

Viget Engage : The Marketing Lab

<http://www.viget.com/engage/>

Google Buzz - Check it Out

Have you played with this yet? It's sort of like Twitter + Facebook + FourSquare / Gowalla. Interesting concept, it's built on the back of the "like" and "share" integration with Google Reader that was introduced awhile back.

http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/W0_A3IZMDUI/

MSM: ?I said No!? or at least I tried (with a little help from the Beatles)

This month's [Middle School Marketing](#) was a discussion on saying "no" to clients. It's probably not surprising that individuals from professional services firms were the most vocal/passionate contributors to the conversation. It was an interesting time to have the discussion - the start of a new year and on the heels of financially challenging times, which have impacted all of our companies in one way or another.

"Try to see it my way. Do I have to keep on talking 'til I can't go on?"

The concept of "no" or maybe more often times, getting a client to say "yes" is complex in the marketing/design arena for myriad reasons. Here were some of the big points of discussion/takeaways:

First off, [go enjoy The Beatles](#).

"Think of what you're saying. You can get it wrong and still you think that it's alright"

The language of marketing has many dialects. As marketers and creatives, we need to speak the language of a varied client audience. A client contact that is automatically on the same page is rare, so if we want to be compelling in rationale for certain initiatives or decisions, we need to be well versed in Sales, CEO and CFO. You will get "no" more times than not from contacts that don't understand what's in it for them.

"While you see it your way"

Clients may have distinct opinions about what they want that don't mesh with your sense of what is best. Those with distinct opinions likely brought you in to execute and may not be that interested in your opinion. You may get more latitude as the relationship progresses (or maybe you never will), but you need to be comfortable that your company's reputation is associated with the work.

[Josh Chambers](#) blogged about and initiated [Taco Bell's "Drive-thru Diet"](#) as a likely example of a creative situation where push back was clearly warranted and in even greater likelihood was not an option for the executives behind this campaign.

"Think of what I'm saying. We can work it out and get it straight, or say goodnight"

On the opposite spectrum, many clients are really looking for our expertise and confidence in counsel and it's our job to make sure they get it. "No," realistically, is rarely an option. What is an option is presenting well thought out validation for why you believe in a certain decision, and then executing it with precision and passion OR doing your best to steer your client down the path of success when you've come to a compromise on an alternate idea.

"Run the risk of knowing that our love may soon be gone"

Being a good steward of a client's money is paramount. Sometimes "no" comes in the form of being very clear about the financial output/reward or being candid about services that the client is just not ready for. Similarly when a decision to end a client relationship is made, it's critical to respect the money that has already been invested and set the client up for a smooth transition and best opportunity for future success.

"Life is very short, and there's no time for fussing and fighting my friends"

We also discussed the internal politics of business development and client services team. BD teams work hard to get new clients in and client teams work hard to service accounts. Seems pretty simple until a client relationship goes wrong. It can seem logical to an account team to pull the "fire them" card, while the BD stresses about how to replace that revenue. Some of us have experienced scenarios of toxic client relationships that cause weight gain, tears, sleepless nights, and have the serious impact of creating negative employee morale. Of course it makes sense to sunset those relationships, but even in very black and white instances, a thoughtful process needs to be followed and can take time. It's important for BD and service teams to work together to identify the "right" kind of clients that have the best chance for success, which often hinges on an alignment of agency and client values and culture.

"We can work it out, we can work it out"

At the end of the day, we all want what's good for our clients and employees. While there are examples of blissful agency/client relationships — most are just that — relationships, requiring strong communication, compromise and yes, sometimes, "no."

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/chj-zaRGrP8/>

What Advertisers and Hipsters Have in Common

Both are super into raising awareness about stuff that others need to be made aware of Both love blue-collar work. Neither have done more than three minutes of it Both recycle other people's creativity and pawn it off as their own Both love their low necklines - especially the dudes Both are 100% incapable of being swayed by advertising Both suck at parties - one won't shutup, one won't talk Both like old crap, but neither have any idea why Both could do a better job at whatever it is you're talking about They're the first person to hear about everything that you have ever heard of Both love something more than life itself until someone else finds about it. Then, they are both really, really over it Both spend enough on coffee (organic coffee, mind you) to feed a small nation "What's that Apple thing called again? Yeah, that. I love that thing" Giant, black rimmed glasses are a requirement. Prescriptions are optional Both love the idea of smoking Both use as many large words as possible (especially "post-modern"). Neither know what those words mean (especially "post-modern") Somehow or another, both wear New Balance's. This still befuddles me Both care about the environment so much they watched "An Inconvenient Truth"

