How Crowdsourcing Is Shaping the Future of Everything

As fast as things are changing, they are about to change even faster. Technology is making it progressively easier to access the knowledge, experience, and resources of the crowd. We have already seen how applications of crowdsourcing technology can provide funding, services, and navigation. Now this technology will accelerate innovation, problem solving and even politics.

We recently had the honor of interviewing the founder of Crowdsourcing Week, Epi Ludvik. Epi is responsible for pulling together the top crowdsourcing practitioners in the world and bringing their insights to corporate c-suiters and entrepreneurs worldwide.

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Q: What is crowdsourcing?

A: I've always said that crowdsourcing is about passions, talents, skills and tangible resources facilitated by high tech platforms. Crowdsourcing can take place on many different levels and across various industries. Thanks to our growing connectivity, it is now easier than ever for individuals to collectively contribute ideas, time, expertise or funds to a project or cause. This collective mobilization is called crowdsourcing.

The future is human-centric. It's all about participation and the ability to co-create via an increasingly connected world. This new way of doing things (crowdsourcing, crowdfunding, co-creation, collaboration and open innovation) is challenging established business models and how companies work across the board. It offers an immense opportunity to rethink and

reinvent conventional processes.

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Q: How is crowdsourcing changing today?

A: Almost three years ago, Crowdsourcing Week created a diagram that identified the 14 Parts of the Crowd Economy. One of the parts called Crowd Currencies is now named Initial Coin Offering (ICO's), Token Generation Events (TGE's) and Cryptocurrencies.

Back then, we anticipated massive crowd participation which is now intensifying and heading toward mainstream. Besides this trend around financial products, we are seeing that crowdsourcing is challenging old centralized models and now decentralization is happening across many different platforms. Crowd Currencies and Decentralization are joining rapid advances in crowd innovation, micro-tasking, co-creation, and the sharing economy faster than most businesses and governments are prepared for.

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Q: What are the implications to business, politics and culture?

A: Massive! Let's put it this way: No country or large organization has ever seen anything like this before. We are now living in the most exciting times for humans to experience. Yet, the world of mixed reality comes with lots of challenges where society and large institutions from the private and public sector are not ready for this massive challenge.

For so many centuries we've been looking down and practicing a "dig and burn" mentality for energy resources. Now we are looking *up* for alternative energy; solar, asteroid mining, etc. The old economy is run on the basis of scarcity compared with the new economy which is run on the basis of abundance. Now we are beginning to see the tensions between the old and the new.

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Q: What is Crowdsourcing Week?

A: Crowdsourcing Week (CSW) connects people with the latest ideas and best practices in crowdsourcing and crowd innovation globally. We help organizations to transition and thrive in the new economy through our worldwide conferences and summits, online educational programs, workshops and consultancy.

CSW is committed to help organizations transition into a more open, connected, and socially productive society. We focus on how crowdsourcing can address the needs of today's leaders to bring about meaningful change. Our big, ambitious goal is to get everyone thinking about collaborating with their stakeholders to create shared value.

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Q: What can attendees expect at this year's CSW Arctic // Europe 2018 conference?

A: This year's European conference is going to be held in two places on the top of the world: the city of Lulea and the village of Vuollerim, both in the Swedish Arctic. We will be focusing on important emerging topics such as finance, ICO's, green bonds, energy, sustainability, innovation and

CrowdGaming, agriculture, and travel & tourism in the sharing economy.

AgTech is one area we have not covered before and I'm very excited to explore the crowdsourcing implications in that critical space. It fits very well with the local economy of Vuollerim. A few years ago, I remember Jim Rogers, an American businessman, investor and financial commentator saying, "Someday farmers will be driving Lamborghinis, stockbrokers will be driving taxis and the smart stockbrokers will learn how to drive tractors." This is exactly what's happening now.

Related: 5 Tips to Make Your Crowdfunding Launch Stand Out From the Crowd

Q: Why is crowdsourcing becoming a "must have"?

A: Many large organizations are too slow and speed is what really matters in this digital economy. We created the Hyperloop of Innovation to demonstrate the importance of embracing talent on demand. Innovation should not be treated as a separate, isolated department. Today you need to pioneer your innovation journey. Crowdsourcing accelerates this process and can get you up to speed quickly.

Q: Why have you dedicated your life to this movement?

A: Crowdsourcing is bigger than a movement. In the decades to come, it will be the new DNA of our society in the digital and physical world. I'm a strong believer in the world of abundance. It bothers me that we are still fighting wrong fights simply because we are stuck with old mindsets. Today, the global economy runs on the basis of scarcity and fear. These mindsets are lethal for society. Crowdsourcing can be a

great enabler to move us toward the well-being of every human on earth, simply by looking to the crowd for supply.

As a way of engaging people, many crowdsourcing platforms employ challenges to participate in as often as you like. This exposes participants to various different problems. This can enhance adaptability and problem-solving skills. As I've said many times, crowdsourcing is about passions, talents, skills and tangible resources. Early this year, Women of NASA creator Maia Weinstock inspired a new generation with a LEGO toy, and in just two months, her creation was sold out on Amazon. Keep in mind that Maia's background is in science journalism, and she is currently the deputy editor of MIT News. Now we can start to think about other possibilities with crowdsourcing.

So, do *you* have a concept that needs flushing out, a rough idea that needs polish, or a problem that needs solving? Crowdsourcing could be the answer you've been looking for. See you at the top of the world!

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