

# ***Happy New Year From The Jump Network***

## ***Leadership Development, Organizational Performance, Executive Coaching***

***December 2015***

Predictable, Probable, or Impossible?

2015 brought us newsworthy items and thought provoking articles in all three categories, so as we look at the New Year and search for ideas, business ventures and educational opportunities, let's review what surprised and delighted us in 2015. We hope these snippets will give you inspiration to believe we can transform what at first seems impossible, into what becomes probable, and then even predictable as we lead our businesses and ourselves into the fast-changing future.

### **January**

***Impossible?*** Who would have guessed plucky upstart WhatsApp would acquire more disciples in 6 years than the entire religion of Christianity since its inception 19 centuries ago? That's 700 million people in both cases, in case you were wondering

***Probable*** - On the other hand, with Facebook's explosive growth it was perhaps not surprising that Mark Zuckerberg's "Friends" also hit a key number, exceeding the population of China this month, at 1.4BN people

***Predictable*** - And so when Amazon signed Woody Allen to develop original content for its fledgling movie business, perhaps it was comparatively predictable, but it still reminded us of a futuristic scene from his movie *The Sleeper*

### **February**

***Impossible?*** Perhaps it was only a matter of time, but when Tim Cooke came out as the first openly gay CEO at what is now the world's most valuable company, Apple demonstrated what would have been impossible just a few decades ago - a truly iconic symbol of modern diversity that is a lesson for all societies today as prejudice and dogma increases division rather than empathy and respect

***Probable*** - Apple's relentless growth also took on new meaning this month as its market valuation at \$710BN exceeded both Google and Microsoft combined

***Predictable*** - Yet the dark side of computing power is growing alongside these bright milestones, with major banks and insurance companies aggregating more and more cloud based data, to the consternation of privacy and fairness advocates everywhere

## March

**Impossible?** In one step further towards a Star Trek lifestyle, wearable technologies are creating breakthroughs. This month a smart connected contact lens was announced from Google and Novartis that monitor Diabetes patients, vastly improving treatment and monitoring effectiveness

**Probable** - Emerging markets continue their inexorable rise, with 80% of people in Africa now owning mobile phones, while with surprising asymmetry only 25% own a bank account

**Predictable** - And Facebook continued its commercial ambitions adding a "buy" button to the site

## April

**Impossible?** Inspired by a scene in the Terminator when the T-1000 robot emerges from a puddle on the kitchen floor, Carbon 3-D, a unit of Autodesk, moves 3-D printing to the next level with liquid technology. 100 times faster than current methods, it promises to revolutionize the industry

**Probable** - Global finance continued to surprise some and worry others with unprecedented statistics, such as the first ever negative interest rate on Swiss 10-year bonds

**Predictable** - Silicon Valley continued its ability to create mystery and magic by coining the phrase "Unicorn" for start-ups valued at \$1BN or more

## May

**Impossible?** Continuing the wearable tech craze, science fiction became reality once more as printable circuitry made its first appearance in smart packaging, smart fabrics and even smart newspapers, coming soon to a newsstand near you

**Probable** - The democratization of the workplace continued to show up in unusual places. At the Berlin Philharmonic - traditionally a bastion of iron rule under rock star conductors - musicians for the first time created havoc with their discontent over the selection of a new leader to replace legendary conductor Sir Simon Rattle

**Predictable** - In a continuing slide into apparent oblivion, the once mighty Sony admitted its core business was now limited to sensor technology used in cars and cameras. From Walkman to woeful?

## June

**Impossible?** Gene mapping used to cost millions of dollars and take months to sequence but with plucky startup 23&Me you can suddenly map your core chemistry for just \$99. Impossible science creating very possible concerns for opponents to CEO Anne Wojcicki in everything from distributing medical treatment to setting insurance premiums

**Probable** - It was only a matter of time before even the French would have to bow to the universal language of entertainment. State backed producer Canal Plus is filming a new TV series about Versailles - in English! Mon Dieu

**Predictable** - As banker bashing and the fallout from the Financial Crisis continued, heads rolled at numerous top institutions including CEOs at Deutsche Bank, Credit Suisse, Barclays, and Standard Chartered. Attempts at culture change, such as the much-derided "RISES" initiative at Barclays, seemingly fail to produce noticeable change, perhaps explaining the staggering total of \$300BN in Banking fines since 2010

## July

**Impossible?** Alibaba, China's noisy e-commerce start-up, invests in sperm banks as a grim social insurance policy to counter the feared effects of pollution and fertility on its citizens. Opportunistic or altruistic?

**Probable** - On the other side of the globe health and science incredibly adds 5 hours a day to life expectancy, or 12 years a decade. The 100-year life seems firmly in the grasp of some

**Predictable** - Still out East, China's handling of the sudden stock market correction this month was uniformly criticized as heavy handed, inappropriate and ultimately damaging for local share valuations. A reminder that central planning still struggles to create reliable economic value

## August

**Impossible?** As entertainment content continues to move to small screens and mobile platforms, Netflix produces 475 hours of original programming in 2105. A figure previously unheard of outside the major Hollywood studios

**Probable** - Generation Y and Millennials continue to make their voice heard on issues they care about. Some headaches were created for Unilever this month as Indian Rap artist Sofia Ashraf's video "Kodaikanal Won't" - about an apparently failed toxic cleanup of mercury at a thermometer factory - went viral. Apologies all round and a personal message from CEO Paul Polman were the result

**Predictable** - We're used to almost daily statistics charting the rise of Apple, but even this stat stood out this month: 47M handsets sold each quarter by the tech behemoth. That's 520,000 a day. Now where's my charger?

