

Thank You for Being Late: An Optimists Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations



A field guide to the twenty-first century, written by one of its most celebrated observers. In his most ambitious work to date, Thomas L. Friedman shows that we have entered an age of dizzying acceleration—and explains how to live in it. Due to an exponential increase in computing power, climbers atop Mount Everest enjoy excellent cell-phone service and self-driving cars are taking to the roads. A parallel explosion of economic interdependency has created new riches as well as spiraling debt burdens. Meanwhile, Mother Nature is also seeing dramatic changes as carbon levels rise and species go extinct, with compounding results. How do these changes interact, and how can we cope with them? To get a better purchase on the present, Friedman returns to his Minnesota childhood and sketches a world where politics worked and joining the middle class was an achievable goal. Today, by contrast, it is easier than ever to be a maker (try 3-D printing) or a breaker (the Islamic State excels at using Twitter), but harder than ever to be a leader or merely average. Friedman concludes that nations and individuals must learn to be fast (innovative and quick to adapt), fair (prepared to help the casualties of change), and slow (adept at shutting out the noise and accessing their deepest values). With vision, authority, and wit, Thank You for Being Late establishes a blueprint for how to think about our times.

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