And for the record, I probably fall into both of these categories, making me the worst person alive.

http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/Uw_T2iaZBAk/

Brand Focus: What Taco Bell is Teaching Us

You've seen the "Drive-Thru Diet" commercials from Taco Bell, right? It's a perfect example of what happens when a company loses its [brand focus](#). What is it that people love about Taco Bell? Words like "late night," "delicious," and "guilty pleasure" come to mind. According to Zeta Buzz, the most common words surrounding Taco Bell in the online space were once "favorite," "delicious," and "love." ([AdAge source](#)). Then the Drive-Thru Diet happened.

A Lack of Brand Focus

A company that has brand focus knows what it's good at, and what it's not. Taco Bell has never been about healthy food or dieting, and by introducing the concept of "dieting" into this brand you're asking it to be something it isn't. As [Jim Collins](#) puts it in his book [Good to Great](#), "Focusing solely on what you can potentially do better than any other organization is the only path to greatness."

"Dieting" is not the path to greatness for Taco Bell.

Furthermore, by putting the spotlight on health and dieting, Taco Bell is practically begging customers to dwell on, and comment on, the weakest part of their business (the part that destroys arteries).

The Sleeping Giant Awakens

In the aftermath of this new initiative, the most popular words surrounding Taco Bell are now "fat," "joke," and "stop." ([AdAge source](#)).

[The Taco Bell YouTube channel](#) hosts the above video, and the results are telling.

Two star rating Ratings have now been disabled 127 comments and I can't find one comment on the video that isn't scathingly critical (haven't looked at every one though). It's really harsh: Fast food companies are so evil. Shame on you Taco Bell!! Wow, total bullshit This is? THE BIGGEST JOKE ever- No wonder most Americans are walking around obese and riddled with disease. Seriously!?!?!

Did customers suddenly awake from their grease induced coma? Did they just realize Taco Bell is unhealthy? I don't think so. I'm pretty sure customers knew that all along. The problem here is that customers thought Taco Bell knew that too.

It Feels Dishonest

Perhaps the new Taco Bell Fresco menu isn't terribly unhealthy; but this just looks dishonest. Everyone is jumping on the health band wagon, the ad is littered with fine print, and the before and after photos look like a bad banner ad. Regardless of it's validity, it just doesn't feel honest. Customers now feel like Taco Bell is trying to pull the ol' switcheroo.

It Discredits Advertising

I hesitate to criticize another agency's work, and I hesitate even more to call it "harmful to advertising", but I can't get around it. This type of advertising is what gives the industry a bad rap. Ridiculous claims about weight loss, partial truths, fine print, and capitalizing on a bandwagon movement. Not to mention the fact that it looks an awful lot like the Jared campaign from Subway.

The Lesson

Big companies keep learning the hard way. When you lose brand focus, when you try to be something you're not, your customers will notice. Back in the day, the extent of their "noticing" took the form of complaining to a few friends. Now, however, they have a giant digital megaphone to hold companies accountable.

Taco Bell could have avoided this whole thing by recognizing what they're good at and sticking with it.

If nothing else, they could have just made a campaign that had a more realistic vibe: "Yeah, you might want a slightly healthier version of fake Mexican food, so here it is." Maybe customers would have been ok with that. But, when you claim to be a company who condones dieting and you insinuate customers could lose 50lbs by eating food that has made a name for itself by being anything but healthy, you've lost your brand focus, and

you've lost customers.

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/DJw7gMaEfr4/>

Our Favorite (45) iPhone Apps of 2009

Those of us who have iPhones had a few favorite apps over the last year (I sort of count, I got mine at the end of the year, but I've been living vicariously for quite some time now). We laughed, we cried, we sang, we shot each other. While some of our favorites are new in 2009, some of them are oldies-but-goodies that keep getting better. I thought I'd share the list with you. As a point of full disclosure (because, as you know, bloggers are transparent), I haven't used every single one of these apps (almost every one, though), but someone here has! Enjoy!

