

On Paradoxes, Constants, And Effects

THE OSBORNE EFFECT

Consumers will put off or cancel purchases in anticipation of a future product.

Named after the Osborne Computer Corporation, which released the first portable computer (Osborne 1) in 1981. In 1983, rumors of Osborne's next computer leaked, and existing sales on the Osborne 1 plummeted – forcing the company to file for bankruptcy a few months later.¹

LOOKING AHEAD:

> How many consumers are holding off on an EV purchase till 2021-2022, when all automobile manufacturers expect to have EVs on the market?

JEVONS PARADOX

As it becomes more efficient to use a resource, total demand for a resource increases.

In 1865, William Jevons noted that the development of more efficient iron production from coal blast furnaces subsequently increased the demand for iron and coal. In energy policy discussions, the paradox is known as the 'rebound' – greater energy efficiency tends to increase total energy consumption.²

LOOKING AHEAD:

> If increasing consumption and resource usage is inevitable, how do we sustainably address growing global demand for resources?

MARCHETTI'S CONSTANT

People will adjust their lives so that their travel time stays approximately constant.

Italian physicist Marchetti noticed that cities expanded to within the limits of a 1-hour commute. Before motorized transport, ancient cities were limited to distances that could be walked in 30 minutes. As cars became available, urban sprawl took hold.³

LOOKING AHEAD:

> What will happen to the commute and urbanization if/when self-driving cars become reality - and the commute becomes leisure time?

Need help dealing with your own future paradox?

Contact us and hear how foresight can help you with strategy and innovation.

