

BIL And TED Conferences = Excellent Adventure

(Six Pixels of Separation - Marketing and Communications Insights Blog and Podcast - By Mitch Joel at Twist Image)

Submitted at 2/18/2008 3:34:37 PM

How many times do you have that "need to smack myself in the head" feeling for not having thought of an idea?

Well, here we go again.

I'm pretty excited to be heading out to Monterey, California next week to attend my first TED Conference. For those not in the know, drop everything and head over to the TED Talks section of the TED website and deep-dive into some of the most prolific thinkers and speakers of our time. TED happens once-a-year (although lately, they have been introducing more events - like TED Global) in California and only one thousand people are "accepted" to attend (TED is probably more known for the \$6000 price tag than anything else). TED stands for Technology Entertainment and Design. My personal reasons for going blends my eagerness to hear some of the brightest minds, to watch (and learn) how some of the best presenters in the world make it happen, to network and grow my circle of influence, to be inspired, to expand my thinking, and to share some of my thoughts as well. Ultimately, we're in a "World Is Flat" scenario and I'm going to use TED as

my first global community outreach (in the physical sense).

Now, here's the "need to smack myself in the head for not thinking of this" moment. Through my Google Reader Blog feeds, I came across a Robert Scoble Blog post titled, I'm going to "Bil," not TED. It turns out that some smarter-than-me people are running an unconference (like BarCamp and PodCamp) around the same time as TED in Monterey. Here's how the BIL Conference describes themselves, according to the website/wiki:

"BIL loves TED. TED is a great place to sit and listen to interesting ideas. Many of those ideas make it online, and millions get to experience them. The catch for many of us is that TED is \$6,000, which is too expensive for most people, including a great number with good ideas worth spreading. BIL has been created as a free space for people with ideas to come together and share them. Our event is self-organizing, emergent, and anarchic. Nobody is in charge. If you want to come just show up. If you've got an idea to spread start talking. If someone is saying something good, stop and listen. We hope BIL can be a perfect match to TED."

So cool.

Some of the topics already posted for BIL (which stands for Benevolence Instability Level) include: Brainstorming A Vision, How to Be a

Successful Heretic, An Exceptionally Simple Theory of Everything, Hacking the Human Fantastic, Digital Graffiti: Art, Advertizing, and Anarchy, Coworking to Coliving - Digital Utopia?, Darknets - fascist gated associations, or intentional community? and much more. I know, some of these talks sound like they should be at TED.

TED takes place from February 27th - March 1st and BIL happens from March 1st - March 2nd.

If you're going to TED, please do let me know, and if you're interested in checking out BIL, you can sign up here (it's free): BIL Conference - Registration. I'll be attending both. I also just got word from the TED people that Chris Anderson (the Curator or TED and not the same Chris Anderson of The Long Tail and Wired Magazine) was interviewed by Charlie Rose and it will air tonight on PBS (set your DVRs).

Update: you can watch Chris Anderson on Charlie Rose here: Charlie Rose Interviews Chris Anderson from TED.

Tags: barcamp bil conference charlie rose s e c h r i s anderson design entertainment google reader ideas long tail meet up bbs podcamp presentation public speaking robert scoble technology ted conferenced talksthomasmfriedman unconference wiki wired magazineworld is flat

Tend The Farm

(chrisbrogan.com)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 4:29:14 AM

Social networks are a great place to meet people, to connect, to add "friends," and to have conversations. One element that I need to focus on, and that you might consider as well, is how to "tend the farm." As we connect to people, and have a great interaction, we feel good about ourselves and feel that we've made a good new connection. What we do next, often times, is forget to reach out and say hi, and see how the other people are doing.

For one, as our networks grow, it's harder to find time to reach out. For another, we sometimes mistake reading people's blogs and seeing their Twitter stream, or seeing their updates in Facebook as being a connection, but unless you actively comment or say something back, the other person doesn't necessarily know or "feel" that you were there. I'm going to pay attention to tending the farm a little bit, and reaching out to people in my social networks that I maybe haven't said "hi" to in a while. It shouldn't take up TONS of time, and I bet the results will be a nice warm feeling, and potential new adventures. If you want a strong community, tend the farm.