Non-Games

[AllRecipes](#) - Free

Great recipe app with filtering, a nifty feature called "Spinner" that "spins" up recipes by shaking your phone, and the ability to save favorites.

[Convertbot](#) - \$0.99

Never before has converting numbers been so beautiful and fun.

[Delivery Status Touch](#) - \$2.99

Track packages via shipment carriers and stores. Also, check your packages location on a map.

[Epicurious](#) - Free

Do I even need to explain this one? Recipes! Smooth interface, favorite-ing ability, and a shopping list integration.

[Evernote](#) - Free

Create notes, sync your notes, access your notes - and it accepts notes of all media types.

[Flickit](#) - \$0.99

Great Flickr uploader with a nice Twitter integration.

[Flickr](#) - Flickr

It is what you'd think it is. Some like it, some like third party apps like "Flickit" a bit better.

[Foursquare](#) - Free

Track where you visit, and your friends. Unlock badges, compete with your friends, and become the "Mayor". Businesses are even offering deals to people who check in frequently. Really fun!

[Gowalla](#) - Free

Similar to Foursquare, track the places you visit most. Also, track your friend's whereabouts, find items, and unlock pins. Beautiful design.

[Grocery Gadget](#) - Free & \$4.99

Create grocery lists and sync via the cloud with others. My wife adds something on her phone, I see it on mine. Also, it learns the order you go through the store and rearranges your list accordingly.

[Instapaper](#) - Free & \$4.99

Use a Safari bookmarklet to save websites to read later, syncs automatically to the iPhone and a few other apps also.

[Kindle](#) - Free

The famous Amazon reader on the iPhone.

[Knocking](#) - Free

Stream live video one-to-one with anyone who has the app. Look for this genre of apps to take off in the near future.

[Locavore](#) - \$2.99

Amazing way to measure your environmental impact through eating. Tells you what food is local, where it's coming from, and where your closest farmers market is. Also, really nice design.

[Mint](#) - Free

Mint continues to shine with efficiency, a great UI, and a fun way of tracking your finances. Tag your purchases on the go and view your budget. Also, it has an additional security pass-code option.

[Next Train DC Metro](#) - \$0.99

There are a few apps out there for the DC Metro, but this one is pretty cool. It provides next train information, maps, and a snazzy augmented reality integration to find the closest metro stop.

[Now Playing](#)

Love this app. Shows you new cinema releases, the latest DVDs, trailers, and all with a wonderfully integrated Rotten Tomatoes score. Also, it flawlessly integrates with Netflix.

[NYC Subway](#) - \$2.99

For our [favorite NYC employee](#) - displays alerts, subway maps, and a Google Map mashup.

[OpenTable](#) - Free

Book your reservation with OpenTable's iPhone app. It's been around for awhile, but it's still great.

[Outside](#) - \$2.99

A simple weather app for those of us who care about how the app looks. Super simple with fun animations and gestures.

[Reeder](#) - \$2.99

For those of you who aren't a big fan of the Google Reader interface, Reeder provides a desktop integration for Google Reader.

[RunKeeper](#) - Free & \$9.99

Uses GEO location to keep track of your runs. A cheaper (and some people claim "better") alternative to Nike+.

[Shazam](#) - Free

Does anyone not yet know what this is? It magically hears a song and tells you what it is. Magic.

Skype

We still love it! Ahtough, I can't seem to find it in the iTunes store right now...very strange.

[Slacker Radio](#) - Free

An alternative to Last.FM and Pandora, this has a few extra tweaks that make it just the right fit for some of us.

[Stitcher Radio](#) - Free

This actually pulls in real radio (yes, it still exists). Listen to NPR...or...ummm...annoying loud people in the morning.

[Tiltshift Generator](#) - \$0.99

For the photo lovers, Tiltshift Generator generate fake depth-of-field effects on your photos.

[TouchPad](#) \$3.99

This is a late contender, but it basically allows you to manage your Mac via your iPhone. It's incredibly powerful, but tough to describe. Check it out.

[Triplt](#) (Free) & [FlightTrack Pro](#) - \$9.99

If you're not using Triplt, you're really missing out. Triplt has a free and paid app (much like their free and paid service) and both make traveling much, much better.

[TweetDeck](#) - Free

One of our favorite Twitter apps - when it's not hogging all the memory.