## September

**Impossible?** Speaking of Gen Y, in another reminder that our business models need a serious rethink, we were told that only 25% of people under 35 get their news from TV. Social media, blogs and other online offerings are taking up more and more of the slack, with newsrooms, publishers and programmers all wondering how they will survive the next decade

**Probable** - But the pendulum swings at some point, so we were relieved to hear of the new trend this month towards "Inconspicuous Consumption". Subtle labels sown into the linings of handbags began to replace the gaudy G's and horsey H's heretofore de rigeur on our catwalks and cocktail bars

**Predictable** - And as mobile seems to take over more and more of the world, our friends in advertising continued to predictably feel the pinch. A whopping \$30BN of ad spend was put out to bid - still only 10% of the global annual \$330BN, but the trend is clear

## October

**Impossible?** The world was taken by surprise when 30 years of China's one-child policy was suddenly rescinded. Ageing local populations and fears of future economic stagnation were cited, but couples may respond with less than full enthusiasm, given the rising cost of living and economic uncertainty they already face

**Probable** - Despite challenges at the lower end of the scale, the upper echelons of Chinese society continue to surge ahead. The number of billionaires exceeded the US for the first time at 596 versus 537. But the most interesting is the figure 242. That's the number of new

Chinese billionaires created in 2015 alone

**Predictable** - October was a month of large numbers, this time with a worrying estimate of 358 million identities stolen online in 2015. Given our increasing online presence this may not be surprising, but worrying all the same as our digital defenses seem flimsy. TalkTalk's one day 15% share price drop in the wake of a 15-year-old hacker dipping into their database provides a case in point.

## **November**

**Impossible?** What had been lurking in the digital shadows since 2010 suddenly became an accepted medium of exchange as Blockchain - the technology behind the mysterious currency Bitcoin - became adopted by the likes of Goldman Sachs. Its future is uncertain but so called "Fintech" seems to be a future reality for all of us

**Probable** - Was it only a matter of time before camera phones became sophisticated enough to make a feature film? Apparently so with the release of "Tangerine", a full length and critically acclaimed release made primarily with two iPhones. Sean Baker's comedy drama, which follows a trans woman on a Christmas Eve hunt for the Hollywood pimp who left her heartbroken, is only slightly more improbable than how it was made

**Predictable** - A sad month for London cabbies as the legendary "Knowledge College" plans to close in the wake of the Uber invasion. What used to take 3 years to learn by heart has been replaced by a GPS and a smartphone. Although since one can still end up at the wrong end of a one way street 3 minutes before curtain time, perhaps there is still a role for our iconic black cabs

## **December**

**Impossible?** Mythical beasts suddenly joined the endangered species list in a surprising reversal from earlier in the year, with news flashes about the "Subprime Unicorn". Illiquidity, complex shareholding structures, and questionable monetisation of business models have led commentators to raise alarms about the apparent overvaluation of our Silicon Valley darlings.

**Probable** - One exception is perhaps Jeff Bezos, who we wrote about last year, and who has quietly built up 50% of his revenue in the "Everything Store" from AWS - Amazon Web Services. A shrewd move that has kept the share price up and the analysts enthusiastically "OneClick-ing"

**Predictable** - And in a final twist on the relentless invasion of mobility, Kim Kardashian crashed the App Store last week with the release of a personal line of Emojis. Even the Pope has released a series of the ubiquitous smileys that adorn our instant messages, tweets and posts, but thankfully his are more humdrum than bum.

So it seems the impossible can become probable and even predictable if we put our minds and creativity to work. As you enter 2016, ask yourself about what small changes will create a big difference. Sometimes just a symbol, like punctuation, can make all the difference.

**IMPOSSIBLE?**

**I'M POSSIBLE**

## **2015 Selected Client List**

*France Telecom / Orange*

Jardine Lloyd Thomson  
M&G Investments  
Millicom  
Novartis  
Oxford Instruments  
Science & Technology Facilities Council  
ST Electronics

### **2015 Business Partnerships**

London Business School - [www.london.edu](http://www.london.edu)  
Corporate Research Forum - [www.crforum.co.uk](http://www.crforum.co.uk)  
Organisation Development Network - [www.odneurope.org](http://www.odneurope.org)  
Act Leadership - [www.act-principle.com](http://www.act-principle.com)

### **2015 Social & Non-Profit Enterprises**

Global Health Documentary Africa - [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)  
NGO Medical Projects India - [www.aravind.org](http://www.aravind.org)  
World Photography Workshops - [www.explorenation.net](http://www.explorenation.net)

### **2015 References & Suggested Reading**

"The Four Dimensional Human - Ways of Being in the Digital World"  
Laurence Scott, June 2015

"Misbehaving - The Making of Behavioural Economics"  
Richard Thaler, May 2015

"Consiglieri - Leading From the Shadows"  
Richard Hytner, June 2014

"Uncommon Sense, Common Nonsense - Why Some Organisations Consistently Outperform  
Others"  
Jules Goddard, May 2013

Harvard Business Review - [www.hbr.org](http://www.hbr.org)

Sources: HBR, FT, WSJ

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