The Costanza Effect - New Thoughts On Old Marketing

(Six Pixels of Separation - Marketing and Communications Insights Blog and Podcast - By Mitch Joel at Twist Image)

Submitted at 2/19/2008 8:03:26 PM

It has to be one of the best episodes of Seinfeld ever (granted, I'd probably say that about every episode), but there is the one where our friend, George Costanza, gives up on (pretty much) everything and decides to do the exact opposite of what he normally does. The punchline is that things start working out for George Boy. In the recent past, I've had the pleasure of speaking to diverse groups of people - from private to public sector and from small business to multi-nationals - and the talking points I'm hearing back are all the same. It happens when I speak, and I hear similar sentiments in client meetings, etc... Whether we're talking Social Media

and Web 2.0 or even in discussions around - what I call - traditional online marketing (Websites, landing pages, micro sites, display advertising, email, search, etc...). "We can't get our heads around it," "what's the ROI?", "are there case studies?"... mostly the conversation revolves around two salient points:

1. Does our company have the right culture to embrace this?
2. Is this guaranteed to work?

Digital Marketing, as it stands, will fail every time with these two barriers. Don't get me wrong, once you embrace and put the time in, the results are there, but I've got some bad news: there are no guarantees, and having Twist Image (or anyone else) build you a website will never change your corporate culture. There's the old business maxim that, "change comes from within."

I'm constantly surprised by a lack of wanting to really push the boundaries when it comes to Marketing,

Communications and these new Digital channels. Part of the sadness comes from the fact that it is pretty easy to dismiss. A simple "there's no proof" or "so and so couldn't make it work" and the ideas are shelved forever. This is not about promoting rugged individualism, but it is about going back to the core of Marketing: communicating a company vision to the masses.

So, when you're sitting in those Marketing and Communications meetings, and someone suggests that the company start a Blog, instead of questioning the culture or looking for some form of guarantee on the ROI, stop yourself. Stop, and think about George Costanza. What if all the options were gone? What if every time you used the judgement you've exercised to date it did not work out? What if you pulled a Costanza and did the exact opposite? What would George Costanza do (hint: sleeping under your desk is not the right

answer).

What do you have to lose? All too often, Marketers worry more about CLMs (Career Limiting Moves) over KPIs (Key Performance Indicators). The Digital Marketing landscape is not that well-manicured yet. The renegades and adventurers are having big wins and gaining uncontested marketshare. The more I see Marketers hesitate when it comes to trying out Marketing initiatives online, the more I want them to watch that specific episode of Seinfeld in hopes that it gets them thinking, and that it doesn't come off as tragic comedy.

Tags: change agent communications corporate blog corporate culture digital marketing george costanzakpi marketing marketing insight marketing philosophy online marketing roise infeld social media twist image web 2.0 website

Why Keynote Speakers Violate PodCamp Rules

(Awaken Your Superhero with Christopher S. Penn)

Submitted at 2/19/2008 5:23:24 AM

I'm pleased to see the ever continuing evolution of PodCamp as a community gathering. It's amazing to see how people adapt PodCamp to fit what's appropriate in their communities and local cultures, and I hope we continue to see new innovations. I wanted to clarify something that occurred to me on the drive into the office this morning:

Keynote speakers are a violation of the PodCamp rules.

Now, the most recent PodCamp to have keynote speakers was PodCamp Nashville, and I want to be perfectly clear this is not saying their event was bad or their organizers did something wrong - they did not, and from those who attended, it sounded like a great PodCamp. This is an opinion and a request going forward.

Here are the Six Rules of PodCamp:

- All attendees must be treated equally. Everyone is a rockstar.

- All content created must be released under a Creative Commons license: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

- All attendees must be allowed to participate. (subject to limitations of

physical space, of course)

- All sessions must obey the Law of 2 Feet - if you're not getting what you want out of the session, you can and should walk out and do something else. It's not like you have to get your money's worth!

- The event must be new-media focused - blogging, podcasting, video on the net.

- The financials of a PodCamp must be fully disclosed in an open ledger, except for any donor/sponsor who wishes to remain anonymous.

The reason why Keynote speakers are a violation of the PodCamp rules relates to rules 1, 3, and 4.

Rule 1. Keynote speakers are by default not equal to other participants. They're placed in a position of prominence above other participants.