[Tweetie](#) - \$2.99

This gets the most votes from Viget peoples.

[Twitterrific](#) - Free & \$4.99

And yet another (free) Twitter app we enjoy.

[UrbanDaddy](#) - Free

Through a series of filters and questions, UrbanDaddy helps you determine where you should go next (food & drink related). Pretty cool idea, and a great example of [branded utility](#).

[WhatsApp](#) - \$0.99

Love! It's free texting/chatting with push notifications, theme customization, and full MMS capabilities. It integrates flawlessly with your contacts, and has a super smooth interface.

[Whiteboard Capture Pro](#) - \$2.99

If you find yourself whiteboarding quite a bit, this app helps take photos of those whiteboards that are actually legible.

[WootOn!](#) - Free

If you're into impulse purchasing, this is your app! If not, the descriptions are always hilarious.

Games

[Canabalt](#) - \$0.99

Addicting game in which you have to jump your way to freedom. Decent music too.

[Fieldrunners](#) - \$2.99

This thing won more awards than I can count (I can't count very high). It calls itself the "Tetris and Bejeweled of the Tower Defense genre" whatever that means.

[FlightControl](#) - \$0.99

This game is so addicting. Land aircraft on runways while listening to your iPod music (or, go with sounds off). Amazing.

[MaxInjury](#) \$0.99

Take a crash test dummy to its limit by knocking him around. Sounds violent...it sort of is, but fun violence!.

[Rolando 2](#) - Trial & \$4.99

Man this game is just fun! You roll these little fella's around by tilting your iPhone, and their voices take me back to the days of [ToeJam & Earl](#).

[Shotgun PRO](#)- \$0.99

Guns. Design. Web. iPhone. Yes please.

[TalkingCarl](#)- \$0.99

This app is good old fashioned humor. Carl repeats whatever you say in a crazy voice. Also, you can actually interact with him to get him to laugh, yell, etc. (think Elmo, but less creepy).

[Voices](#) - \$0.99

Sort of like TalkingCarl, you just record a message and select a funny voice to repeat back what you said. It also happens to be quite pleasant to look at.

[Words With Friends](#)

Very similar to Scrabble, allows you to play "Words" with friends. Words and friends sold separately.

Hoped you enjoyed the list!

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/gqJB4v9qdxU/>

How to Track Internal Links in Google Analytics using Asynchronous Tracking

NOTE: If you are using the **standard tracking method (ga.js)**, please see the post entitled [How to Track Internal Links in Google Analytics](#). This post is intended for [Asynchronous Tracking](#).

What do you do if you want to track how often a link on your site is clicked? How do you see those links in Google Analytics (GA)? What filters and profiles should you create to accurately track this information? Hopefully, I can accurately answer these questions -- some of them in this post, some in the future.

Warning if you don't care about web analytics, reading this post may produce seizures and a strong desire to fall asleep on the job.

First, why in the world would you want to track internal links? Isn't that stupid idea?

If I click the "go here now" link on my site, and it takes me to another page on my site ([www.example/go_here_now.html](#)), why do I need to track the link? Wouldn't I just check the navigation path report for /go_here_now.html? Yes, you could do that. But what if you have multiple links on Page 1 that link to Page 2? How do you know what links brought someone from Page 1 to Page 2? Was it the blue link? Or the green button? The navigation path simply tells you what page people came from and to, it doesn't tell you exactly how they got from page to page

Second, which method of link tagging should you use?

`_trackPageview` or `utm`? **If you don't know the difference, read this bullet. If you do, skip to the next bullet.** The `_trackPageview` JavaScript creates a fake pageview. This method is most commonly used to track outgoing links or downloads. The `_trackPageview` attribute is placed within the `tag` and looks like this: `onClick="javascript: pageTracker._trackPageview('/example/blue-link')`. The `/example/blue-link` becomes a new pageview and it is tracked in GA as a new pageview - so it will increase your pageview count. These fake pageviews will now show up in your "content" reports. [More information.](#) **The `utm` method** involves telling GA what the campaign name is (you define this), the source (typically something like Google), and the medium (typically something like PPC) - as well as a few other options. This method is most commonly used in tracking PPC campaigns (as Google AdWords does this automatically), email campaigns, and other external campaigns that link back to your site. [Epikone has a great post on this](#), and here's some additional [Google info](#). **I recommend using the `_trackPageview` method.** If you choose to tag your links with `utm`, it erases all referral information. In other words, if someone arrived at your site via a Google organic search; but they then clicked on an internal link that had the `utm` tagging, you lose the insight that the visitor originally came from the Google organic search (the source and medium). Instead, you see the new source and medium information that you manually entered. For me, that's not a good option. I need to know where the visitor came from as much as I need to know what internal links they're clicking on. [Again, check out Epikone's post](#). Because `_trackPageview` creates a new pageview, you can use custom filters to include and exclude those pageviews from GA profiles (more on that below). Also, you don't lose any referral information.

