

A VIEW TO OUR FUTURE

The key to coping with the future and adapting to its demands is preparation. With that in mind, TAPPI formed a Futurists Committee several years ago to help guide the Association's long-range planning.

A recent project taken on by the group has been to provide a glimpse of conditions we may encounter in the year 2015. Their report has just been published as a book entitled "The World in 2015: Four Possible Scenarios."

Stuart Sharp, Chairman of the TAPPI Futurists, led the development of the report. Through their descriptions of possible futures, the Futurists explore the opportunities and threats of a changing world for the pulp and paper industry.

The report uses expert opinions and scenario building,

scanning and monitoring, and extrapolation of trends. Instead of making predictions, the Futurists have tried to describe the future in various plausible ways that relate to specific actions for consideration. They have drawn upon the views and opinions of individuals from various segments of the pulp and paper industry, as well as suppliers and customers.

The Futurists are confident the world of 2015 will still need and use paper. But, will it need the pulp and paper industry as it exists today?

The four scenarios of the world in 2015 presented by the Futurists are "postcards of the future:"

- The first scenario considers the positive influence of the changes in business and society. As technology advances, the world will change and benefit from global economic stability.

- The second scenario provides an alternate view that shows an aggressive, closed world that results in unrest and possible global conflict.

- The discussion of a hypothetical World Paper, Inc., in the third scenario considers the impact of views from the earlier two scenarios on a global paper manufacturing company operating in 2015.

- The final scenario examines the threat of the information revolution to paper. Does paper still have a place in the future world with the "high tech"

advances that will be commonplace in every home?

Each scenario in the book also identifies key trends that are essential indicators to realizing the view presented.

In the scenarios, the Futurists primarily present a positive worldview. Realizing that the world could be considerably different in the event of a decline in the global economy or some other catastrophic event, the Futurists also consider the consequences of such actions on the world, family, and individual through alternate views.

In preparing the report, the Futurists wanted to provide readers with a tool to facilitate thinking about key decisions. It was also "designed to open up individuals' thinking to consider options that might otherwise have been missed."

The report "illustrates a methodology and provides a best guess at the major factors that could have large influences."

Many of the issues considered in the report will also be discussed by a special 2010 Task Force of TAPPI members in the coming months. In the same way as the individuals and companies that comprise the industry will need to adapt to a changing world, so will TAPPI need to evolve to continue to meet the needs of industry professionals. The recommendations of the Task Force will help TAPPI in making those decisions.



Richard G. Barker
TAPPI President

To order copies of "The World in 2015: Four Possible Scenarios," item number 0101R288, published by TAPPI PRESS, call the TAPPI Service Line at 1 800 332-8686 in the United States, 1 800 446-9431 in Canada, or 1 770 446-1400 in other locations. The fax number is 1 770 446-6947, or email: service-line@tappi.org. You can also order on-line at <http://www.tappi.org>. The price for the 72-page, soft-cover book is US\$ 40 (US\$ 25 for TAPPI members).