Rule 3. Keynote speaker slots are likely not going to be put up for general availability. The whole reason to have a keynote speaker is to select someone special, so it's unlikely that anyone can speak at the keynote.

Rule 4. Keynotes typically have nothing going on alongside of them, which means participants have no other content options, and therefore cannot exercise the Law of 2 Feet.

Of the three rules, #1 is the most important. PodCamp is built on the foundation that all participants are equal.

When Chris Brogan and I set out our own guidelines at the first PodCamp for the UnKeynote, we agreed:

- An introductory statement and welcome by organizers is more than appropriate

- Logistical issues should ALWAYS be presented - restrooms are here, organizers wear this color shirt or this badge so if you need help, grab them

- Thanks for coming to PodCamp
- A reminder that PodCamp is YOUR conference, not ours, and the experience you have is driven solely by participants, not organizers

Like I said at the beginning of this post, this is relatively uncharted territory, but important to address now. No one in the past did anything wrong, but I'd like this guideline to be in the minds of organizers from now on:

Keynote speakers are NOT okay at PodCamps.

What are your thoughts?

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Five Things to Do at a Social Networking Meetup

([chrisbrogan.com])

Submitted at 2/22/2008 5:14:17 AM

Meetups are the online manifestation of our social networking efforts. With Twitter and Upcoming.org and Facebook and all the other social networks, putting together a bunch of like-minded people is relatively simple. You find a venue that doesn't mind a bunch of nerds, preferably with a place you can be loud (because social media types are often the loudest bunch in there, unless there's a bachelorette party), and hopefully some delightful libations to ease social interaction. But what do you DO there, once you've walked in and identified that you're in the right place. Here's a recipe:

Say Hi to Your Known Friends

Often times, someone at the meetup is known to you. Make sure you say hi to them earlier in the night than later. I'm working on this one, because sometimes, what happens is that I'll be somewhere with friends, and never get over to see them because time gets eaten up so fast. I'm going to make a point of saying hi to my longer-known friends first at meetups, so that they feel acknowledged.

Find the New People

Look for folks who might be new to your local scene, or that you haven't met before, and introduce yourself. My favorite opening line is to ask them what they normally do when they're not hanging out with a bunch of Twitter geeks. If that doesn't work, I like to ask people about their passions.

Don't Crowd Surf Too Much

There's a tendency that's easy to follow to just flit between crowds. It's not a wedding. You don't have to hit every table. If you find something interesting, don't be afraid to dive deep into the conversation for a bit. Get into some deeper waters with people, because otherwise, time will wash over you like a wave and you'll be out without much to show for it.

If You Need to Do Business

Try to think of these meetups as a first date. Don't put your tongue down our throats. In other words, if you're there fishing for new business, play it cool, and be part of the gang. Talk about what's relative, and don't swerve things instantly into your line of business and how you can help (sell) us. However, it's okay to say that you're hoping to build business relationships or the like. Just make that for a follow-up conversation.

Talk About Something New

Whenever possible, come with some really neat new idea to throw into the mix. Think of it as mental show and tell. Or hell, do real world show and tell if you've got a nifty new something to show people. But consider bringing something new to the meetup. It will enrich everything. (Don't force it into the conversation, but have something new in mind.)

What do YOU do at meetups to make them better, more interesting, a reflection of the value of real space versus online social networking? Tell us about your favorite meetups, or things that you've seen happen that you liked.

Respect My Authority - Social Media Analytics

(Six Pixels of Separation - Marketing and Communications Insights Blog and Podcast - By Mitch Joel at Twist Image)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 2:43:57 PM

If people like Avinash Kaushik are all excited over the notion of Web Analytics 2.0 and getting beyond the "what are they doing" and into cool metrics like sessions, downloads, actions and other telling ways of seeing who's doing what online, then the individual's presence is bound to be next. Technorati now features a ranking called Technorati Authority (it's been live since May 2007). Here's how the Technorati Weblog explains Technorati Authority in their Blog posting entitled, Technorati Authority And Rank:

"Technorati Authority is the number of blogs linking to a website in the last six months. The higher the number, the more Technorati Authority the blog has."

