

By Marcel Bullinga

## Welcome to the Future Cloud: Five Bets for 2025

**What will life be like when we are free of paper, petroleum, and waste? The author's five public bets offer scenarios for this more nonmaterial future.**

In the summer of 2025, you live in the Cloud—a world with no paper and no oil. The Game Generation has turned learning and working into a game, and every office or school into a gaming zone. They have created new Circles of Trust, since the old institutions failed to deliver pensions, energy, and life insurance. Social robots have conquered the streets, doing the dirty jobs. All of this has reduced traffic jams and caused an economic boom. No more crises!

The Cloud is the new face of the twenty-first century. It is the global brain, the next wave of innovation. It is the world of our children—fun, fast, fascinating. The Cloud is the hyperrealistic mix of real life and virtual life, like Alice in Wonderland but very much real.

The Cloud tackles most of the current crises. Upcoming raw materials shortage? We create super materials out of local mud. Energy crisis? We collect local earth heat, tap the energy we create ourselves by walking around, and harvest every spot of Sun. Financial crisis? We create new local currencies.

Do It Yourself is the motto of the Cloud. You produce your own energy and print products at home. You manage your finances and you keep your secrets in your own personal dashboard. You check everything on the spot with your wizard mobile. You are in control!

Here are a few of my best bets for life in the Cloud:

### **Bet 1: The Last Newspaper and Book Will Have Been Printed in 2020.**

Paper has disappeared completely in the 3-D mobile media cloud. "Slow Screens" encourage monotasking and focus and have replaced all current paper media, as well as digital information carriers like DVDs and CDs.



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Goodbye, traditional media: Future readers will rely on screens for news and other text content (i.e., books).

We will rent information, not own it. Newspapers and magazines are available on screen only. Libraries and bookshops have turned bookless. They are either bankrupt or will have eventually turned into community centers and congress halls.

### **Bet 2: Social Robots Solve the Labor Shortage in Western Europe and Japan.**

Competition among countries and companies is increasing. Graying societies like Japan and western Europe face labor shortage. In the future, social robots, 3-D product printers, and smart software will have taken over the dirty and boring tasks. Robots are our new colleagues. Directing robots is much easier than directing people.



Social robots such as this friendly doctor will overcome labor shortages in a variety of fields.

### **Bet 3: Seniors, Children, and People with Disabilities Are the Winners of the Digital Revolution.**

Whereas nowadays vulnerable groups have problems leading an independent life, the future is different. The Eyewriter will enable handicapped people to communicate. Every factory, house, and office will become a games room. Your body is the key to the Cloud. There is less difference between what is real and unreal.

### **Bet 4: An Inexpensive, Green, and Intelligent Car Is for Sale in 2025.**

Prices of oil and raw materials go up and down like crazy these days, causing mass anxiety. In the future, new materials will have been created from scratch out of local materials like sand and water. This ends our dependency on oil for fuel and plastic. Local energy sources reduce the battle for scarce resources and the potential for war. The disappearance of paper greatly reduces the need for mobility and transport.

### **Bet 5: Your Mobile Phone Is the Remote Control of Your Life.**

Your mobile phone is quickly becoming the modern Swiss Army knife, but even better! It is your own personal bodyguard. It has an embedded traffic light that can warn you if the cucumber you're about to eat has *E. coli* and let you know if your doctor is on a surgery blacklist. This prevents sickness and averts many deaths and millions of dollars of economic damage.

So what are the consequences of the Cloud for ordinary people like you and me? What are the seeds of the future? These are my bets; I invite you to rate them online. Vote for the future now at: [www.futurecheck.com/allbets](http://www.futurecheck.com/allbets). □

#### **About the Author**

Marcel Bullinga is a futurist and keynote speaker. He is the author most recently of *Welcome to the Future Cloud: The World in 2025 in 100 Predictions*, [www.futurecheck.com/book](http://www.futurecheck.com/book). Follow him on Twitter @futurecheck.