation: Apathy is crumbling – from aspiration in some cases, from necessity in others. More and more people are expressing them-

selves, their politics, their values, their hopes and dreams for the future. That expression has consequence. More and more people have power. And they are wielding it to shape politics, policy, business, healthcare, art, agriculture and communities.

Action: We need to recognize, celebrate and harness this newfound power - and use it wisely. The End of Apathy is not by default the beginning of utopia. Indeed, the looming specter of dystopia may be one of the strongest motivations for action in the New Now – to imagine and lead us to a better future.

The screenshot shows the Innocentive website homepage. The top navigation bar includes the logo and links for Register, Log In, Help, and Contact Us. A large banner features a rocket launch and the text "Breakthrough innovations. Fast results. Contact us to learn more." with a "Contact Us" button. Below the banner, the page is divided into several sections: "Lead through Open Innovation" with a sub-section "Accelerate Change", "Confidentiality and Convenience", and "Pay for Results - Not Trial and Error". On the right side, there are sections for "CORPORATE OVERVIEW", "NOT-FOR-PROFIT SEEKERS", and "INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY".

Innocentive, one of this year's Game Changer winners, helps people connect and innovate.

<http://www.innocentive.com>

Warning: A torrent of information, ideas and emotions is about to flood the planet. We are unprepared. Some institutions and processes will burn up in the atmosphere. Others will rise from the ashes.

Leadership & The Rise of Responsibility

For several years the U.S. newspaper industry has latched onto a peculiar phrase to explain away its downfall: secular change. The language is telling: secular means, literally, of the world – and not of religion. Newspapers faded, so the story goes, because the world changed.

It's true in a sense – the culture changed. The way we produced, distributed, accessed, shared and applied information changed. The economics of information changed. The business of news changed.

But blaming the world — “secular” changes — is a sad excuse for any leader paid to anticipate and plan for change, and it rings hollow whether it comes from newspaper publishers who failed to innovate for a digital culture, auto executives who gambled on endless profits from gas-guzzling SUVs, or financiers and government regulators who aided and abetted reckless lending.

You can dismiss all of those collective failures as secular, of the world, in extremis — from the outside. But they were really just the opposite — they were self-made.

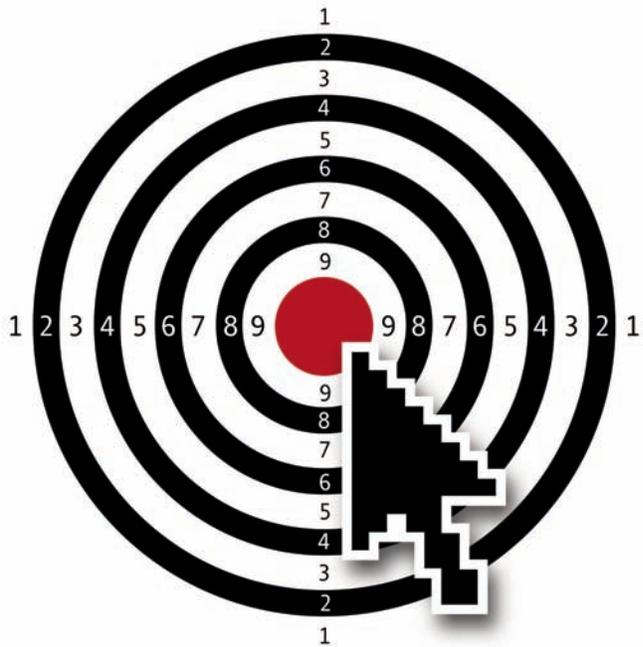
They were all failures of leadership.

The result has been nearly religious in nature: our faith has been shaken. More than shaken, it has been redirected. Few Americans believe the media, government or large corporations will lead the U.S. to a better future. They look to science and technology leaders, small business owners, entrepreneurs, friends and family — even themselves.

The public's sense of who will lead us to a better future reflects the failures of the 20th Century's biggest and most influential institutions. Dissatisfaction with the news media, corporations and government runs deep. So in The New Now Americans look elsewhere. They reflect a business imperative for leadership and social responsibility, and an opportunity for all of us to inform, define and provide that leadership. If big business, government or the media won't lead, we'll lead ourselves. We'll create our own businesses and our own media to build a better future.

No matter where you sit or what you do, that's a call to action to participate, to inspire hope and bring prosperity to more people. It's an agenda for me, us, here and now: Lead us to a better future.

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Non-profit center for global research, analysis and collaboration to foster a better-informed society through media.

- ▶ We Media conference
- ▶ We Media Community
- ▶ We Media bog
- ▶ Media research & ethnography
- ▶ Media innovation

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