It all matters, and it's getting more important by the day... and here's why:

Have you even been added by someone on twitter, and when you look at their profile the people following them is one-fifth the size of

people they are following? Has someone ever told you about a Blog, and when you look it up on Technorati, it has a very low Technorati Authority rating? You check out a Podcast and there are no audio comments? You are asked to friend someone on Facebook, and you're suddenly bombarded with event requests and messages that are not for you? You connect to someone on LinkedIn and now your inbox becomes nothing short of headhunter spam?

Being able to see a Blog's Technorati Authority or looking at how many followers someone has on twitter is, definitely, the new web analytics that count. In a world where a "friend" means many different things to different people, we're all becoming less and less concerned with how many people are coming to our Websites, and more and more concerned with who they are (and how connected they are).

We all make snap judgements on people (their Personal Brands) based on who's connected to them, and what the Wisdom of Crowds thinks about that particular individual. Odds are that you won't be adding someone on twitter if they have not displayed value in their content, and if they are

following everybody but nobody is following them.

Social Media web analytics are being run by people like you and I with a quick scan of our eyes (and no need for tethered technology). It could well be the most important (and powerful) metric Marketers need to think about when they begin looking at new Digital Marketing initiatives. They'll also have to focus not just on who they would like to connect to, but in this new world of transparency, how they are perceived in the social channels as well.

The best part? These types of web analytics have little to do with math, science or technology and everything to do with how one person connects to the rest of the world.

After watching my habits online with this thought in my brain, I have a new-found love for Eric Cartman's infamous line from South Park, "respect my authority."

Tags: analytics avinash kaushik blogger icartmanfacebooklinkedinlinkingmeasurementonline social networkpersonal brandpodcastsocial mediasouth parktechnologytechnorati transparency twitter web 2.0 web analytics web analytics 2.0 wisdom of crowds

Chip Griffin Launches Media Disruption

([chrisbrogan.com])

Submitted at 2/21/2008 4:10:56 AM

Superstar media maker, epicurean, lunar photographer, and all-around great guy Chip Griffin announced yesterday the launch of his new

property, Media Disruption. Just like Chip says, it makes sense. He loves media. He loves the notion of disruption. Let's get hitched. Congrats to Chip and Eaglon publishing.

Join the Conversation Book Review Quick

(Awaken Your Superhero with Christopher S. Penn)

Submitted at 2/18/2008 10:36:20 AM

Joseph Jaffe was kind enough to send me a review copy of his latest book, *Join the Conversation*. It's a really, really LONG book, weighing in at 300 pages. I managed to get through it in about two weeks of sporadic reading.

The Good

- The book has plenty of case studies and examples of conversational marketing. Everything from Fedex Furniture to Virtual Thirst.

- Jaffe writes in a similar style to Seth Godin - short sentences in second person voice, so it's easy reading.

- Standalone text units mean you can pick up and put down the book easily.

The Bad

- If you like books to flow, this isn't it. Each unit of text practically stands alone. If you're accustomed to more of a story, this book is, as Mitch Joel put it, like a series of blog posts.

- There are almost too many case

reviews and not enough actionable plans.

- Whoever did the font typesetting needs to be slapped around. There are WAY too many fonts, so many that it's distracting.

Overall

It's hard to actually review this book because it's in sort of a grey zone for me. Is it a good introduction to conversational marketing? Not really, at least not for the beginner, because there are very few clear takeaways or plans to begin implementation. For the advanced new media marketer, the book doesn't break a lot of new ground in ways you can disrupt the marketplace with marketing - it's more of a series of case studies than it is a blueprint for your next marketing Death Star.

Join the Conversation is probably best suited as an idea book - the kind of book you pick up from time to time when you need to leaf through a few examples to generate ideas. Get inspiration from how people have done things or glean lessons from how NOT to do things based on

missteps of the past.

Would I recommend it? If you're at the journeyman stage of new media marketing, I think *Join the Conversation* is a worthy addition to your bookshelf. For those who haven't played Sid Meier's *Pirates!*, that's the second of four stages:

- Apprentice (and not Donald Trump's kind)
- Journeyman
- Adventurer
- Swashbuckler

Join the Conversation fits for those no longer new to new media marketing, but haven't developed an arsenal of their own yet. It's also probably too long for most executives to plow through, except maybe in audiobook format, but it's still a good resource if you're needing inspiration for your new media marketing campaign.

