

**Foreword**  
Dick Emery



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Despite our love of crystal-ball gazing, predicting television trends is virtually impossible. To a degree that's the way we like it. It's the unpredictability that makes this industry such a challenge and proves the viewer is really in charge. In the last ten years, we've witnessed the start of the digital TV revolution, the launch and demise of Ondigital and then the launch and huge success of Freeview. We've seen TV become truly interactive, celebrated the fact that more than half the population has gone multi-channel and worried that this isn't enough to make digital switchover truly achievable. We've seen independent producers secure ownership of their programme rights, the introduction of a new regulator and (although I still can't quite believe it), we've watched ITV reform.

Who could have predicted that viewers would suddenly be faced with so much choice? That EPG position could make or break a channel? That reality TV would become the current guaranteed banker of many a prime-time schedule? And that a game show offering the chance to win £1 million would not only be possible but an international smash?

The truth is, someone somewhere probably did predict it all. From the days of consulting oracles in ancient Greece to the emergence of trend forecasting as a 'must have' for any business planning, predicting trends has become an industry in its own right.

Like most broadcasters, at UKTV we consider all the relevant insight available, from looking at lifestyle trends to thinking about the needs of advertisers in a world of Sky+ and video on demand. Unlike most broadcasters, however, not only are we committed to broadcasting quality British programmes from the most original to the celebrated classics, we absolutely put the viewer first. Offering choice to viewers

and keeping them at the heart of every decision we make is always a priority and that cannot be done without looking at future trends for both the industry and the world around us.

For the purpose of this book, we've chosen to ask some of today's most influential programme makers what they think TV will look like in ten years' time. As you would expect, the result is a series of very passionate essays covering everything from the ownership of ideas to who the winners and losers might be. Harry Thompson believes there will be more business-driven commissioning with people who make comedy programmes forced to convince managers with backgrounds in selling biscuits or washing powder to make creative decisions, rather than people with a background in TV. For some, this is already a reality. Alex Graham considers the future of reality TV, Jimmy Mulville asserts that future TV successes cannot be predicted, while Peter Bazalgette takes us through an imagined typical day in ten years' time, from waking up in his new home, Manchester, to his plans for *Big Brother 15*. As for Ray Snoddy, his vision of the future sees the BBC as a clear winner and Sir Michael Green back in the chair at ITV in a strange reversal of fortune.

This book is full of compelling arguments and challenging ideas for the future and all delivered with real passion. Personally, I think it is this collective passion for the industry that will more than adequately see us through the next ten years. My only disappointment is that no one has predicted the break-up of ITV. It won't stop me hoping...

Rather intriguingly, the most often mentioned name is that of Russian oil billionaire, Roman Abramovich. Just remember you read it here first.