



8 Exponential Trends That Will Shape Humanity

# Future of Education

**We live in a time of great abundance and unparalleled possibilities fueled by exponential growth from the impact of technology.** Our job at sparks & honey is to understand the **accelerators, balancers and patterns** that are driving exponential cultural change in the near term and foreseeable future. Our team of cultural strategists and curators works with leading brands and thought leaders to apply these trends and use them as a catalyst for disruptive innovation.

We eat culture for breakfast in order to understand the value of **emerging fringe signals, cultural shifts and explosive doubling patterns.** While monitoring thousands of inputs and mapping and scoring them, we have identified 8 rapidly accelerating trends that will shape institutions, governments, businesses and everyday consumers.

We have consolidated these trends into short vignettes in order to share a curated snapshot of what will create either **great opportunities or unexpected challenges.** We will cover these trends over the next two months. This report covers **The Future of Education.** We hope you engage us in the debate and exploration on how these exponential trends will shape your business and the World.

Please enjoy and share this second of eight free reports. The discussion will also continue in our core social channels - [@sparksandhoney](https://twitter.com/sparksandhoney), [www.bigthink.com/blogs/amped](http://www.bigthink.com/blogs/amped) and [www.facebook.com/sparksandhoney](https://www.facebook.com/sparksandhoney).

