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TOP TEN TECHNOLOGY PREDICTIONS FOR 2024

Analysis and aggregation of the biggest trends covered by global business and technology media, to inform PR and communications programmes this year.

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OVERVIEW

Now that the dust has settled on the technology predictions from leading brands, media and commentators, we've analysed the top 10 themes that have been reported globally which will define the technology media landscape in the next year.

From those featured in Wired to Computer Weekly, Gartner to Omdia and the FT to the BBC, the themes represent the views of some of the most influential channels across the globe.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many predictions are based on AI and its impact across businesses, the wider economy and society. From skills to start ups, regulation to reality, predictions generally focused on the practical impact it will have this year following last year's meteoric rise in hype and use. Our top 10 also includes quantum and cybersecurity growth, a relook at sustainability and cleantech and more mainstream media topics such as VR.

Will these come true? Well, we don't have a crystal ball, but given the collective perspectives, these could be seen as a definitive view on what might just happen this year. And from a comms and media perspective, these provide a benchmark of issues to track, to use as a basis for developing supporting and contrarian commentary, and to inform and support planning.

MEDIA ANALYSED

Our analysis is based on over 25 published articles across major global media sites such as; Business Insider, Fast Company, and the FT, UK national media such as; BBC, Independent and the Times, and leading technology media including; Techcrunch, Sifted, IT Pro, Computer Weekly, CNET. These, combined with additional insights from analysts such as Gartner and Omdia, provide a robust and comprehensive overview from a global and industry perspective.

TOP TEN THEMES WE FOUND

1. **More practical Generative AI use cases with business ROI**
2. **Rapid increase in Copilot productivity**
3. **Quantum Computing's promise moves closer**
4. **More sophisticated cybersecurity and increased concern!**
5. **AI will finally be able to count fingers and toes!**
6. **Vision Pro will supercharge AR and VR usage**
7. **Energy costs rise will increase cleantech and EV demand**
8. **Expect more legal challenges to AI**
9. **Available tech talent will lead to tech startup growth**
10. **Enterprises move to fully wireless networks**

MORE PRACTICAL GENERATIVE AI USE CASES WITH BUSINESS ROI

Following its rise in 2023, Generative AI unsurprisingly featured in some form in every prediction we reviewed. Many articles, including those in Business Insider, UKTN and TechCrunch, highlighted how discussions around Generative AI will shift away from futuristic hype to a focus on real-life, practical use cases and return on investment for business adopters in 2024.

Experts predicted that 2024 will also be the year that existing infrastructure is improved to accelerate for AI's adoption, with some highlighting API-driven customisation, whilst others predicted that network infrastructure would be a key priority to help deliver 'AI transformations' in 2024.

RAPID INCREASE IN COPILOT PRODUCTIVITY

The majority of tech predictions from analysts, experts and journalists highlighted the power of AI to improve business collaboration, namely through the emergence of various 'copilot' AI tools that can aid with content creation, project management and analytics - with Microsoft's the most prominent.

Experts in Business Insider, UKTN and The Times Raconteur highlighted how these copilots have shifted the conversation from how AI might take over jobs, to how it will support human staff in doing their jobs better, happier and more efficiently.

Similarly, many experts and analysts called for 'reskilling' and 'upskilling' of human staff so that they can get the most out of their AI copilots - a trend they predict will continue as AI transformation initiatives grow into 2024.

QUANTUM COMPUTING'S PROMISE MOVES CLOSER

Whilst most analysts and experts recognised that Quantum still has some way to go before it begins to truly transform the technology industry, exciting developments such as IBM's Quantum System Two unveiled in December 2023, spurred renewed media interest in the promise of Quantum computing to tackle big societal issues, from medicine discovery to economics.

Many of the prediction articles we analysed mentioned Quantum in some form, with most highlighting the key steps Quantum developers will need to take in 2024 to build on existing foundations. Many also predicted that 2024 will be the year that the big tech giants truly engage with Quantum – with increased interest in Quantum AI, combining last year's AI developments with the massive computational power of Quantum.

The Times described Quantum AI as 'no longer just a theoretical marvel but a practical tool' – one that will have both business and wider societal implications going into 2024 and beyond.

