A Look at the Year Ahead

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Here are our predictions for the year ahead. We look forward to dusting this article off a year from now to see how we did.

The Electronics Industry will be up more than 10%.

According to Investopedia, the Electronics Sector was up 5.6% in 2019 (https://www.investopedia.com/ask/answers/052515/what-growth-rate-electronics-sector.asp). I'm not sure we or our peers felt this growth. The year prior, 2018, was a very strong year and some level of correction was felt in 2019 we think, at least anecdotally. But we think 2020 will return to a strong growth format, driven (no pun intended) by increased adoption of electric vehicles, continued consumer demand of IoT devices and the continued rollout of 5G.

Don't forget about Industrial IoT devices

We think 2020 will see large scale adoption of Industrial IoT devices. Predictive maintenance and production load balancing will be augmented with intelligent and real-time data collectors placed throughout manufacturing facilities. We think in 2020 this initiative really gets moving, and if you are not on board, the pressure of falling behind will start to be felt.

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning become more integrated

As an extension of our prediction regarding the expansion of Industrial IoT, we see these devices feeding, and being fed by, increased usage of AI.

Synchronization of Distributed Business Systems

Separate utilities for Automated Marketing, eCommerce, CRM, Quoting, Sales Order Validation, Purchasing, ERP and Finance will work in a synchronized manner, integrated via real-time APIs (application programming interfaces). This "merger" will enable users to leverage the unique value propositions of previously independent software solutions without sacrificing the integrated movement and presentation of data.

The Digital Supply Chain will expand to automate additional value propositions

Okay, we know something about this one and it may seem self-serving. At the same time, this is our business strategy, so if we don't believe in it, who will? The Digital Supply Chain presently automates the delivery of raw materials in support of a presented requirement. In the coming decade, this automation will continue to expand to including quoting, sourcing, purchasing, planning, and design. As a manager, you

must both look for opportunities to automate manual tasks, as well as identify those tasks particularly well suited for us humans. If you are attempting to differentiate your business on those values easily automated by machine, you may find yourself on the unstable ground in the future.

Component Manufacturers will continue to consolidate

We saw a fair amount of consolidation in 2019. This will continue in 2020 and beyond as smaller suppliers attempt to achieve the technical scale and broad product offering required to compete in the global marketplace.

And just for fun

We are guessing the stock market will be up about 10% with strong employment continuing throughout the year. So take care of your employees.