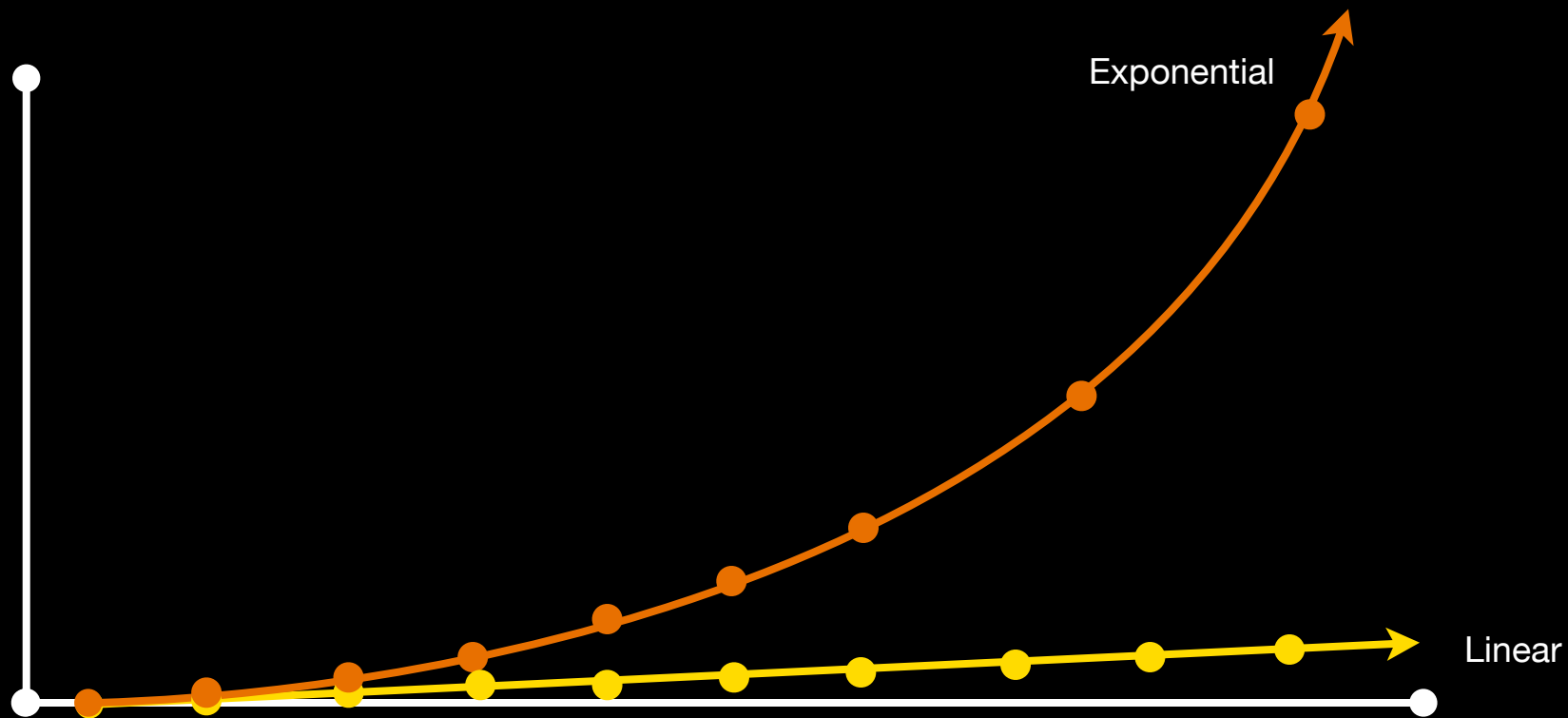
Terry Young

CEO of sparks & honey

[info@sparksandhoney.com](mailto:info@sparksandhoney.com)

& Our blind spot comes from the fact that, historically, we have lived in a linear world.

But today's changes are exponential.







1. Century of  
City States

2. Future of Education

3. Citizen Doctor

4. 3D Printing

Part 2 in the series: 8 Exponential Trends that will Shape Humanity

## Future of Education

5. Quantified  
Everywhere

6. Conscious  
Brands

7. Ancient Wisdom

8. Cyborg Marketing





# The Future of Education

Welcome to the new learning model, a move from institutional learning to the school of Life. Learning is no longer linear, it is perpetual and lifelong. We've reached a tipping point this year, as the number of online learners has reached an all-time high.

Learning is becoming more about self-actualization and less about receiving a particular grade. Education is being custom-tailored to fit the individual. It enables people to pursue multiple avenues of interest leading to the ability to live a portfolio life. This means that careers now become unstructured and less singular, and people are equipped with a wider range of skills.



Image source



*“60% of the best jobs in the next ten years haven’t been invented yet.”*

*-Thomas Frey*





Mainstream education practices are not sufficient to prepare students for a future filled with constant change.





# 20 points

IQs of Americans today are 20 points higher than their grandparents, which is known as the Flynn effect  
Source: The Week Magazine



**The educational model is out of synch with our exponential world: “We teach and test things most students have no interest in and will never need, and facts that they can Google and will forget as soon as the test is over.”**



\$30k

Is the average student debt at the time of college graduation

Source: Reuters

**Applying the ROI Approach to Education:** U.S. and state officials are intensifying efforts to hold colleges accountable for what happens after graduation, a sign of frustration with sky-high tuition costs and student loan debt. ROI figures could help prospective students compare salaries by college and major to assess their best investment.