Now then, to answer the questions I began this post with...

Step 1: Proper GA tracking script placement. Usually, when we're not using `_trackPageview`, we recommend placing your GA tracking script just before the close of your `tag`. We do this so that if GA is loading slowly (which rarely happens), your whole page can load before GA kicks in and it won't have to wait up for a slow GA server. However, in this method we're tagging links within the `tag`, so GA needs to kick in before those tagged links load on the page. **The GA tracking script should be placed after the opening of the `tag`, and before your tagged links, to ensure your tagged links load after the GA tracking script.** Make sense? Step 2: Add the `_trackPageview` variable to your links. Add the snippet `onclick="_gaq.push(['_trackPageview', '/outgoing/example.com']);"` to your links. Once done, your link should look like this:

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/b1bmdHTmpFI/>

Middle School Marketing: 10 Predictions for 2010

As 2009 comes to an end, we decided to use our last [Middle School Marketing](#) of the year to [review our predictions for the past year](#) and discuss our new ones for 2010. Here goes...!

Predictions for 2010 **The Internet Will Be Less Free:** Users will be more comfortable paying for services they love rather than being pestered with annoying ads, or seeing their favorite services go bankrupt. [Pandora](#) has begun charging if you reach a certain number of listening hours, and [Hulu will almost be a paid service in 2010](#). Additionally, there are examples in the news industry such as the [NYT Reader built on Adobe Air](#) and [Rupert Murdoch announcing](#) he would charge for online content by July 2010. **Mobile:** This is a no-brainer. Yes, Android consumption will increase greatly; yes a new iPhone will appear; and yes, my Mom now has a [Droid](#). The average Joe and Jane will pick up smartphones on their favorite network, thus forcing marketers to more thoughtfully engage in an [application-based digital economy](#) (and please, God, let that not mean more ads). We hope that networks will stop holding things back, but that seems overly optimistic (unless [Nexus One](#) sells unlocked at a reasonable price; that could change things). **Pocketized Computers:** With the rapid improvements in smartphone operating systems and hardware, the lines will blur between Netbooks, eReaders and smartphones - particularly Netbooks and smartphones, perhaps leaving Netbooks out in the cold in the near future. **Acquisitions:** It's always fun to make acquisition predictions. With the [recent Apple acquisition of LaLa](#), and Pandora reaching [40MM users](#), we predict that Pandora may have a buyer in the near future. **Apps:** Application development and interaction will grow at an even greater pace due in large part to Android penetration, which will lead to more and more [application based marketing](#). In 2010, people may actually hold it against certain companies if they don't have an app. **Paid Search:** The Bing/Yahoo! search deal will fail. Even with the Yahoo! deal, Bing will not gain significant market share on search leader Google (although [Bing travel](#) is pretty sweet). **Organic Search:** We will see dramatic shifts in Google and Bing as they begin integrating Twitter and other "latest" news sources (think [TweetMeme](#) or [TweetMixx](#)). Now if we could just get people to stop typing URLs into Google... **Facebook:** Facebook will be back in court over [privacy issues](#). Facebook advertising will "improve" – both the advertising platform and the targeting ability. However, the ads will probably still suck. **Digital Media/Online Video:** The digital media experience will grow significantly. Apple's acquisition of LaLa and [Amazon's digital store](#) are just the beginning. Digital media will be enriched by full-blown experiences using things like desktop/mobile apps and augmented reality (examples: [Avatar](#), [Mayer](#)). **The Fall of the Social Media Expert:** This is more of a hope. If we hope it hard enough, maybe all those so-called social media experts will just... go... away. So there you have it: MSM's collective predictions for 2010. Do you have any predictions that we didn't cover here? If so, please share!

