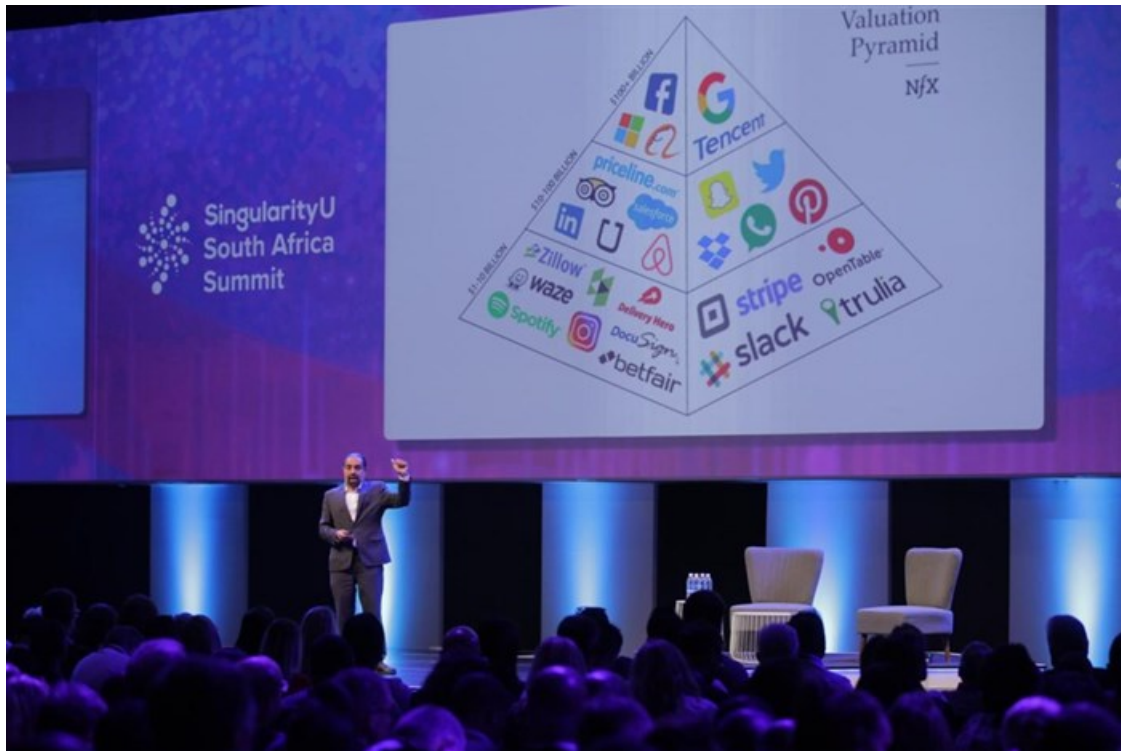


# What happens when the world becomes linked?

*These are the highlights of Ramez Naam's presentation at the SingularityU South Africa 2019 Summit.*



Ramez Naam delivering this presentation at the SingularityU South Africa 2019 Summit. Image supplied.

Before the Singularity, there's something called SYNCularity. Humans are special - we're clever but weak and that's not enough. Our unique ability lies in communication and coordination.

The printing press supercharged our ability to spread ideas across society and that changed everything. Every single invention and piece of technology was only possible because we found ways to supercharge the connection between scientists and innovators.



#SingularityUSouthAfrica2019: AI or death? Redefining what it means to be human in the software age

17 Oct 2019



## The network effect

A supercomputer is not simply a supercomputer – it's a 'superconnector' in our pockets. Data improves exponentially, according to Nielsen's Law. What's more, is that data speeds increase 50x per decade.

Think of Metcalfe's Law – the number of connections in a network is not the same as the number of nodes in a network. The value of a network is a square of the number of users/connections in a network.

Today, there are around 393 startups, worth millions, that are essentially network effect companies – these companies have found a way to build a platform where their users add value to each other.



### Why making mobile data cheaper is vital to kickstarting startup sector

Greg Chen 13 Sep 2019



Ask, are you building a network? The number of people on the internet continues to grow. AI tools and the explosion of data are starting to solve fragmented connections on a global scale.

Tools like Babel and Skype Translator are connecting people across the globe – we can now communicate with each other better than before. Text and speech translation breaks down barriers for those who are not a part of the world's most dominant language groups.

## Be a firestarter

Africa is the least connected continent on Earth but that also means it has the greatest opportunity for new connections. Africa's mobile internet connectivity rates have doubled within four years.

By 2025, two-thirds of Africans will be connected to the Internet using smartphones and data will quadruple. But what is the value of all of this? Additional productivity. This connection will give people the opportunity to do things they couldn't do before.



### AI: The balancing act in developing Africa

25 Jul 2019



Africa's answer lies in adaptive AI algorithms and personalisation. With more data, we can build more accurate AI – something which will be the core for strong businesses going forward. Better datasets mean more improved products so ask yourself – what data are you throwing away?

But there are also societal benefits: from healthcare to agriculture and education, data and AI will be key for connecting and coordinating exponential technology that can fundamentally future-proof Africa and make ourselves, as human beings, better over time.