Join the Conversation is available for sale here on Amazon. (disclosure: 5% commission goes to my employer, the Student Loan Network)

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look: the Nokia n810

(Awaken Your Superhero with Christopher S. Penn)

Submitted at 2/20/2008 6:05:10 AM

I'd been hearing a lot of buzz about this little machine ever since Podshow's sponsorship of it with a few prominent podcasters I listen to, like CC Chapman and Julien Smith. Yesterday I got to play with one of the boxes, courtesy of Peta Andersen, and I think one of these is in my future soon.

Why?

Take a look at this picture. What do you see?

That's an n810, and it's running terminal.

The n810 is a Linux box. Yes, it comes with all the shiny applets and stuff, but it also comes with a Linux distribution called Maemo. Maemo makes the n810 a big deal because it's a variant of Debian Linux, and that means you get a command line. Poking around a little more, that terminal is running bash, and apt-get is installed on there.

apt-get, if you're unfamiliar with Debian Linux, is a package manager that lets you download and install packages from the command line. To install, say, wget, you'd type apt-get install wget when you're online and the service would do the rest.

Why is this a big deal? Unlike my iPod Touch, which I still love, the n810 is a true portable computer. The existence of a bash shell and apt-get means that I can run most of my marketing software (a lot of the stuff I do is on the command line on my Mac, such as wget, perl, bash scripts, etc.) from a microcomputer in my pocket. That plus a large, tactile keyboard makes this little device a winner.

Now if only I could get a better price than \$400...

If you're a podcaster promoting your show's coupon codes, you are welcome to post the codes in the comments.

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One Year Later

(Chrisbrogan.com)

Submitted at 2/19/2008 9:23:57 PM

Something, and I forget what it was, made me want to go back and look at what I was blogging last year at this time. I thought, "Hmm, what was going on back then? What was I writing? How would it hold up today?" So, here are a few posts, with a few opening lines from each. You tell me.

Things to Do After a Conference

I'm freshly back from PodCamp Toronto, and I've learned that there are a lot of things to do. Basically, what I did was put together all the technological ties to people I met socially throughout the event. And with Video on the Net on the way in 3 weeks, I thought I'd share the list of things I got done after I got home.

Full post.

How MySpace is Broken

Near as I can tell, what you're supposed to do on MySpace is set up your space, build your profile, and then go find friends. If you squint, it's

like you're fixing up your bedroom, and then inviting "friends" over to your room to check it out. They can see the posters on the walls, your pics, sniff through your record collection, or watch TV (the MySpace Movies).

Full post.

Community and Rockstars

Community doesn't stop at the conference. One thing my boss, Jeff Pulver understands deeply and tries hard to communicate is that community is what drives a conference, not the other way around. We saw this yesterday, and into last night.

Full post.

Your Show Itself is Not the Money Maker

One of the common go-around questions in new media (podcasting, blogging, etc) is how one "monetizes" their podcast. How do I make money for my efforts? I see this as a topic at EVERY PodCamp, including Toronto. It's a valid question.

Full post.

Who Wins the Revolution

I asked a question on Twitter that went something like this: Not counting Warhol, are the people who EMPOWER the revolution ever as remembered as those who LEAD the revolution?

Full post.

Two Years Ago

Just for fun, here are a few posts from two years ago.

Free Technology Everywhere

Do you, uh, Del.icio.us?

Feeds of C.B.C hit 50!

Not Free Agents- Guild Members

Three Years Ago

Three years ago, it was mostly about fitness and nutrition, but I liked this one:

The Lessons We Learn

And Now, in 2008

I'm still doing my bit to communicate what's interesting, what I think is important, and what might help YOU move your community along. Thanks for your attention. It means the world to me.

What metrics matter to podcasters?

(Awaken Your Superhero with Christopher S. Penn)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 5:33:38 AM

A recent question sent into Marketing Over Coffee - what metrics matter for podcasters to measure their success, ala the ADM?

Ultimately, traffic metrics are only the top of the funnel - they're the raw number of eyeballs in, and that in itself isn't worth much except for general trends.

No matter what statistic you use - file downloads, Feedburner numbers, etc. the main value of basic traffic statistics is trend growth - does your show have more audience this month

than last month? Does your show have more audience this year than last year, and what kind of growth are you looking at - 1%? 5%? 50%?

