

Report Card on “Three Top Tech Trends for 2018”

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The tech industry lives on trends. For those working in organizations that either develop tech or use tech, understand tech trends has clear business implications. But for those in charge of marketing of tech, it's important to understand what trends will interest reporters and other influencers to determine how your organization can anticipate and develop story angles to leverage interest in that trend that can position you as a thought leader.

Back in Feb. on [CommPRO.biz](#), I published an article about [three important tech trends for 2018](#), and this article is intended to review our picks and see how we did, with the goal of better understanding tech trends ahead of 2019.



1. **Artificial Intelligence and robotics will continue to be “hot.”** Actually, in 2018, AI became the hottest tech trend, eclipsing Bitcoin as the tech that gets the most attention. (According to Google Trends, Bitcoin was untouchable in 2017 but AI and artificial intelligence now generate more searches than Bitcoin. Cloud computing

remains significant as a search term but anecdotally isn't generating the kind of media coverage it once did.) Industrial robotics as a trend is doing well, especially when connected to stories about AI "hot" technologies, increasingly connected. We expect to continue to see scare stories about a "robocalypse" in which A.I.-enabled robots replace human workers but we also expect articles that debunk the scare stories. We said we expected to continue to see scare stories about a "robocalypse" in which AI-enabled robots replace human workers but we also expected articles that debunk the scare stories. **Grade: A.**

- 2. Millennials' impact will change how companies market products and services.** We said we expected marketers to increasingly cater to Millennials' preferences and needs in 2018. (After all, we saw some companies like Home Depot offer classes on home care topics to get them in the door and buying.) We also expect millennial preferences to become the default choice; for example, doorbells may become vestigial as millennials text, not ring, when they arrive at a friend's house. Now, near the end of the year, we still think this is true but this trend did not necessarily generate coverage, which is one way we judge the impact of the trends we identify so our grade will reflect a lack of media coverage. **Grade: C.**

- 3. Smart-Home automation gains acceptance but still is a niche offering.** We think that smart home technology, including keyless-and-doorbell-free doors, are the future but we feel we were right in categorizing them as still in the early-adopter phase. The one exception we stated was the market for intelligent personal assistants like Amazon's Alexa and Google's Home. According to some projections, in a few years, there will be more personal assistants than people. **Grade: A.**

Overall, we scored a B+ on tech trends.

We think it's safe to predict that these trends, especially AI and personal assistants, will continue to be important. That's good news for marketers who may be thinking about trends they should embrace and try to optimize as they develop their marketing plans for next year.



About the Author: Norman Birnbach is the president of Birnbach Communications, www.birnbach.com, a Boston-based [PR](#) and social media agency focused on thought leadership that has been issuing annual predictions for nearly two decades. His blog, [PR BackTalk](#), provides insights and attitude about PR, journalism and traditional and social media.