

4. Automation.

Marketers will be (mostly) pleased to learn that automation will become a bigger mainstay in and throughout 2017, with advanced technology enabling the automation of previously human-exclusive tasks. We've had robotic journalists in circulation for a couple of years now, and I expect it won't be long before they [make another leap into more practical types of articles](#). It's likely that we'll start seeing productivity skyrocket in a number of white-collar type jobs—and we'll [start seeing some jobs disappear altogether](#). When automation is combined with machine learning, everything can improve even faster, so 2017 has the potential to be a truly landmark year.

5. Humanized Big Data. (visual, empathetic, qualitative)

Big data has been a big topic for the past five years or so, when it started making headlines as a buzzword. The idea is that mass quantities of gathered data—which we now have access to—can help us in everything from planning better medical treatments to [executing better marketing campaigns](#). But big data's greatest strength—its quantitative, numerical foundation—is also a weakness. In 2017, I expect we'll see advancements to humanize big data, seeking more empathetic and qualitative bits of data and projecting it in a more visualized, accessible way.

6. Physical-Digital Integrations.

Mobile devices have been slowly adding technology into our daily lives. It's rare to see anyone without a smartphone at any given time, giving us access to practically infinite information in the real-world. We already have things like site-to-store purchasing, enabling online customers to buy and pick up products in a physical retail location, but the next level will be even further integrations between physical and digital realities. Online brands like Amazon will start having more physical products, like [Dash Buttons](#), and physical brands like Walmart will start having more digital features, like store maps and product trials.

7. Everything On-Demand.

Thanks to brands like Uber (and the [resulting madness](#) of start-ups built on the premise of being the “Uber of _____”), people are getting used to having everything on demand via phone apps. In 2017, I expect this to see this develop even further. We have thousands of apps available to us to get rides, food deliveries, and even a place to stay for the night, but soon we'll see this evolve into even stranger territory.

Anyone in the tech industry knows that making predictions about the course of technology's future, even a year out, is an exercise in futility. Surprises can come from a number of different directions, and announced developments rarely release as they're intended.

Still, it pays to forecast what's coming next so you can prepare your marketing strategies (or your budget) accordingly. Whatever the case may be, it's still fun to think about everything that's coming next.

Forbes: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2016/11/16/7-technology-trends-that-will-dominate-2017/#6777c91b1b2a>