

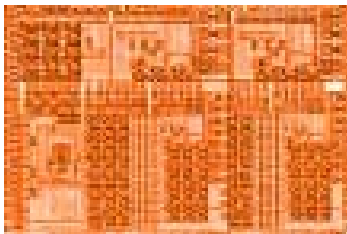
2

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

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Introduction



In a context of constant change, people are increasingly looking for true and accurate sources of information that will help them keep abreast of new trends. By developing new study approaches, we can gain a better insight into the future of technology and be better positioned to harness the business opportunities it offers.

Bankinter's Fundación de la Innovación (Foundation of Innovation) was set up with the stated mission of "influencing the present by looking to the future", and of stimulating and consolidating innovative thinking in the Spanish business environment. It is an ambitious and innovative project, whose main aims are to enhance social awareness of technology and to encourage business opportunities, based on the emerging technologies detected. The project, which now has 130 members, seeks to reinforce Bankinter's commitment to society.

The flagship project of the Fundación de la Innovación **Bankinter** is its "Future Trends Forum" (FTF), a showcase for the Bankinter culture of innovation and commitment to new developments. The forum is backed by a select and exclusive group of experts from different spheres of human knowledge, leading scientists and intellectuals on the international stage. It boasts some of the world's top minds, who work together, trying to predict the immediate future (in a 5 - 10 year timescale), detecting social and economic trends and technological developments, analysing their possible impact on a range of spheres and deciding what conclusions to convey to different strategic areas of society.

The FTF's methodology is based on three essential pillars: multi-disciplinary approach, neutrality and globality. These three aspects are essential in ensuring that any new response to the future will not be affected by private interests or favouritisms of any kind.

The FTF members freely propose, vote and finally decide on a subject, which they then go on to debate in greater depth. The final result of each of these processes is to disseminate the conclusions of this research work among the business community, professionals, senior management and companies and institutions. This part of the forum's work takes the form of a lecture tour of major Spanish cities, and the release of this publication.

In the conclusions of this fifth FTF meeting, for example, you will find meticulous, reliable and credible information on a subject which was debated and considered to be of priority importance for the immediate future: "Nanotechnology: The Industrial Revolution of the Twenty-First Century".

The publication sets out the analyses made by the FTF, in conjunction with its main collaborator, Accenture, on the possible impact nanotechnology may have on sectors such as materials, electronics, medicine and energy –and on society at large. The book includes chapters on the present and context of nanotechnology, which analyses the nanotech presence and research in different industries, and on government support, so vital in getting this new science off the ground. It also gives the "FTF view", with the experts' conclusions on possible scenarios for the future and the most likely economic and social impact on the different regions identified as leaders.

Once again the Fundación de la Innovación **Bankinter** hopes that this new publication will serve as a source of knowledge, but above all as a stimulus and guide for professionals and business people in different industries who will to some extent be influenced by the emergence of nanotechnology on all the world's markets.

Notes

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