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/GKTIqit64ZI/>

Why Facebook Privacy Changes are Disconcerting

As you know, Facebook recently changed its privacy policy. What you may not know, is this seeming act of goodwill is actually a pretty sketchy effort to make user information even more public. There is definitely value in the change; but the roll-out of those changes, and the accompanying spin, is (for me) disconcerting.

The Facebook I Love

It's important to know where I'm coming from when writing this post. What makes Facebook worthwhile for me (and many of us) is the "privacy." I am, of course, aware that if it's online it's not really "private" in the traditional sense. However, aside from email, Facebook is my last "private" digital hangout. Whereas from a privacy perspective I care very little who sees/follows my Twitter account, and I actually want lots of people visiting my web sites; I'm very selective with my Facebook friends. I want a place to talk with family and friends without strangers popping by to say hello (especially search engines).

This Isn't a Crisis

There, I said it. Before you keep reading, I want to be clear that this post is in no way suggesting this is a catastrophe. It's up to you to decide, but in the end it's just making Facebook...different. **The settings themselves are actually great**; it's the reason for, and presentation of, the settings I'm not thrilled with.

Why This Is Disconcerting

The Spin Is Nauseating

The new privacy features were touted as just that: privacy features. We were told they were all about us when, in reality, we were "marketed" to in the dirtiest sense of the word. This is another move on Facebook's part to **make Facebook more public not more private**. Why? More traffic = more ads = more money. In the [words](#) of Barry Schnitt, Director of Corporate Communications and Public Policy at Facebook: [Becoming less private and more public is] 'a change just like it was a change in 2006 when Facebook became more than just people from colleges...Facebook is changing.'

Still not convinced? In the middle of their "[Guide to Privacy on Facebook](#)" you will find this:

We recommend Everyone be able to see information that will make it easier for friends to find, identify and learn about you. This includes basic information like your About Me description, Family and Relationships, Work and Education Info, and Website, as well as posts that you create, like photo albums and status updates.

Thanks for the recommendation, Facebook. You're so great to look out for me like that.

And what will happen to all those public facing status updates? "[Bing will be getting access to Facebook 'Everyone' status updates in early 2010.](#)"

I understand Facebook has to make money. If ads are the only way to keep it alive, then so be it. Just shoot me straight on why you're doing what you're doing. And don't go changing the entire purpose of the web site just because you need more ads. I'll pay to use the darn service if that means it stays true to its nature and I can stop seeing those god-awful "Cartoon Yourself" and "Get-Rich-Quick" ads.

The "Default" Settings Are Public

If you changed your Facebook privacy settings in the past, your settings will persist. However, if you're one of the [80 to 85 percent of users who have never changed your privacy settings](#), your default settings will now be "public." In other words, Facebook is banking on 80 to 85 percent of their user base "accidentally" being fully public. Shay-dee.

Again, it would be unfair to not point out how easy the new privacy settings are to change and understand; but that doesn't seem to be the point, does it?

Why So Nervous?

Most of us don't have anything to hide in terms of inappropriate content (most being anyone over the age of 18...have you seen high schooler's Walls?). Honestly, I'm not even mad that Facebook is changing so drastically, perhaps it really will result in a "better" experience for some - I'm just not really one of those "some." What makes me nervous is the underhanded tactics Facebook seems to regularly employ when undergoing "improvements."

Additional Links [A guide to privacy on Facebook](#) (Facebook)[The Day Has Come: Facebook Pushes People to Go Public](#) (ReadWriteWeb)[The Facebook Privacy Fiasco Begins](#) (TechCrunch)[Why Facebook Changed Its Privacy Strategy](#) (ReadWriteWeb)

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/e1cwymKO8zA/>

Google Analytics Training - 5 Free Spots for Unemployed!

We're hosting another [Google Analytics 101 training](#) on December 10th, 2009. This time, there's one small change to the program that we're really excited about!

We're reserving five spaces for those of you who have been hit by the economic hurricane that is otherwise known as "2009." We're hoping this will be a great way for you those of you who are job hunting to broaden your skill set, and perhaps fall in love with a new industry. We promise we won't try and sell you anything, cause you to fall asleep, or otherwise annoy you. So, if you are unemployed, or know anyone who is, sign up and get to know the powers of Google Analytics.

