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On film technology

Film versus digital: many colleagues, and commentators in the press, believe that the delay to embrace digital was what caused the company's decline. To blame digital technology for the failure is a misguided excuse. Many companies made a successful transition from the analog era to the digital age initiated by the invention of the CCD detector. These companies include Canon, Nikon, Leica, and yes, Fuji Film. Although failure to dominate digital technology added to the decline, alongside managerial decisions, I don't think it is as important as the first mistake of the Fisher era. Furthermore, it is relevant to highlight that a successful transition from film to digital would also necessitate a transition from a chemistry based culture to a hardware culture. As a matter of fact, in 1997, I communicated with Fisher cautioning him that electronic hardware was not a strength of Eastman's and that, as a chemical company, it would be preferable to concentrate on the materials side of digital imaging.

Note: molecular imaging, or film technology, or photography, should be around for a long time, for specialized applications in the arts and sciences. This is due to its superior resolution and its unmatched archival qualities. The archival superiority of traditional black and white silver-halide films is an issue almost completely ignored by the mass media and the public. Also, molecular imaging protects the integrity and fidelity of the events being recorded, a feature that has advantages in scientific and legal applications. Parenthetically, it appears that Fuji Film will end up as the sole beneficiary of this American technology.