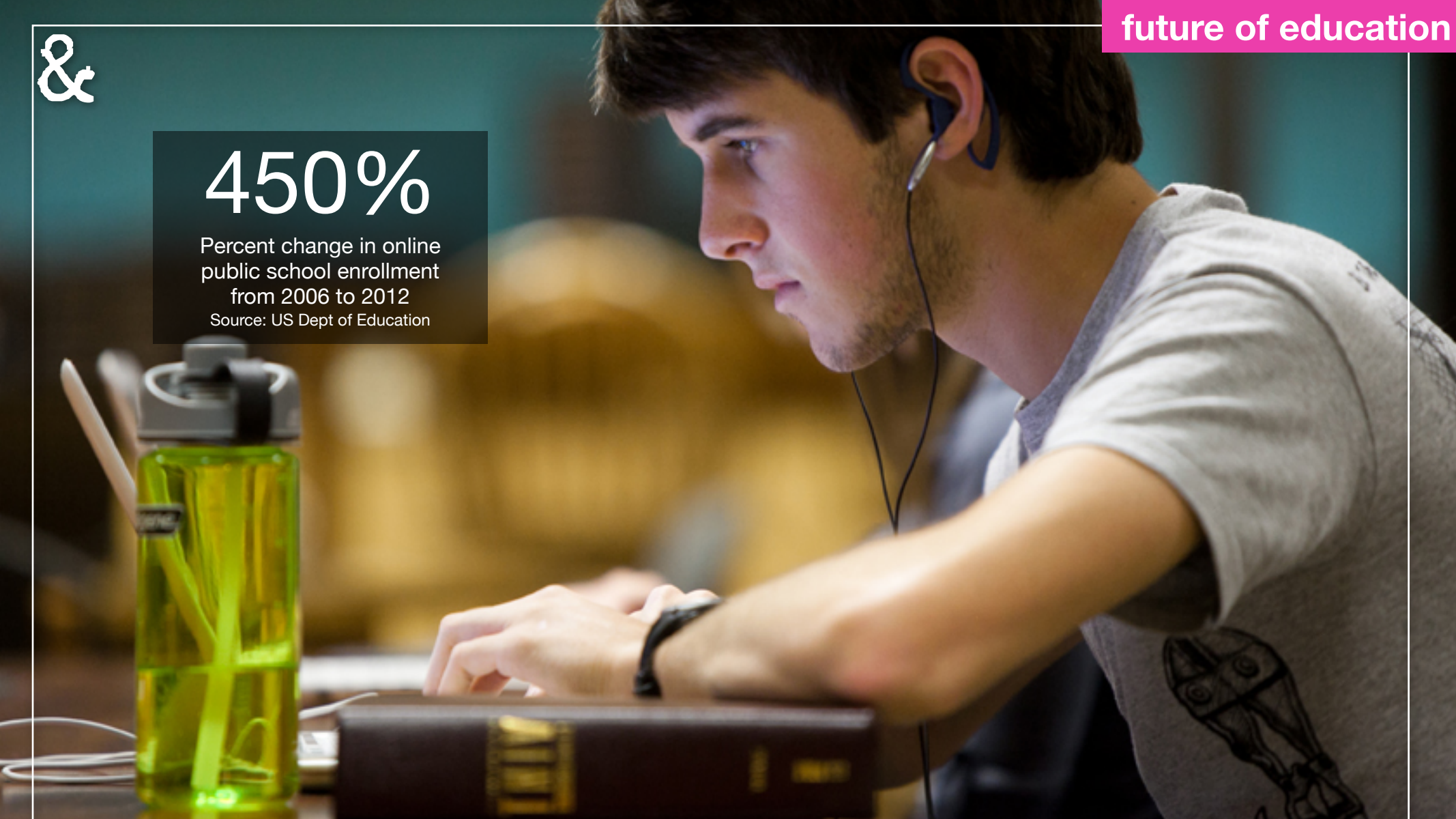




450%

Percent change in online public school enrollment from 2006 to 2012

Source: US Dept of Education

A young man with dark hair, wearing a grey t-shirt and blue earbuds, is focused on his laptop. He is sitting at a desk with a green water bottle and a pen holder. The background is blurred, showing other people in a classroom or library setting.

**Online Learning Hits a Tipping Point:** Computer based education is becoming a practical option for many students. From free “massive open online courses” to accredited online universities, it provides a cheaper, more flexible alternative to traditional college.





**Education Might Get Too Personal:** The education system is already sourcing Big Data about students, amassing huge intel, which is worrying parent groups. While data enables courses to be tailored to individual learning styles, biology and even neurology, the worry is that third parties can access student data, making marketing to IQ a possibility.





**Education Alternatives are Proliferating:** With student debt at an all-time high and scarce jobs, traditional college may no longer be a sound idea. Blended offline-online learning systems and DIY education centers provide ways to embed lifelong learning into busy lifestyles.



**The Not-Back-to-School Movement:** Designed to encourage lifelong learning and independent thought, the Thiel Fellowship program provides funding for world-changing projects as an alternative to college.





21%

Of Americans say the best thing for a young person is to skip college and instead learn a skill  
Source: The Futures Company



**The Birth of Hackschooling:** Rather than pursuing a straight-through run of high school and college, innovators in the education space are piecing together their own custom learning experiences based on a mix of real world experience and personalized modular classes.

**Anticipate Brands As Professors:** Brands will seize white-space opportunities in education, from funding teaching materials to product placements in schools. In addition, expect brands to adopt experiential storytelling to educate consumers about themselves, especially as consumers seek back-story and provenance. Consumers' thirst for information will enable brands to take on the role of being the authority on a topic.

