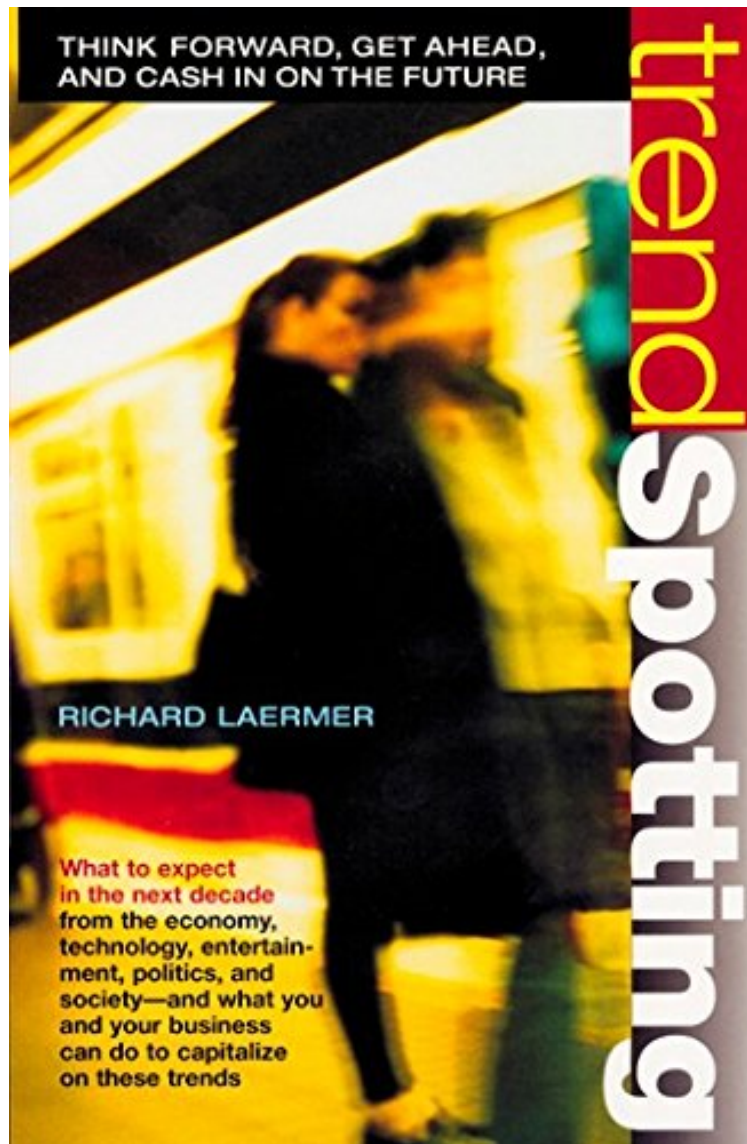


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## Trendspotting: Think Forward, Get Ahead, Cash in on the Future

*Richard Laermer*

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**Richard Laermer : Trendspotting: Think Forward, Get Ahead, Cash in on the Future** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Trendspotting: Think Forward, Get Ahead, Cash in on the Future:

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Book looks ahead with a brain  
By Justin Martin  
This is a truly useful book. For starters, Laermer doesn't idly speculate in the way of so many futurists. Instead, Laermer's brand of futurism is based on interviewing acknowledged experts, and reporting to readers about what they see on the horizon in their particular field. In Trendspotting, when you get a prognostication about the future of technology, it's courtesy of

