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Technology Times April 2021 Issue

"With over 20 years of experience providing remote support to clients that rely on technology, I know what it takes to deliver business continuity. Add to that another 20 years of support in the service industry you'll not find another company that takes customer service to heart as I do. Find out for your business what a difference it makes. "



Dan Foote
Owner/President

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The 6 Emerging Tech Trends That You Need to Know About Now

By [Amrita Halid](#)

"There were tremendous aftershocks that started to reverberate and change many different segments of the economy," says Webb, who presented [Future Today Institute's 14th annual Tech Trends Report](#) at SXSW this week. At roughly 500 pages, this year's edition is the bulkiest yet. Webb says that the length primarily was due to the impact of Covid-19 as barriers to the widespread adoption of remote work, digital payments, and artificial intelligence seemed to disappear nearly overnight. The report highlights nearly 500 new trends, up from 406 last year.

So, what's on deck for 2021 and beyond? You can expect further advancements in [artificial intelligence](#), including for health care applications like drug discovery and improving patient outcomes, but also in forms of creative expression, like in the visual arts or music. The move toward [cryptocurrencies](#) and decentralized finance will continue, and the demand for digital collectibles such as [nonfungible tokens \(NFTs\)](#) will boom this year. As more nations switch to 5G, a wealth of new technologies such as robots, drones, holograms, and augmented reality displays will show up in our everyday environment, from shopping malls to sports arenas.

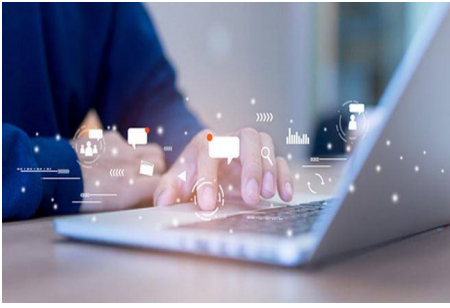
What's more, algorithms will continue to score and rank areas of our life, from our sleep to our fitness to our "social credit score," which measures your online activity. *In other words, the videos, the pictures, the links, nearly everything you post online will continue to be measured by big tech.*

"Everyone alive today is being scored," wrote the authors of the report.

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WE BEFRIENDED TECHNOLOGY,



AND THERE'S NO GOING BACK

"Folks who have tried online banking will stay with it. It won't mean they won't go back to branches, but they might go back for a different purpose." -

Theodora Lau, founder of financial technology consulting firm Unconventional Ventures

THE WORLD has long been going digital. But before the pandemic, older Americans still tended to buy apples at the grocery store, have the doctor measure blood pressure and see new movies at the theater. We still may cling to a few IRL (in real life) experiences, but virtual tools are increasingly the new default.

"If nothing else, COVID has shown us how resilient and adaptable humans are as a society when forced to change," says Joseph Huang, CEO of StartX, an organization that helps tech companies get off the ground.

Popular food delivery apps more than doubled their earnings last year. Weddings and memorial services were held over video conferences (yes, we'll go back to in-person on but probably with cameras and live feeds to include remote participants).

In the financial sector, PayPal reported that its fast growing users groups was people over 50; Chase said that about half of its new online users were 50-plus.

In telehealth, more doctors conducted routine exams via webcam than before, and, in response, insurance coverage expanded for these remote appointments.

"It quickly became the only way to operate at scale in today's world" - Huang says, "both for us as patients, and the doctors and nurses who treat us. Telemedicine will turn out to be better and more effective experience in many cases, even after COVID ends". *Source—AARP*

Tiny Scanner Review

The Tiny Scanner [mobile app](#) turns your phone into a scanner and saves documents as either a photo or a PDF.

With it you can now easily scan documents, receipts, reports, photos or just about anything. The [scanner app](#) is lightning fast and is available for both iOS and Android devices.

How the Tiny Scanner Mobile App Works

The app only requires a few permissions to access your camera, in-app purchases, wi-Fi connection information and media/photos/files. It's really easy to use and you can operate it in two ways. You can either scan using the camera or by selecting an image already stored on the device.

Using the camera, you will be asked to choose whether you want to have the flash on or off and you can as well change the page size format. You also have full control over the output. You have a number of (black, white and grayscale) output to choose from. You can also adjust the contrast using the options displayed on the same page. Once you are done, click save. You will be provided with a sharing button.

The application supports a number of cloud hosting platforms like OneDrive, Evernote and Dropbox. They are, however, only available to Pro users. All PDF documents created by the app are available on the program's interface. You can also find them under TinyScan > Documents or open them directly using a file explorer.

Settings

The settings allow you to make the changes to the default preferences. You may change the process (black and white, color, grayscale, photo, last filter) and the default page size, for instance.

The app allows you to add a passcode that protects against unauthorized access. Enable Wi-Fi access to be able to access your documents from other devices, a laptop or PC, for instance.



