
Chapter 2

Introduction

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One of the keys to success in a world in continuous development is to know how to anticipate change and the impact it may have in the medium and long-term future. If we can master this knowledge, we can identify and capitalise on future business opportunities. Certain tools are essential in achieving this aim and they include an analysis of future trends. Bankinter set up its Fundación de la Innovación with a clear objective: to influence the present by looking to the future and to stimulate the creation of business opportunities at the cutting edge of technology and management in order to promote innovation in the Spanish business world. It is an ambitious and innovative project, through which Bankinter hopes to stimulate the creation of business opportunities arising out of changes in the social context. With over 300 international expert opinion leaders from different disciplines, hailing from around the world, and a superb board of trustees, the project also seeks to reinforce Bankinter's commitment to society.

The Future Trends Forum (FTF) is the Fundación de la Innovación Bankinter's most important and most fully consolidated project. It is the showcase of Bankinter's culture: innovation and commitment to new developments. The FTF is Spain's leading forum on long-term forecasting and innovation and embraces top scientists, academics, businesspeople, entrepreneurs and other leading international intellectuals. It is the only multidisciplinary, multi-industry and international think-tank in Europe. It seeks to convey all the objectivity of a forum enriched by a range of viewpoints, which remains unbiased and unswayed by interests of any kind.

The forum strives to predict the immediate future by detecting the social, economic, scientific and technological trends that are most likely to change the way we live and work, analysing possible scenarios and impacts on current business models in sectors that will be most affected. Based on its discussions it seeks to draw conclusions on to the best way of creating wealth out of the situation. These recommendations are intended to be circulated among different strategic spheres of society

FTF members themselves can propose issues for discussion and a vote is taken on the ones that will eventually be addressed. The final result comes when the conclusions of this survey of employers, professionals, top management, companies and institutions are publicised. In this phase, a report is published and lectures are given in major cities in Spain.

This latest publication, prepared with Accenture as the main collaborator, presents the Future Trends Forum's conclusions on the impact the new paradigm of cloud computing may have on society and on the market.

It begins by defining the new model of cloud computing and its associated market. The report describes the factors that have influenced the emergence of this new

model of technological management and analyses the conditions paving the way for this new technology to take hold in society.

It goes on to analyse cloud computing from the perspective of supply, identifying the main cloud providers, and the business models on which their success is based; describing different categories of cloud services, pricing methods and barriers to future development and assessing the impact these new services will have on innovation.

The report goes on to look at the demand side of cloud-based services. First we analyse the implications of cloud computing for business (distinguishing between SMEs, start-ups and big corporations) and for government. For each of these groups, we study the main advantages and disadvantages of the cloud, as well as the current state of the industry. We then describe the strategies that both government and business need to follow in moving to the cloud. Finally, we look at the impact the new model will have on society, education and the environment.

The last section of the report focuses on the Spanish market. It starts with an analysis of Spain's position as a breeding ground for cloud providers and goes on to look at the Spanish market from the point of view of use of cloud services in business and government.

Once again, the Fundación de la Innovación Bankinter hopes that this new publication will act as a source of knowledge, but, above all, will offer stimulation and guidance to professionals and employers from different sectors to harness the advantages and opportunities that may arise in an uncertain economic landscape. More than ever before, companies that know how to understand changes and act in consequence will not only manage to stay in the market, but will emerge strengthened from the crisis, ready to benefit from the new wave of growth when it comes.