**Serve Up Education in Personal and Packeted Ways:** Big data will enable coursework to be highly tailored to individual needs and learning styles (even personality types, attitudes, lifestyles... and DNA). In addition, curricula designed for busy consumers will be offered in snack-sized modules with more emphasis on project-based and opportunistic “teachable moments.”

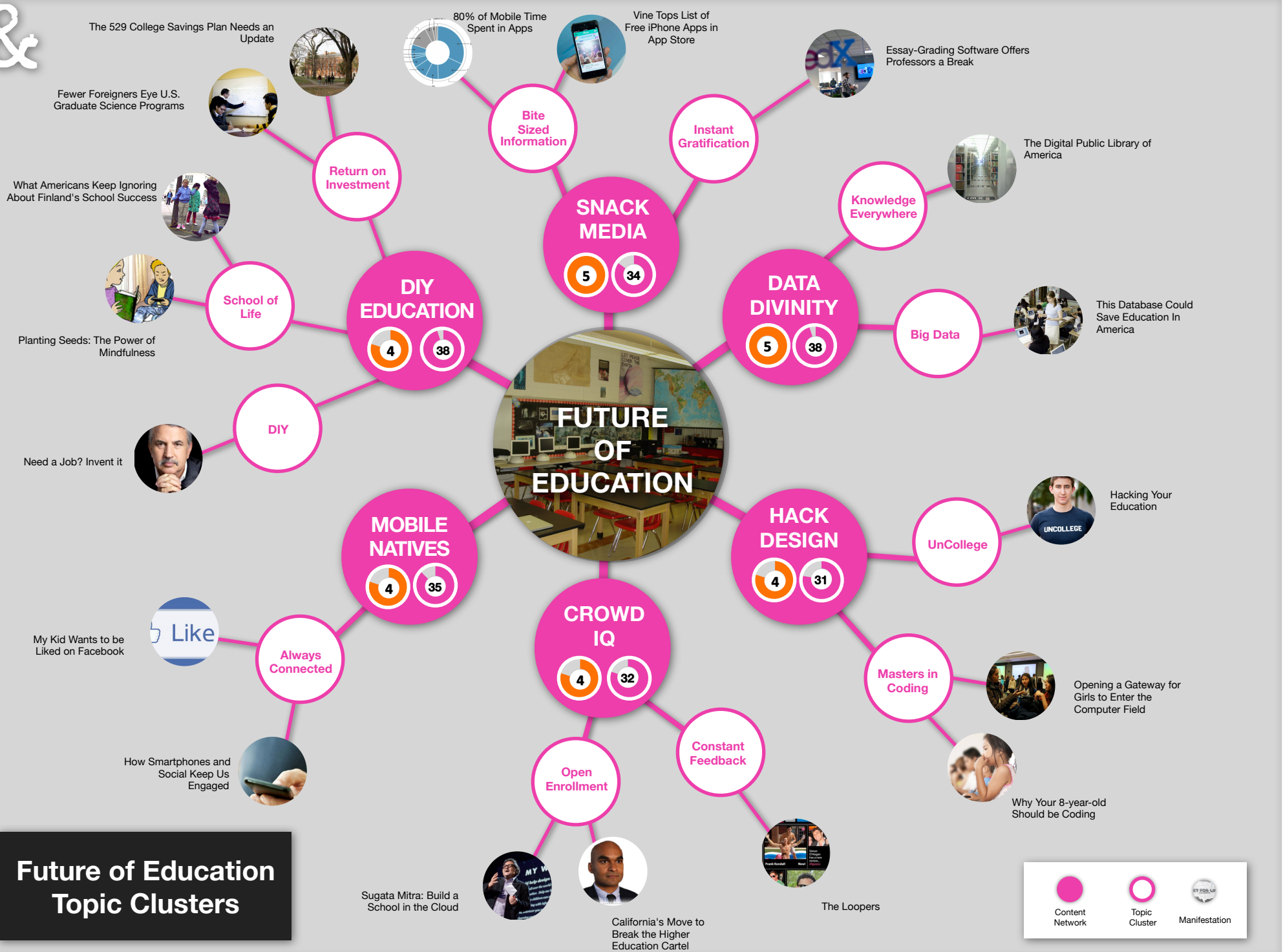
**Play to the New Realities of Long-Tail Learning:** The Internet galvanizes people with niche interests. The flexibility of tech-enabled education will fuel interest in fringe topics and skills, which will drive a surge in acute specialization (as opposed to education striving for generalists). Concurrently, as people “hack school” and learn from life experiences, they will develop unprecedented breadth of knowledge.