For more information and to register, visit our [Google Analytics Training](#) page.

If you're unemployed and want to take us up on our offer, please email [training\[at\]viget.com](mailto:training[at]viget.com). It's first come first serve, so email right away if you're interested!

Join us on December 10th!

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/UqScn- owrQ/>

Middle School Marketing: Augmented Reality

This morning's [Middle School Marketing](#) discussion centered on [Augmented Reality](#). For those unfamiliar, I found this definition on Augmented Reality from Gary Hayes helpful:

Information, 3D models or live action blended with or overlaid onto the physical world around us, in real time. A camera & attached screen is used to view the combination of real world and metadata or rich media. Devices or systems commonly used for AR include:

Mobile devices with inbuilt cameras such as iPhone, DS Lite, PSP or Android

A head mounted display HMDs (eg: glasses or futuristic contact lenses) attached to a wearable networked computer

A PC or Mac with webcam

A games console with camera accessory

A large TV screen with advanced Set Top box and Web cam

Others in development

While the technology is not new, Augmented Reality (AR) seems to be generating a lot of buzz these days - in large part thanks to advances in smart phone and webcam technology. As marketers it's important to not only be familiar with various use cases of AR, but to also be prepared to have conversations with clients on how they may be able to utilize the technology.

While there are a lot of cool applications, there doesn't seem to be a silver bullet quite yet. We walked through a couple of recent examples of AR technology, including a live demo of the December issue of [Esquire Magazine](#). Several industries are making major headway, but we all agreed that the technology still has a way to go. The examples we took a look at this morning, included:

Couple other examples worth checking out:

[John Mayer's Augmented Reality Video](#)

[Xbox Natal Announcement](#)

Blogs & information regarding the topic:

[Augment Pro](#)

[Augmented Advertising](#)

[16 Top Augmented Reality Business Models](#)

[Augmented Planet](#)

[Augmented Times](#)

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/5nnjOnrcFOM/>

PPC Summit Chicago

Last week I got the opportunity to attend Day 2 of the [PPC Summit](#) in Chicago. The PPC Summit brings together experts in the pay-per-click industry who cover a number of B2B and B2C search marketing topics. Topics include keyword targeting, ad copy strategy, landing page optimization, lead generation, ecommerce, third-party tools, social media, and analytics integration.

My favorite session was the first one I went to – Expanding Advertising Coverage: Local Search Opportunities. The talk started off with the benefits of [local search](#) and quickly moved into Facebook advertising. Unlike many of the other sessions, this one evolved into more of a conversation than a talk; the audience started asking questions, which we tackled together as a group.

A few things I learned from the session:

Local targeting on Facebook is becoming better and better. Just recently, they opened up targeting at the major city/metropolitan level. Soon they will open up targeting at the zip code level – awesome! CPC bidding on Facebook can end up being very expensive, so it might make more sense to bid on a CPM basis – I'm still cautious about this one, but worth a shot. Facebook is not and will probably never be the best source for conversions/revenue, but it can do a lot for brand awareness. You might have better luck sending visitors to your fan page rather than your website, so they can continue to interact with the brand – this is especially useful if your fan page offers several interaction points. Some companies spend upwards of 100k on Facebook advertising each year – wow.

Overall, this session turned out to be much better than I had expected. The speaker, [Dennis Yu](#), was energetic and encouraged questions, which sparked audience involvement, leading to a well-rounded and very interesting discussion.

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/1LVguBLOrSY/>

Is Planning Impotent? Redscout + PSFC Presents ?Spur?

[PSFK](#) (my favorite "blog", hands down), has teamed up with [Redscout](#) to create a video series entitled "Spur", the focus of which is to look at the digital planning industry/career.

[In their own words:](#)

Over the next two months, PSFK will be hosting Redscout's SPUR video series. It will explore the intersection of brands, strategy, innovation and the world of account planning. We hope to spark a lively discussion, and inspire those working in the field.

Check out episode one, "Is Planning Impotent?", it's got some very interesting remarks:

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/VoZvAJvLDLc/>

Los Angeles Goes Google

Looks like the [Go Google](#) campaign is working.