It's more important to use a consistent growth metric than a standardized one - if you consistently measure on Feedburner numbers, then you have a baseline to measure growth. If you consistently use files downloaded with status code 200 from Apache, you can measure based on that.

Having two statistics - Feedburner + Apache - is good for ensuring that trends are consistent. If Apache completed downloads are radically different than Feedburner numbers,

you need to investigate why. Is it a spambot scraping your content? Is it people listening straight off the web site without a download? If metrics matter, your chosen benchmarks should move in tandem - 10% growth in Apache is 10% growth in Feedburner.

I think it's vitally important for podcasters to also chart out their funnels, even for shows with nothing to sell. For example, Marketing Over Coffee right now doesn't have a revenue model per se, at least in the sense of a widget for sale. But we do have conversion metrics we want to examine - blog comments, subscribers to the feed, etc. and

rolling forward, we're almost certainly going to put out a newsletter. We may even be able to measure our success by speaking gigs, etc., but unless you're living in a CPM advertising world, eyeballs and ears don't count for much.

The Student Loan Network measures the Financial Aid Podcast by both growth of the house list and loan volume - two very clear, revenue-generating sales metrics. Those count for a lot more than eyeballs and ears.

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Sometimes, the responsible choice is walking away

(Awaken Your Superhero with Christopher S. Penn)

Submitted at 2/19/2008 6:03:03 PM

I read with dismay this story on MSNBC about people breaking into their retirement funds to pay for housing and other debts they've accrued.

Now, understand that I work for a financial institution, a lending company. It is in my short term interest and financial welfare to recommend that people should always pay their debts, and for the most part, if you have the ability to repay, you should.

However, in cases like the story above, sometimes the responsible thing is to walk away.

Which is worse?

- Declare bankruptcy, default on your loans, and take a 7 year hit in which you pretty much are cut out of the lending world?

- Deplete your retirement, default on your loans anyway, and not only take a 7 year hit on credit, but also be

wholly dependent on welfare and charity for the last 20 years of your life?

Which is worse?

The logical conclusion, the business conclusion, is to walk away from your debts. Don't think that businesses don't make that decision every day. Sallie Mae (ticker:SLM) lost a deal with JC Flowers - they walked away. There were consequences, but the consequences of walking away were weighed by JC Flowers and they decided that walking away made the most financial sense.

There's a culture encouraged by financial institutions that there's a moral penalty for walking away, and that moral pressure is one of the many forces used by companies to keep individuals in obligations, whether or not they have the ability to repay.

Here's the problem with that. It's short term thinking. For the citizens

in the MSNBC story, it is in my long term interests as a taxpaying citizen of the United States for that borrower to walk away. Companies come and go, but that citizen, if he depletes his retirement, will be dependent on me and others for a subsistence lifestyle. Just as he's trading his future for the present, so are financial institutions trading America's future for the present if they continue to encourage debt holdings by consumers who simply cannot pay and will not be able to pay.

Conclusion: if you're a financial institution with a consumer who cannot repay, that loan is going to decay sooner or later anyway. (unless it's a student loan which can never be forgiven or written off by the consumer) Write it off now, preserve that citizen's retirement and savings, and help them be able to buy your services later on down the road. Think long term, think big picture. ShareThis

Questions from the Street

(Ronin Marketeer)

Submitted at 2/13/2008 4:03:11 AM

As part of the ooVoo project Charlie had a few questions that we weren't able to get around to, but they were great so I wanted to throw them (and my two cents, of course) out there...

Where the Big 3 are wasting their marketing dollars (Or teaching Goliath new tricks).

It's not as much wasting dollars as underfunding the riskier things that have the opportunity for huge returns. Seth Godin has written a lot of stuff about "The Safe Route" being the riskiest possible path. Media continues to fragment - Newspapers and 30-second spots continue to lose power. Find your social niche now, start a blog, shoot some YouTube production level video, actually talk to people.

Is the Tipping Point Toppled? (re: Fast Company article)

My friend John Blue brought this up this weekend also, my response: Yeah, Watts stuff is interesting but I think he's 1) building a platform around being contrary and 2) severely underestimating the power of the connectors - in tech circles Engadget is much more than 40 times more powerful than the average chump. I'd bump it up by an order of magnitude and see if his model sticks. That and I think you have to rate the content itself - He hits a home run talking about having a hard time getting "some company's shitty product" to go viral...