Conclusion

Tiny Scanner is an excellent portable scanner for both [iOS](#) and [Android](#) users. The app is loaded with functional features that make document scanning and sharing a breeze. The free version is perfect for both personal and business use. The Pro version (available for \$4.99 on Google Play Store) offers a number of extra features, such as the ability to customize page sizes for PDF export. There are different paper sizes available in the app including A4, Legal (8.5×14), Letter (8.5×11) and many more.

Another great feature available on the Pro version is an intuitive folder system that organizes digital files. The app allows you to also create multiple files where you can save scanned documents. You can use its powerful search features to quickly find any document too.

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:

"The 6 Emerging Tech Trends That You Need to Know About Now"
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Here is a look at some of the most notable predictions for 2021.



HELM Audio BOLT DAC/AMP

If you're looking for a simple way to upgrade your audio experience, a DAC ([Digital to Analogue Converter](#)) might be it. A DAC is one of the most important steps in digital audio processing. If you're not familiar with the tech, it's where the stored digital representation of your music – a series of 1s and 0s – is translated into an analogue wave that can physically power a speaker driver in your headphones.

Just as downloading or streaming a high-quality audio file ensures an accurate representation of your music, a DAC will make sure you're getting the most out of your audio files.

This new DAC upgrade from HELM Audio is the smallest we've seen – perfect for travel or just keeping your desk uncluttered. It's compatible with laptops and smartphones with a USB-C slot (and iPhones with a converter), and it plays best with Tidal's chosen digital format for its recordings (MQA), though it will happily work across all streaming services.

\$99.00 (£75 + £18 shipping approximately), helmaudio.com



1. Smartphones will be a thing of the past.

The pandemic hit the smartphone industry especially hard, with global smartphone shipments [declining](#) in 2020 as both demand and supply took a nosedive. While smartphone sales will likely rebound in 2021, they will also have to compete with a new breed of smart eyewear and wearables that are entering the market. These include Apple's yet-to-be-released smartglasses, virtual reality headsets such as Facebook's Oculus Quest 2 and Microsoft's HoloLens, and a growing industry of wearables and "hearables" like the Apple AirPods. Webb notes that people are holding on to their old smartphones for longer, and are less excited by new features. "There are just not a lot of compelling new features or functionality that are coming and are all in one smartphone device. So we're transitioning away from that. It's a different paradigm, from a single phone to a new constellation of devices that we will either wear or embed," says Webb, who is a former Inc. columnist.

2. The tech exodus and newly remote workforces aren't temporary.

While Silicon Valley isn't going anywhere, there will be an impact as companies like Facebook, Shopify, Twitter, Square, and Slack [promise](#) to let their workers continue to work from home past the pandemic's end. Startups and smaller companies will likely follow suit. This will result in a high-skilled tech workforce now being more equally distributed across the United States, instead of just the Bay Area and New York City.

3. Health care is the next battleground for big tech.

The tech giants will make further advances in [health care](#), including through wearables such as smart glasses and wristbands, [and the growing smart fitness industry](#). There's already been ample evidence of this in recent months, including Apple [unveiling](#) its Fitness+ service, Amazon launching a [Halo band fitness tracking wearable](#), and Google's acquisition of Fitbit. Webb predicts that big tech is influential enough to force established pharmaceutical companies and the health insurance industry to evolve. These changes are already in the making; *for example, major insurers are already offering to reimburse wearables like the Apple Watch*. Covid-19 accelerated the adoption of telehealth and smart fitness, so expect more advancements in this space from both big tech and startups. Also in the pipeline are further growth of at-home lab testing and remote patient monitoring tools.

4. The "home of things" industry is expanding.

The rising popularity of smart home devices and [home surveillance systems](#) such as Amazon Ring and Google Nest has created a new "home of things," or HoT, industry. Google, Amazon, and Apple will be the major players in this space. But also forthcoming are a growing number of connected smart home appliances and devices, from vacuums to drink makers to a trash can that can detect an empty milk carton or box of cereal and automatically order a replacement.

5. Antitrust action may fail to keep up with big tech's moves.

The Biden administration is expected to ramp up [antitrust enforcement](#) of big tech. But the report notes the ever-changing business landscape may be too fast for regulators to keep up with. Also, it's unclear whether some of big tech's most consequential actions (such as Facebook's [acquisition](#) of Instagram, or Amazon's acquisition of [Whole Foods](#) or its moves to build out a digital payments, logistics, and delivery infrastructure) are illegal from an antitrust standpoint.

"No U.S. laws prohibit being really, really smart," write the report's authors.

