

# The future of technology and marketing



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Jennifer Marlo

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What do you expect the future to look like?

Depending on whom you ask, the answer to that question is highly variable.

Those of us who watched "The Jetsons" might have expected the future to be full of flying cars and witty robotic maids.

Today, followers of Ray Kurzweil expect that by 2030 we'll be injecting nanosensors into our bloodstream and implanting microchips into our heads in order to enhance brain function.

For decades, marketers have portrayed a cold, austere, and utilitarian future, as exemplified in the ad below:

"I hate this picture," said Brian David Johnson, future casting and principle engineer at Intel Corporation, in his keynote address at the iMedia Video Summit in San Antonio, Tex.

"Where are the pillows? Where are the family pictures on the wall?" he asked. "Where is the stuff that makes us *human* -- the stuff that makes us comfortable?"

Indeed, advertisements like the one above seem to suggest that humans themselves will change, shedding the need for the objects that lend us comfort, the objects that make a house a home.

Ads like the one above are "completely, intellectually dishonest," according to Johnson, who believes that the future will look a lot like *right now*. But while the future may *look* the same, our actions and interactions will change -- namely our interactions with technology.

As a futurist for Intel, Johnson's job is to create models for what it will feel like to be a human 10-15 years from now. Future casting is a process that is used to develop a "pragmatic and actionable vision for computing," Johnson said.

In order to do this, Johnson teams up with the best and the brightest computer and statistical scientists, but for all their brain power, Johnson knows that really, the future is predicted by consumers. And what do consumers want? They want their technology to be integrated, streamlined, user friendly, and *entertaining*.

This is precisely why the future won't look much different from today, because for all our technological advancements, people still just want to watch TV. Content creators and technology companies are happy to deliver on this desire -- by 2015 there will be approximately 500 billion hours of video content on the cloud and 12 billion devices capable of receiving TV content via the internet. So really, all those gadgets that consumers use -- smartphones, computers, tablets, etc. -- are really just being thought of as mini TVs.

People love TV because "it's the thing they do when they're at home with their families," Johnson said. Therefore, carrying these portable gadgets make consumers feel as if they're "carrying a little bit of home in [their pocket]."

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Marketers can benefit from knowing that the future of computing is all about experiences. We can expect our technologies to become increasingly *informative*, ubiquitous, *personalized*, and *social*. Television is no longer just digital -- it's now data. Consumers will be able to click items or people on the screen to get information. This mix of coordinates and links will make TV informative. Our technologies will allow us to find desirable content, and the data that is collected from our search will result in highly personalized ads and content suggestions. Lastly, we'll want to share what we see with others, making the experience of interacting with our technology a social one.

"We'll be surrounded by computational intelligence," said Johnson.

Perhaps it's time for marketing intelligence to catch up.

Jennifer Marlo ["Computational Intelligence: The Future of Marketing"](#) is associate editor at iMedia Connection.

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Jennifer received her BFA from UC Santa Barbara and MFA from CALARTS in 2006. Post graduation, Jennifer segued into freelance writing, focusing on various topics such as arts, entertainment, travel, and tourism. Jennifer is a native Los Angelean...

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