Web 2.0 for beginners (How to dip your toe in the brave new world of the web)

I'd recommend David Meerman Scott to go in depth and for a quick read, Chris Brogan's new ebook.

So the real question is "Do I have any original thoughts of my own?" tune in tomorrow for my reviews of the remixes on the Michael Jackson Thriller 25th anniversary edition.

Common Sense Is Not So Common... Especially When It Comes To Advertising

(Six Pixels of Separation - Marketing and Communications Insights Blog and Podcast - By Mitch Joel at Twist Image)

Submitted at 2/20/2008 6:35:20 PM

According to Wikiquote, the saying, "common sense is not so common" is attributed to the French Writer and Philosopher, François-Marie Arouet (also known as Voltaire). I find myself thinking about that quote a lot lately. I also catch myself picking up the book Purple Cow by Seth Godin frequently to inspire some newer thoughts I've had on the power of branding and building your own Personal Brand.

There's something esoteric about Branding. No matter how hard a company tries to "create" a brand, the ultimate shared experience by the mass public is, truly, what the brand

is. Funny enough, when it comes to Advertising, that rule does not hold true. I believe that to be the reason we're constantly inundated with "better, brighter, whiter, faster"-type of messaging.

Wouldn't common sense tell us that the easiest way to account all of this bad advertising (henceforth known as "badvertising") is to create products and services that are easily believable?

What if advertising did the same thing?

There's no chance we can solve the badvertising problem in one Blog posting, but what would Marketing, Communications, Advertising and Public Relations look like if it focused solely on bringing forward an easily believable message about easily believable products and services?

People who had a need for that

product or service would flock to it. And, they would be loyal... forever. Which is the reasoning why Marketers exist in the first place. Advertising needs to transform in this new world of transparency and authenticity. It needs to move beyond snake-oil, and into a place where it's doing what it was intended to do - communicating what a product or service does. The "why you need to care" or "benefits" will be self-evident.

They will be obvious.

It does seem like common sense. Then again, you know what they say about common sense.

Tags:advertisingauthenticitybadvertisingingbrandcommon sensecommunicationsfrancois-mariearouetloyaltymarketingpersonal brandpublic relationspurple cowseth godintransparencyvoltairewikiquote

The State of Video Conferencing - The ooVoo Experiment

(Ronin Marketeer)

Submitted at 2/18/2008 7:52:03 PM

Tonight I just wrapped up my 7th and final ooVoo session (thanks to Sherman and Sean for a great chat). Just in case you missed it, ooVoo allows video conferencing for up to 6 people with audio for free. If you are familiar with Skype and have done video chat there, add 4 more people and you get the idea.

As far as best practices:

- Insist that all

callers use headsets or earphones. Sound coming out of PC speakers that can hit the mic will cause an echo that can mess up the audio for everyone.

- Have some serious bandwidth, a solid 100kpbs per user on the call is a good place to start.

- As moderator you must keep control of the call - introduce topics and call out to bring everyone into the conversation. I also attended 4 other sessions and Steve Hall did a great

job of keeping a call moving and I've tried to steal some of his style.

- Have your topics listed before the call begins - treat it more like a meeting than a casual conversation. Have an agenda and topics ready to go.

The best part of it for me was to have more of a two way conversation, you get instant feedback and it's much easier to learn from others. On the down side, limiting the conversation

to 6 creates a smaller overall audience. One thing I might like to try is to get a panel of 6 that can work well together and record it for release as a video podcast. I think it might be able to work if you had the right group of people.

Overall it was a great project, I'd definitely use video chat again in the future.

Five Levels of Social Conversation

(Chris Brogan.com)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 5:15:50 AM

Friend, deep thinker, and prolific email friend, Bill Cammack and I were talking about how people use things like Seesmic and other media to make conversations. I told him my theory that I like to believe there are five general categories of conversation out there. Bill asked me if I'd blogged about it, so here it is.