6. Cryptocurrency and social payments will gain mainstream acceptance.

The blockchain and digital currency made significant headway in 2020. Just this month, J.P. Morgan released a [report](#) warning that Wall Street is at risk of falling behind in digital finance, and also released a new debt instrument geared toward cryptocurrency companies. For 2021 and beyond, the report predicts that more governments and central banks will seriously explore cryptocurrency. Countries such as Ecuador, China, Singapore, and Senegal have already issued their own digital coins, and a number of other countries, including Japan and Sweden, are actively exploring the [adoption](#) of a centralized bank e-currency. The pandemic encouraged more people to use Venmo, Apple Pay, Google Pay, and other contactless peer-to-peer payment services. The growing popularity of online shopping has prompted a rise in "buy now, pay later," or BNPL, platforms like [Affirm](#). Not only are people now more likely to shop or pay for things with their phones, they're also more likely to trust big tech with their finances.

5G and Its Conspiracy Theories

There are three main conspiracies centered on 5G, two of which implicate COVID-19 as well, but none of which have any evidence to substantiate them. The first conspiracy is that 5G causes COVID-19, or at least the **symptoms of COVID-19** (many believers of this particular conspiracy do not believe the virus exists at all). In this sense, 5G and COVID-19 are more or less the same thing. 5G/COVID-19 is a biological weapon, and it's being released in part via 5G cell towers as a global depopulation campaign by the leaders of the New World Order.

Bill Gates is frequently mentioned as the originator of this depopulation campaign. In one popular YouTube video, a QAnon-associated conspiracy theorist, who is also an anti-vaxxer with tens of thousands of subscribers, draws a parallel between Gates's Microsoft efforts decades prior and his vaccination efforts nowadays. The theory goes that Gates's Windows program was purposely susceptible to viruses so he could make a profit on anti-virus software, and today, he's orchestrating a depopulation campaign while also speaking out about pandemic vaccination efforts so he can someday make a huge profit on a mandatory vaccine. The gist is Gates is concerned with making a profit on the vaccine—which will double as a way to track the entire human population—rather than actually designing something intended to put a stop to the deaths caused by 5G/COVID-19. The more widespread theory is that 5G weakens the immune system through radiation, thus making you more susceptible to COVID-19. Evidence has been offered in the form of United States maps, which allegedly show that the cities with 5G coverage have been most affected by COVID-19 outbreaks. Of course, this ignores two realities: One, most of the areas in the U.S. with limited 5G coverage are major cities with denser populations more susceptible to an outbreak; and two, plenty of countries—namely Iran—don't have any 5G capabilities, yet have been hit the hardest by the virus.

And finally, there are the conspiracy theorists who don't believe 5G is connected at all to COVID-19. In actuality, they say, the media is covering this obviously false link solely as a distraction tactic. The media and government accomplices are trying to diminish and lump together the anti-5G folks who have otherwise-legitimate gripes about 5G causing non-COVID-19 health issues.

Microsoft Patching & Reboots

I can hear you from here. “I just rebooted and now it wants another!” or, “Another reboot? Are you kidding me?” Yes, I know: it's frustrating. We all share the same frustration because some reboots seem to take forever because of the update that's being installed.

Most updates deal with security (and most is closer to all than anything else!). We especially share this frustration with you. Times a magnitude. Lately, Microsoft has been releasing a number of updates and in that flurry of updates are some bad patches. You may have experienced one or two where we've had to hop in and uninstall one or two. While we do what we can to mitigate the release of bad updates or patches, sometimes the bad ones sneak through. It's a humbling experience.


Updates, though, create a chain of events. If a computer receives a patch that requires a reboot, it won't accept future patches until the queued patches have been fully installed. And you get tortured by prompts to reboot. So you wait a few days instead of dealing with it now. By then, we're already into another patch cycle, if Microsoft is scrambling to keep up with issues (and we know the answer to that is, “Yes.”).

So finally you reboot. Or we cause it for you. And almost immediately after, if there are queued updates, a new round of patches gets installed—which also wants a reboot.

Missing a couple cycles doesn't necessarily put your machine at risk. What does put your computer at risk is when patches don't get installed to the point that they start to fail—especially for the semi-annual major jumps.

Our patching policy runs weekly. First we look for what's new, which we then research as best we can for efficacy. This usually happens on Wednesdays. Thursday nights we apply patches to the online machines. Or, patches are applied when a machine comes back online—unless, of course, it's still requiring a reboot from an earlier update.

Here's where you can help: if you've been prompted to reboot your computer for updates, please do so. A best practice that allows you to get your work done without waiting for that interminable reboot to finish installing the updates is to reboot at the end of the day.

Go to Start >  Power > Restart. This will allow you to walk away while your computer does the important work of updates! It's also important to remember that your next login might take a bit longer, especially if one of the semi-annual upgrades has just installed.

Oh, and laptop users: in most cases, opening the lid of your laptop doesn't cause it to restart, but only to come out of sleep (closing the lid usually puts the laptop to sleep).

I hope this helps explain the importance of restarting your computer to finalize patches, updates, and upgrades. Protecting your computers and data requires these steps. Please let me know if you have questions regarding this subject.

Thanks,

Dan

Patch Management Software and Tools

