



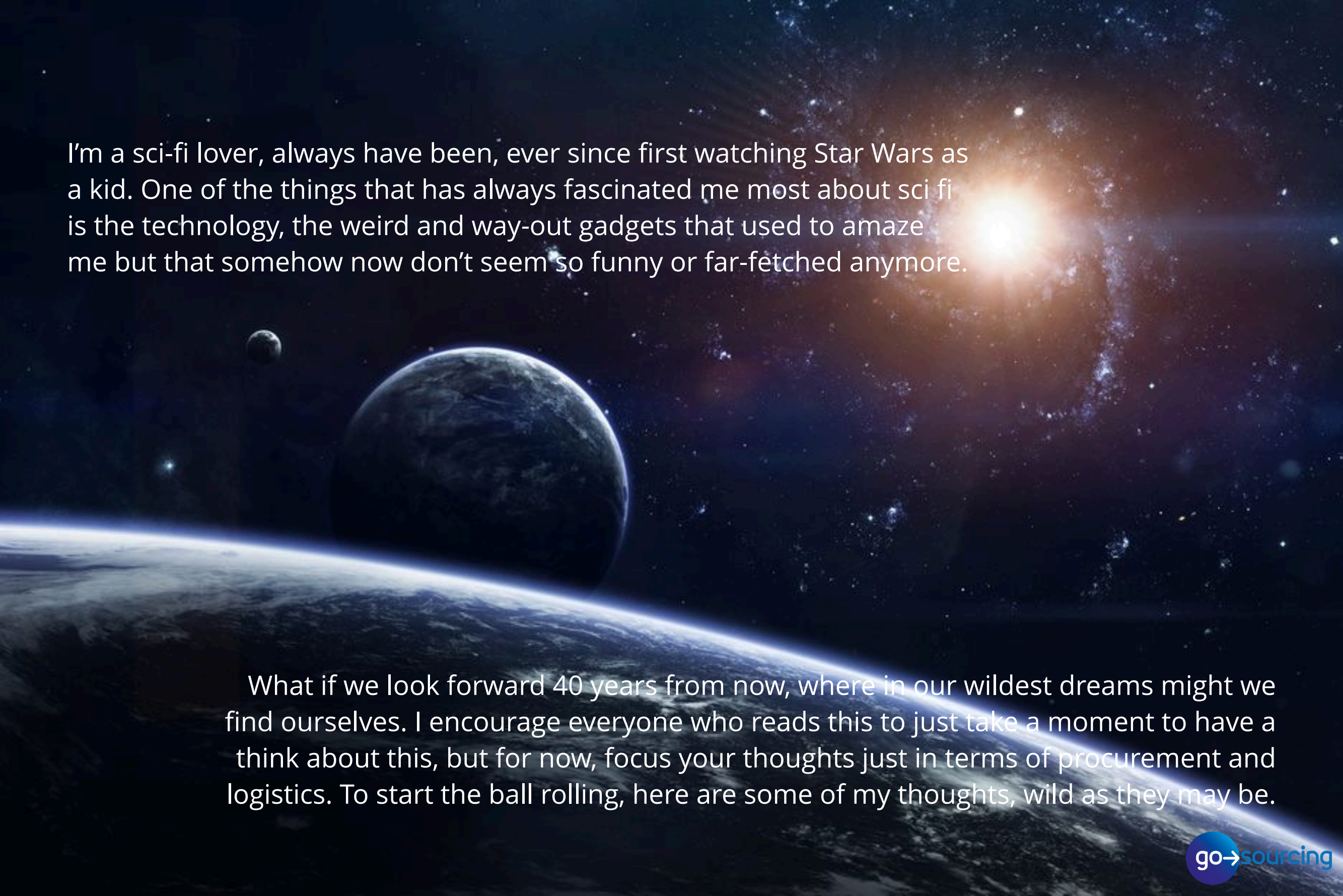
# The Shape of Logistics in the Future



Narrated by

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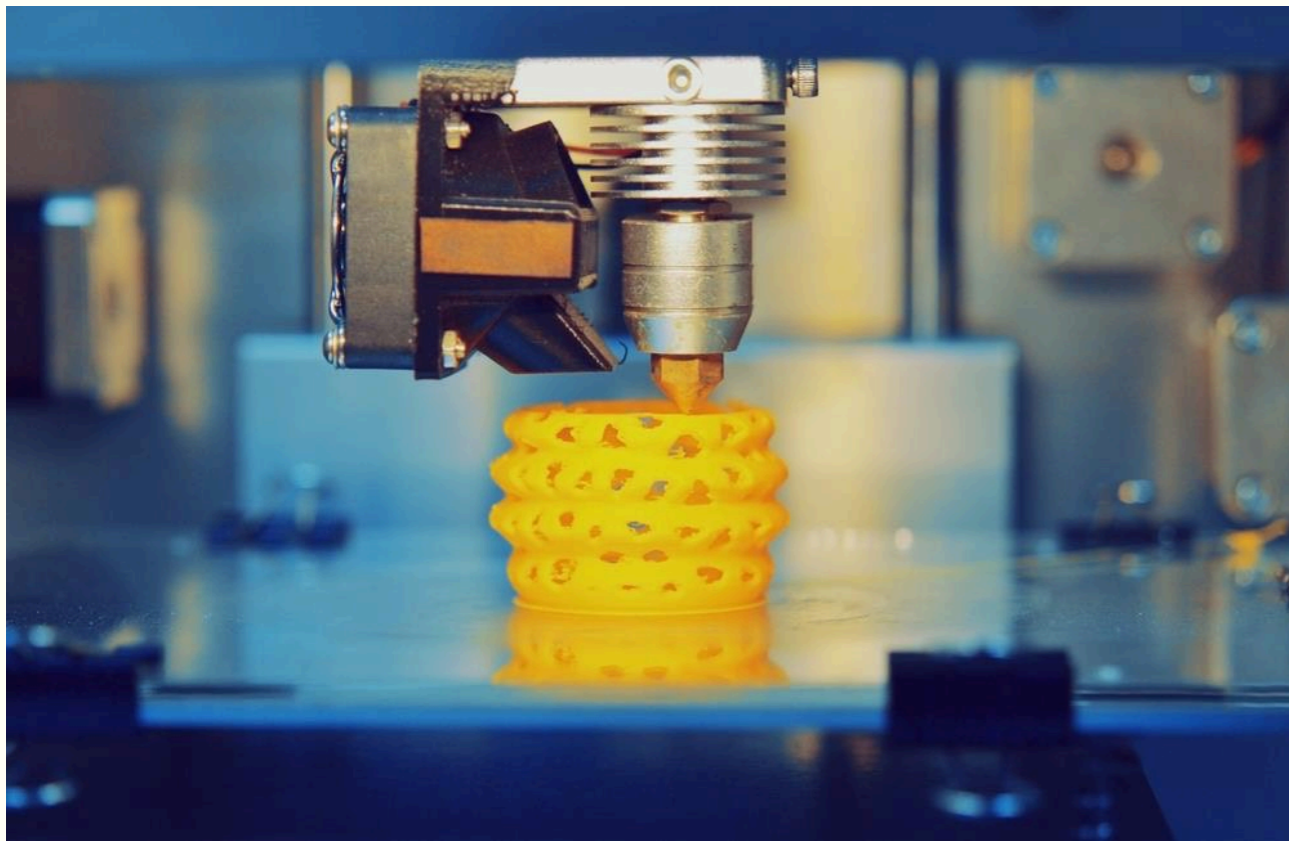


I'm a sci-fi lover, always have been, ever since first watching Star Wars as a kid. One of the things that has always fascinated me most about sci fi is the technology, the weird and way-out gadgets that used to amaze me but that somehow now don't seem so funny or far-fetched anymore.

What if we look forward 40 years from now, where in our wildest dreams might we find ourselves. I encourage everyone who reads this to just take a moment to have a think about this, but for now, focus your thoughts just in terms of procurement and logistics. To start the ball rolling, here are some of my thoughts, wild as they may be.



in future logistics, there will be no need for human involvement, except maybe for the ordering, and even that is questionable. Once an order is placed, the manufacturing of it will be automatically scheduled, and based on this, the transportation schedule will be booked.



Small items will generally be 3D printed directly to a local 3D printer at a delivery store, if you do not have your own printer at home.

For larger items, once manufacturing is completed, specialized material handling machines will ensure that the goods are packed safely for transport, and if containerized, will plan and optimize the container packing, ensuring optimum efficiencies and shorter packing times than can traditionally be achieved by humans. As a benefit of this, damage during packing and transporting will be cut by over 90 per cent.



Consumer goods will all have RFID's (Radio-Frequency Identification) tags installed, while clothing will have it woven into the material, such that it is invisible, meaning that you and all goods can be tracked live at any time.



This also means that it will no longer be necessary to tally the entire contents of a container as an RFID reader will be able to immediately identify not only the contents of the container, but also exactly where each item is, thereby building up an 'image' of the goods in the container immediately, and so making smuggling even more difficult.



Larger items will have tracking and shock monitors with their own modems, meaning that should any jolt or such-like shock happen to the goods while in transit, an immediate alert will be sent advising of this and giving readings of the level, direction and impact of said shock.

These items will be collected by self-loading, autonomous heavy movement vehicles, which will have access to a schematic of the unit in their database, and will be able to automatically set themselves up to lift and safely carry the unit.



Watching the old Star Trek series, it amazes me how much of what was then made up actually exists for real today, from automatic sliding doors, to the handheld communicator (mobile phone) to the handheld measuring devices, all things dreamt up then for a TV show but that have become real today.

In many ways, with the advent of the smartphone era, we have actually started to surpass much of the 1970s' science fiction with reality, and I wonder what would the sci-fi writers of then think if they saw the world of today.