MORE SOPHISTICATED CYBERSECURITY, INCREASED CONCERN!

Going into 2024, it's no surprise that much of the concern around technology revolves around the continually evolving threat landscape, with developments in AI potentially being leveraged by bad actors. Google's Cloud Cybersecurity Forecast 2024, covered in ZDNet, predicted that enterprises will have to consequently reevaluate their security options in the face of new, sophisticated threats.

On the other hand, Technology Magazine foresaw the potential of Generative AI to strengthen cybersecurity through assisted data-retrieval, automated monitoring, escalating and the use of intelligent machine learning tools that can learn from threat patterns.
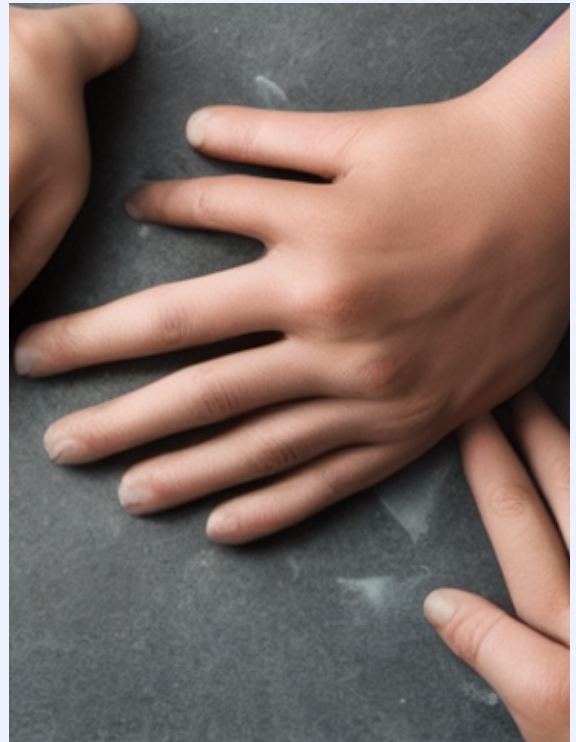
In the face of continued hybrid working environments, which make businesses more reliant on networks of devices and servers, zero-trust and passwordless models were also predicted to take on an enhanced importance in the security of enterprises.

AI WILL FINALLY BE ABLE TO COUNT FINGERS AND TOES!

Whilst The Pope in a puffer jacket and fake Drake swept the headlines in 2023, experts recognised that there was still a sense of a teething phase in AI generated text, images and audio. However, a consensus among AI predictions we analysed was that over the next 12 months, the quality and speed of Generative AI models will drastically improve. As BBC Technology Editor, Zoe Kleinman joked – AI images will 'finally have the right number of fingers and toes'.

Many publications covered OpenAI CEO Sam Altman's promise that "what we launched today is going to look very quaint, relative to what we're busy creating for you now". Many also highlighted the invention of 'multi-modal general AI systems' which can process and combine text, video and audio – to generate realistic and responsive user interactions.

TechCrunch also predicted that late joiners, Apple, will be making moves around Generative AI in 2024, whilst Elon Musk's xAI will also be one to watch in the next year.

VISION PRO WILL SUPERCHARGE AR AND VR USAGE

Apple's Vision Pro headset drew headlines towards the end of 2023 and, according to experts in the BBC, Fast Company and Computerworld, it is set to take 2024 by storm.

But it's not just Apple, with the market predicted to grow to $230 billion by 2032, it's no surprise that CNET described VR and AR as 'the next big thing', whilst Fast Company predicted greater implications for wider society, from VR headsets in healthcare to the emerging trend of Metaverse gaming. Similar to articles around AI, media coverage highlighted a move from hype to tangible VR use cases in 2024.

ENERGY COSTS RISE WILL INCREASE CLEANTECH AND EV DEMAND

Behind only AI, sustainability was one of the most common topics we saw in predictions this year, with many articles mentioning the drive for 'Cleantech' in 2024.

