#Edinburgh2050 Jamie Coleman of CodeBase

Jamie Coleman, Managing Director of CodeBase, gives us his insights into the impact developing technology will have on Edinburgh's future in the latest in our series of posts from thought leaders on the #Edinburgh2050 City Vision.

The world is currently undergoing massive changes due to technology. We will reach a point over the next few years where everyone in the world will be connected via mobile phones to the internet, and ever-cheaper technology means that everything that can be connected will be. This means that software is now at the heart of practically every aspect of life. The opportunity to transform the world in a positive way by giving young, digital businesses the chance to grow is what CodeBase is all about.

If we are successful, by 2050 Edinburgh will be one of the world's most successful, progressive and entrepreneurial cities again – as we were in days gone by. This shift in technology will allow more people to be their own boss, and the days of working for faceless corporations may be a thing of the past. These new jobs will look as different to us as our jobs today would look to a farmer from 100 years ago. Machines are getting better and better at production-based tasks, and we see even highly skilled jobs increasingly being done by computers. Whilst computers may be better at jobs involving production, humans are better at creativity. So the Edinburgh of 2050 will not be about the traditional factory model of innovation, trying to make widgets for half a pence cheaper. Instead, success will come from brain power, good ideas and creativity. This will be in every sector of life – from medicine and engineering to travel and energy.

Edinburgh will only be successful if everyone has the chance to participate in this change. This means that the ability to learn new skills throughout life is vital. Schools will expand the inherent creativity of children rather than stifle it. Access the world of opportunities to allow children to discover what they are amazing at so that they can do what they love, not what society expects of them.

We can already see the shift today where a new generation have different consumption needs powered by changes in convenience, value, experience and culture. They care less about owning stuff from cars (Uber), Holiday homes (AirBnB), CDs and DVDs (Spotify, Netflix). On the flip side, they care more about interacting with peers to work and learn together in a society that is fairer. This is the role of cities as the super network, connecting people.

Self driving cars will mean that no-one owns a car. Instead, cars will be a cheap commodity that arrives when you need it. No human drivers means no street lights and no traffic jams. Out of town shopping malls will have little purpose when there is no requirement to park. City centre stores in the heart of the high street will rise again but will look very different as the online and offline worlds merge. Banks, for example, will not exist in the way that we know them now with old incumbents destroyed by financial technology allowing everyone to participate and exchange value.

Edinburgh will be a hub of global exporting, but of digital goods not physical ones. Scotland has a deep culture of solving big, hard problems and if we can export these skills, we can make the world a better, fairer place.

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