

Proceedings of the 7th Annual World Conference  
of the Society for Industrial and Systems Engineering,  
Binghamton, NY, USA  
October 11-12, 2018

## **The Next Big Thing. What is it?**

**N.F. Schmeidler**

Manager, Grant Thornton LLP  
333 John Carlyle Street, Suite 500  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Corresponding author's Email: [Neal.Schmeidler@us.gt.com](mailto:Neal.Schmeidler@us.gt.com)

**Abstract:** Governments, investors, businesses, economic developers, job seekers and many others continually scan the horizon, hoping to identify the next big thing. The big thing that creates opportunities to turn investments into fortunes. The thing that provides opportunities for new graduates, the unemployed, and those who simply just want a change. In the late 1980's, the economic outlook for many looked bleak. Economic developers were tasked with identifying and steering their programs toward the next big thing. The Commonwealth of Virginia (USA) chose technology. Which turned out to be a great choice. This presentation will not focus on the late 1980's and early 1990's and how Virginia made a great decision. Instead, the presenter will provide his views on what might be the next Big Thing.