Five Levels of Social Conversation
I believe there are roughly five levels at which we communicate on tools like Seesmic or Utterz or Twitter (to a lesser extent):

- My Dog Has Fleas - baseline social conversation. No different than what would be said in line at a grocery store, and not usually that interesting.
- Let's Talk About X - conversation, but hit or miss on real insight.
- Hacks and Energy - lots of good stuff, still a little hit or miss, but

Ads or No

(Chris Brogan.com)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 2:30:00 PM

Advertising is such a strange beast. I've been asked by many people why I'm not running ads of any kind on my site. I remember the conversation on Robert Scoble's blog. Lots of people have had this same conversation, and lots of them have reached different decisions. My own mind isn't made up.

Next week, I'm speaking at the Affiliate Summit with people much smarter than me. I'll also have the chance to meet with people know LOTS more about advertising than

with more engaged/engaging types. (Not sure why I call it hacks, but I mean when you suddenly get into a bit of fast energy flow).

- Production - people who understand the medium and are "making" something, but who aren't into conversation, per se. (like Internet TV shows.)
- Serious and Deep - rarest of the rare.

Most of my conversations probably fall into 2 and 3. Sometimes I produce something, too, but not so often. Am I serious and deep on the web? Not usually in video.

What do you think? Am I missing anything? Is this silly? Thanks for the email, Bill. I'll reply on that a little later.

Photo credit, Bill Cammack.

me. I'm hoping to ask them for their thoughts and insights.

But what about you? I'm thinking that I might want to put a few ads on my site. I'd want them to be relevant to my community. I'd want them to reflect things I believe you might actually WANT to know about. But does that cheapen our relationship? There are ads in the New York Times. There are ads in Fast Company. But there aren't normally ads in our discussions.

Your opinion matters a great deal to me on this one.

Photo Credit, Zach Klein

Power Of Promotional Books

(Dan Kennedy)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 5:13:15 AM

I'm not sure if there is a more powerful marketing tool than your own book.

Books carry with them credibility, a certain amount of celebrity, much higher readership than sales letters or brochures. Nutritional companies, newsletter publishers, and all sorts of businesses have discovered the power of this tool. Certainly, for speakers, seminar leaders, consultants, and marketers of information products, it

is indispensable.

A promotional book is usually made to look like a "real" book in every way, down to the most minute detail, but in content is really a "set up" of its author as the expert to do business with. Sometimes it is relatively subtle; sometimes the book is little more than a long sales letter in between the covers of the book.

To view all of the profit producing and wealth creation resources go to www.glazerkennedywebstore.com

Mind Bending Use of Twitter

(Ronin Marketeer)

Submitted at 2/21/2008 4:34:37 PM

Twitter invites keep coming in. I have a normal routine, I click through and see who the person is. Anybody with more followers than they are following is fine with me. If you are equal or have 100+ more, it depends on if I know or like you, a highly subjective test.

Then there are the Spitters (Spam Twitters) who are following 2,000 people and have 3 followers. Those go to the junk bin.

Until today.

I got an invite from 5min_tech, and

they follow 2,000 more than follow them. I was about to relegate them to the clearing at the end of the path, until I read the tweets:

How to boost firefox speed? How to buy a computer? How to make flaming logos in Photoshop?

All things that, when flowing through my river of tweets, I might be interested in. Or at least more interesting than "Watch a sock puppet endorse ooVoo. Seriously!"

They got by the rules and defenses by giving some value to the customer - let that marinate for a while (a la Clarence).

Trade Show Secrets

(Ronin Marketeer)

Submitted at 2/20/2008 6:27:22 PM

- Keep a first aid kit in the crates - it's not a show without somebody bleeding at some point

- A bottle of scotch is good too - a painkiller, and it can be traded to get your cases back after the show

- Arrive a day early to set up, already have the address to Home Depot in your GPS

- Always Advance Ship to the Warehouse

- Bring a box cutter but always keep

it in the show cases, bring it to the airport and your next prostate exam might be at Git'mo

- Packing Tape, Black Sharpie, Flash Drive with soft copies of all show collateral

- Get your bill of lading 3 hours before closing if possible

- Bring a tape measure, you can use that with the duct tape and knife to snake power under your carpet

- Order the padding

- Staffing adequately beats good shoes

Return of the Creepy Stalker

(Ronin Marketeer)

Submitted at 2/17/2008 1:38:22 PM

A little more than a month back I wrote a post about how to get the most out of social networking events. Chip Griffin from Media Bullseye asked me to beef it up a bit and the new, updated version is up. Learn how to network like a pro over at Media Bullseye.