people such as Jared Headley a tech guru with Cisco. The section on spiritual trends draws on the research of people such as Robert Thurmond, a distinguished professor of religion at Columbia. It gives Laermer's book so much more credibility than if he'd just pulled all this stuff out of his head. And some of the predictions are fascinating: smells and tastes transferred over the internet, so that you can sample brownies before ordering a batch. Or entire homes powered by small, dishwasher-size hydrogen generators. The book becomes all the more credible when you notice that some of the predictions are already coming true. He quotes an expert as saying that movie studios will hype their products all the more if the economy stays soft. "Hype is more intense in a slowdown," the expert is quoted as saying. "People are more and more intense and, um, vicious." That put me in mind of the fierce whispering campaign rival studios are mounting against the movie *A Beautiful Mind* to try to keep it from winning Oscars. I would highly recommend this book. It is fun to read, superbly researched, and you can actually believe that some of the predictions will come true. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Much more a "what" book than a "how" one. By Servant of God I expect this book to tell me "how" to spot the trend. Instead, it keeps on telling me "what" (10 chapters out of 11) experts predicted on or before 2002. Today is 29th Jan 2005 and well it's natural for me to comment that it is quite outdated and irrelevant. In short, not recommended. p.s. To justify my rating of the book, below please find the ten ways (taglines) to be a better trendspotter from the last and only relevant chapter for your reference. 1. Faddy Trends 2. Note + Phone + Mail 3. Books for the lover 4. This web I am tangled in (websites) 5. News or lose (newsletter) 6. Grassroots trendspotting from our packed files (talk to experts who would be moved by your enthusiasm) 7. Trade Ya! (trade and non-mainstream magazines) 8. Pay attention to little guys (Alan Greenspan would track something as seemingly insignificant as the production and sale of packing paper) 9. Information, please. (newspapers) 10. Anything rhyme with Google? 2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Great read for beginning futurists. By B. Pomeroy Richard Laermer presents an entertaining and informative look at the future in "Trendspotting." Laermer takes a holistic approach to envisioning the future, focusing on entertainment and spirituality as well as technology. This is important, as trends converge and combine in unexpected ways -- which is the central challenge of futurism. "Trendspotting" also strikes a balance between optimism and a wariness of unanticipated consequences, which sets it apart from the Internet-will-change-everything enthusiasm of future guides of just a couple of years ago. One thing "Trendspotting" is not is in-depth... which is not necessarily a bad thing. The generalist approach makes it a great introductory text for beginning futurists. The book, however, has two fundamental weaknesses. One is Laermer's very clear liberal bias. In of itself, that isn't a problem, but a more politically balanced viewpoint would allow the book to be even more enlightening. The second, more serious problem is not so much the fault of the book or author, but of time. My edition is dated 2002, and it makes absolutely no reference to the most profound events of our time: 9/11 and the subsequent war on terror. Books like this ought to be updated every year or so, as even the most subtle of current events can change the outlook of the future.

This is the book that will show anyone how to discern true signs of change. Here are the hottest tips on what to expect from the economy and technology, arts and entertainment, politics and society at large. Written by a public relations expert, this new insider's guide goes beyond other books on forecasting by revealing the hows and whys of "trendspotting," offering hundreds of compelling predictions, and revealing how these ideas will impact your life. With Trendspotting, the future's in your hands.

From Publishers Weekly Laermer, who worked as a reporter in the '80s and made money promoting dotcoms in the '90s, reads the media, adapts nimbly to cultural change and has knocked off an unoriginal if funny little tome on what to expect in the coming years. Although his previous books (*Native's Guide to New York*; *Bargain Hunting in Greater New York*) were relatively slight research projects, this work is more ambitious and comprehensive. Its thesis is not novel: the beginning of the 2000s will become a decade of increasingly rapid technological advances that branch into all areas of life (frequently for commercial gain) and intensifying convenience-driven social isolation. He covers technology (predicting remote-controlled everything), spirituality ("traditions are going to change and fast"), the workplace ("entrepreneurs will have to learn what a good business model really is") and the environment ("environmentally friendly products will be more and more ubiquitous"), ending with the cover-story-formula, titled "Ten Ways to be a trendspotter." Laermer includes predictions from heavy hitters like Kurt Andersen and Jeffrey Zucker, who muse about media saturation, Internet porn and more, and wrings sound-bite pronouncements from their East Coast-circuit lips (e.g., Zucker's take on media saturation: "quality, at the end of the day, really cuts through"). His anecdotal tangents display an appealing enthusiasm and wit. But despite Laermer's undeniable charm and childlike sweetness, the future his experienced Manhattanite eyes see is eerily dark in its cynicism. (Mar. 5) Forecast: Laermer's amusing (though not groundbreaking) book should sell like hotcakes, which, according to him, are Gotham's hippest dish today. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. About the Author Richard Laermer, the founder and CEO of RLM Public Relations, has written for *The New York Times*, *Daily News*, *USA Today*, *Us Weekly*, *Interview*, *Newsday*, and other publications. He is also the author of five books including the *Native Guide to New York* series, and appears on public radio as the "Guerilla Consumer." Richard, who calls himself The Trender, has

created a book-oriented Web site with 110 topics, one new one per day till the end of the summer, about slightly educational and offbeat topics for trendSpotters.