



The Nature of Technology: What It Is and How It Evolves

By W. Brian Arthur

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“More than anything else technology creates our world. It creates our wealth, our economy, our very way of being,” says W. Brian Arthur. Yet despite technology’s irrefutable importance in our daily lives, until now its major questions have gone unanswered. Where do new technologies come from? What constitutes innovation, and how is it achieved? Does technology, like biological life, evolve? In this groundbreaking work, pioneering technology thinker and economist W. Brian Arthur answers these questions and more, setting forth a boldly original way of thinking about technology.

The Nature of Technology is an elegant and powerful theory of technology’s origins and evolution. Achieving for the development of technology what Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* did for scientific progress, Arthur explains how transformative new technologies arise and how innovation really works. Drawing on a wealth of examples, from historical inventions to the high-tech wonders of today, Arthur takes us on a mind-opening journey that will change the way we think about technology and how it structures our lives. *The Nature of Technology* is a classic for our times.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

What is technology in its nature, in its deepest essence? Where does it come from? How does it evolve? With contagious enthusiasm, Arthur, an economics professor and a pioneer of complexity theory, tries to answer these and other questions in a style that is by turns sparkling and flat. Technology is self-creating, though it requires human agency to build it up and reproduce it. Yet technology evolves much like organisms evolve, and Arthur cannily applies Darwin's ideas to technologies and their growth. All technologies descend from earlier ones, and those that perform better and more efficiently than others are selected for future growth and development. But radical novelty in technology cannot be explained by this model of variation and selection, so Arthur argues that novel technologies arise by combination of existing technologies. For example, a hydroelectric power generator combines several main components—a reservoir to store water, an intake system, turbines driven by high-energy water flow, transformers to convert the power output to a higher voltage: groups of self-contained technologies—into a new technology. Arthur's arguments will likely alter the reader's way of thinking about technology and its relationship to humanity. (*Aug.*)

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Unknown

“...enlightening and stimulating, enhanced by a remarkable diversity of historical examples...The book invites comparison to work by Thomas Kuhn...Economists, social scientists, engineers and scientists all may come to regard it as a landmark.” —*Science*

“Provocative and engaging...Arthur's theory captures many well-known features of technological change [and] also answers interesting questions.”—*Nature*

“...reframes the relationship between science and technology as part of an effort to come up with a comprehensive theory of innovation... Dr. Arthur is bold in his reassessment of the role of technology in science.” —*The New York Times*

Review

"We launched Java based on Brian Arthur's ideas." -- Eric Schmidt, CEO of Google

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Louis Vasquez:

This *The Nature of Technology: What It Is and How It Evolves* book is not really ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book will be information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get information which is getting deeper a person read a lot of information you will get. This specific *The Nature of Technology: What It Is and How It Evolves* without we understand teach the one who studying it become critical in thinking and analyzing. Don't be worry *The Nature of Technology: What It Is and How It Evolves* can bring whenever you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' turn into full because you can have it in your lovely laptop even telephone. This *The Nature of*

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