

Application



STRATEGY

The intersection of technology, policy, and politics affects every business. Anti-competitiveness lawsuits and antitrust investigations will have a chilling effect on merger and acquisition activity by the big tech companies. If one of the companies under scrutiny provides some (or all) of your technology stack, further improvements and features could be paused if lawsuits were to siphon off resources. Chief strategy officers should work closely with chief technology officers and others in their organizations to develop near-term plans. Ongoing tensions between China and the U.S. will continue to impact the supply chain, intellectual property, and trade.



INNOVATION

Policy uncertainty creates all sorts of hurdles for innovation teams. However, the Biden administration has taken office with clear, decisive plans. This should give innovation teams the foundation they need to work on new products and services related to climate change, transportation, biotech, artificial intelligence, and systems that use biometric recognition.



R & D

China has emerged as an R&D powerhouse. In recent years, China has launched new programs to repatriate researchers from their U.S. and European posts. The Thousand Talents initiative bestows lavish packages—high salaries, luxury apartments, automatic admission to the best schools for children of researchers—to those who are willing to bring their expertise home. But tech companies are poaching talent also, from academic departments and other companies. With so much competition, companies should develop strategies for R&D team acquisition and retention.



RISK

China's Belt and Road Initiative, which has been a huge success in expanding trade throughout emerging economies, has also been a boost for the country's digital initiatives. As China pursues its cyber sovereignty plan, our existing splinternet will worsen. This will challenge foreign businesses that operate in China, spark new cybersecurity challenges, and eventually prevent some companies from reaching the Chinese market. Risk models should be developed to determine plausible near-future scenarios so that leaders can adjust their strategies accordingly.

Key Questions

We recommend using this report to support your strategic foresight activity in the coming year. Every executive team should begin by asking these questions about technology, science, and policy:

1

Is our company's government affairs team proactive enough—or is it simply responding to policy changes?

2

What parts of our business make us vulnerable to state, national, or international government action?

When was the last time we audited the systems that keep those parts of our business safe?

3

Is our government department adequately planning for the longer-term? What assumptions must hold true for our current strategy to succeed? How will we make needed changes?



Selected Sources

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Amy Webb pioneered FTI’s data-driven foresight methodology that is used within hundreds of organizations globally. Her focus is to transform organizations as they prepare for complex futures. She advises CEOs of the world’s most-admired companies, three-star admirals and generals, and the senior leadership of central banks and intergovernmental organizations. She leads FTI’s technology research initiatives on AI, synthetic biology and genetic engineering, next-generation networks, and quantum technologies. Webb is a professor of strategic foresight at the New York University Stern School of Business, where she developed and teaches the MBA course on strategic foresight. She is a Visiting Fellow at Oxford

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Why FTI

We answer your most challenging questions using data, creative inquiry, and strategic foresight.

- What are plausible deep (20+ years), long-range (10+ years), and near-term (2+ years) futures?
- What scenarios describe our futures?
- What's happening outside my industry that I should know?
- What companies, startups, and partners make up our future value network?
- What new products, services, or businesses should we build?
- Which tech trends should we monitor? When should we act?
- How can we build an early warning system to see the next disruptive event?
- How do we reduce uncertainty about our futures?

We support executive leaders and their teams.

The Future Today Institute works closely with executive leadership and management teams to transform their strategic thinking on the future. Advisory services include signal mapping, trend identification, scenario development, risk modeling, visioning, and strategic planning.

About the Future Today Institute

Founded in 2006, the Future Today Institute researches, models, and prototypes future risk and opportunity. As the leading strategic foresight and futures management consultants to executive leadership teams worldwide, FTI's data-driven applied research reveals trends and calculates how they will disrupt business, government, and society.

Together with our clients and partners, FTI is helping leaders achieve their preferred futures. Our pioneering, data-driven forecasting methodology and tools empower leaders to make better decisions about the future, today.

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