Fast Company looked to recent examples - such as Google's and Apple's pledges to reduce carbon neutrality by 2030 - to predict that in 2024, as energy costs continue to remain at record levels, the major cloud providers will be looking for more sustainable solutions to curb both their environmental impact and energy costs. Analysts are also expecting bumper years ahead for the Electric Vehicle (EV) market which is set to continue innovating on battery efficiency, sustainability and life-cycle.

EXPECT MORE LEGAL CHALLENGES TO AI

With the rapid democratisation of Generative AI products and tools, many publications including the BBC and TechCrunch predicted that the legal challenges we saw appear towards the end of 2023 will grow, both in number and legal complexity.

Commentators also expect the key lawsuits involving Microsoft, GitHub and OpenAI, among others, to be foundational in developing regulation around AI. As BBC Tech Life suggested, when these tools become more sophisticated, the issues escalate. Many AI industry leaders predict legislation to specifically target the issue of transparency about the use of AI – with potential mandates forcing disclosure where AI has been used.

AVAILABLE TECH TALENT WILL LEAD TO TECH STARTUP GROWTH

Due to the tech layoffs during the post-pandemic realignments over the last few years, experts for Business Insider predicted that the pool of available technical expertise would be driven to create new and innovative tech startups, harnessing renewed optimism in the sector.

Business Insider recalls that the period following down times are often a prime time to build, with Airbnb, Uber, and Slack just a few examples of startups thriving in the period following the recession of 2008.

Analysts and experts forecasted a highly competitive startup landscape in 2024, with tech veterans and first-time founders taking advantage of AI innovation and a surplus of technical talent. Pitchbook reported that AI startups are garnering huge valuations with interest from technology giants like Amazon, Nvidia and Microsoft.

ENTERPRISES MOVE TO FULLY WIRELESS NETWORKS

From Forbes to Fast Company, developments in network infrastructure were a key focus in predictions articles. A particular emphasis was evident on the growing importance of IoT, the rollout of technology such as SD-WAN to power hybrid working and the ever-present demand for network security.

Predictions in SDxCentral forecasted the end of wired networks, with a shift to 100% wireless infrastructures as the performance and reliability of Wi-Fi continues to improve.

More generally, hybrid working and its implications on infrastructure and software demands continued to be a relevant and consistent theme throughout technology predictions for 2024.

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TIPS TO BUILD ON THIS ANALYSIS

Look for new perspectives on AI
There will be exciting opportunities to tell compelling stories about the benefits, challenges and roadblocks in AI transformations that can cut through the hype. While AI has massive promise, remember that it is a multifaceted issue, encompassing ethics, regulation, efficacy, and investment. Therefore, it's important to balance enthusiastic claims with both a sense of realism and a unique perspective, considering both the immediate impact of AI and its broader socio-economic and geo-political implications.

Predictions aren't just for the end of the year!
Nobody can predict everything that will happen in a year, so as well as making broad and sweeping predictions once a year, focus in on key topic areas where you can have a unique voice on an ongoing basis.

Monitor and reevaluate
A lot can change in one, three and six months, so if you're looking at predictions in June, chances are you won't be saying what you said at the start of the year. Successful media commentary builds on industry developments and breaking news stories. Check out which stories have resonated in recent weeks and assess where there is an opportunity to say something new and interesting.

Back it up
Whilst far-reaching predictions can be interesting, those that resonate with media are supported by evidence and tangible uses – whether that's customer case studies, data or industry trends – predictions should be backed up by hard facts where possible. Also, don't be afraid to lean on a spokesperson's personal experience -predictions built on real experiences can be very interesting to media!

No 'one size fits all' approach
Look at what specific publications are writing about and tailor commentary to what they cover. Make the most of all your spokespeople, they'll often have a diverse mix of expertise and opinions which can be broken up by topic and targeted towards specific publications.

ABOUT KAIZO

Kaizo is an independent PR and content agency that works with big brands and brands with big ambitions – so they can grow, inform, sell, lead debate, and maintain and enhance their reputations.

The business has a track record supporting Enterprises and Business to Business technology industry leaders and challenger brands in the UK and across multiple global markets. Client experience includes; BlackLine, SnapLogic, Freshworks, Expereo, Stack Overflow, Sharp Europe, D-Link, Brightcove, ExpressVPN, Avast, Druva, and Pure Storage to name just a few.

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