**Facilitate Lifelong Learning:** As 60% of the good jobs currently do not exist, and skills learned in school today will be outdated by the time students graduate, it will be imperative that anyone looking to get ahead will constantly update and upgrade their skill sets. Recruiters will put a higher premium on “what you did recently to expand your horizons” than an Ivy League education.

## Job of the Future?

### Curiosity Counselor

Advances in neuroscience are revealing the untapped power of the brain, and how “curiosity” is more of an indicator of success than IQ. Competitive parents will seek out experts to nurture their child’s curiosity to increase their CQ (curiosity quotient), while schools will initiate CQ testing.



**Future of Education  
Topic Clusters**



At sparks & honey we track and analyze thousands of cultural data sources in real time, incorporating live data feeds from numerous APIs as well as hundreds of offline sources. Using a proprietary Culture Mapping Platform, we monitor cultural bursts, identify clusters of activity and trends, score their energy levels, project their lifespans and analyze their cultural resonance. This intelligence helps brands understand and connect with popular culture in order to make more strategically informed business decisions.

Our platform incorporates three different frameworks to structure and contextualize raw data:





1. Century of City States

2. Future of Education

3. Citizen Doctor

4. 3D Printing

Stay tuned for “**Citizen Doctor**,” the next installment in our “8 Exponential Trends That Will Shape Humanity” series.

Follow us [@sparksandhoney](https://twitter.com/sparksandhoney) to keep up to date with our latest free reports.

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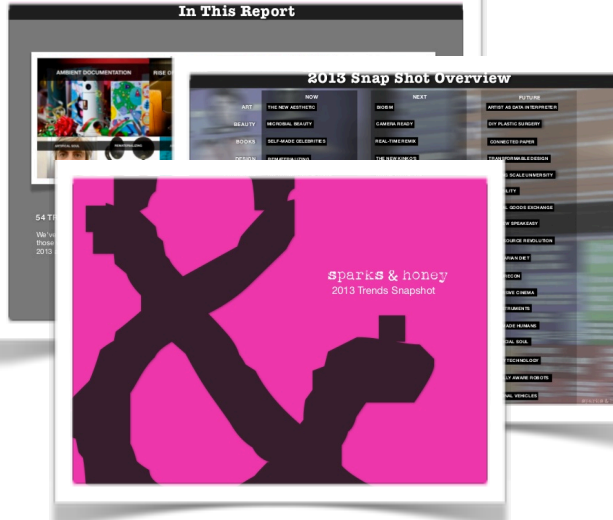




## INDUSTRY REPORTS

25+ report types that help you translate high-energy cultural moments into valuable opportunities for your brand, including:

- *Competitive Assessment Report*
- *“Future Of” Report*
- *In-Depth Industry Report*
- *Innovation Report*
- *Media & Technology Usage Report*
- *Up & Coming Celebrity Report*



## STRATEGY WORKSHOPS

Deep-dive sessions where we focus on innovation opportunities for your specific brand based upon fringe signals and cultural conversations.



## WAVE BRANDING

Proven methodology for creating, approving, launching and distributing content rapidly to take advantage of cultural moments.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Applying the Wave Branding cultural platform, sparks & honey can support:



### Community Management

- ▶ Fan/Follower Acquisition
- ▶ Channel Management & Administration
- ▶ Ongoing Fan/Follower Engagement
- ▶ Social Media Infrastructure

### Social Media Insights & Analytics

- ▶ Sentiment Analysis
- ▶ Industry Insights
- ▶ Content Performance

### Influencer Programs & Content Distribution

- ▶ Cultural Influencers & Affiliates
- ▶ Blogger Outreach
- ▶ Content Distribution

### Content Creation & Campaign Integration

- ▶ 360° Campaign Integration
- ▶ App Development
- ▶ PR Support Programs (pre-buzz, live coverage, post-event buzz)

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# sparks & honey

IGNITING CULTURAL ENERGY

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