Despite heavy lobbying from Microsoft, L.A. City Council voted to outsource email and other apps to Google. Wow.

LA is the second major city behind DC, who signed up last year, to go with Google in the larger struggle for the estimated **\$20-billion market for email and office software** that Microsoft now dominates.

Under the deal with L.A., Google will provide e-mail, calendar, online chatting and other services to the nation's second-largest city. In terms of numbers, that's 30,000 city employees! Many of whom (I'm guessing), probably didn't even know Google had such services. Aside from the press and the money, this win goes a long way at legitimizing Google's enterprise solutions.

One can't help but feel slightly bad for Microsoft who seems to be taking hits from two of the web's biggest players: Google and Apple.

http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/CD_vF4fp4cl/

Yahoo! and Bing Search Marketing Agreement - What's the Deal?

Ever since the [announcement](#) that Bing and Yahoo! will fold into one search engine, there have been a lot of questions as to when exactly this will happen, what it means for advertisers, how it will affect users, and whether it will hurt Google. I have spent some time trying to find answers to these questions, and thought I'd share what I found.

Most important to note is that the transition from Yahoo! to Bing will take anywhere from 12-24 months, starting in the US and then expanding to other regions. Therefore, advertisers' and users need not worry about it just yet! When the transition is finally complete, here are some key points to know.

What exactly does the agreement entail?

Yahoo! will adopt Bing's search engine. Yahoo! will take control of premium search advertising for both Yahoo! and Bing (Current Yahoo! premium advertisers have a dedicated sales team). Display advertising on other Microsoft and Yahoo! properties (such as Yahoo! finance) will not be affected – only search ads.

How will this affect search marketers?

Advertisers will now use Microsoft's AdCenter platform to manage both Bing and Yahoo! Search campaigns. Advertisers buying through AdCenter will have no control as to whether their ad appears on Bing or Yahoo! Search. Advertisers should benefit by only having to work with two search platforms versus three.

How will this affect users?

Users will benefit from being able to search a larger ad inventory. This means there will be chance of finding a relevant ad for a search, which will hopefully give users an overall better search experience. Users will still be able to search via Yahoo! or Bing. Yahoo! will keep its interface and functionality, as well as its "Yahoo! Search" brand, but it will have a "Powered by Bing" logo at the bottom of the page. Yahoo! and Bing will probably never overtake search leader Google, who (along with its partners) currently owns about 73% of the market, [according to ComScore](#). However, the agreement may help Bing make a dent in Google's market share, perhaps forcing Google to improve and innovate in order to maintain or increase its share.

Despite a few drawbacks (such as not being able to pick which search engine your ad appears on), I believe the agreement is a good thing. Not only will it make the lives of advertisers a little easier (managing two instead of three networks), but it also lays the foundation for a more competitive and innovative search landscape. I am looking forward to seeing what happens in the search market once the transition is complete!

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/Goe78hdqSX8/>

Social Media Monitoring Tools

Yesterday's [Middle School Marketing](#) meeting focused on something we talk about a lot: [social media monitoring](#). Long-time attendee [Wendy Scherer](#) of [The Social Studies Group](#) kicked things off with a brief presentation that highlighted pros and cons of various monitoring tools.

No one argued that there are a number of tools available for monitoring brand(s) on the web. The trick, however, is find those that work best for you. Key take aways from our discussion included:

Set Up is Key: Regardless of the tool, time is required to set tools up so they're meaningful. The old, "junk in, junk out" phrase seems to apply; the time invested upfront will surely pay off later. **Time Commitment Required:** As with any monitoring tool, time is required to review and analyze data. Similarly, it's not just about the information tools provide, it's what you do with the information that sets you and your social media strategy apart. **Sentiment Stinks:** Overarching consensus was that no tool does a "great" job getting sentiment right. Human review is still needed. Tools like [Open Amplify](#) seem to be making headway, but we weren't convinced it replaced good ol' fashioned human review. **No Tool Does Everything Well:** Each tool has strengths and weaknesses. Some might be great at blogs and Twitter, but lacking on general media clips; others might provide in-depth data, but not sexy charts and graphs. Long story short: you'll likely need more than one tool to get all the data you need.

Whether using a free or paid tool, social monitoring is critical for those looking to engage with customers in meaningful ways.

As always, thanks to all who attended. We're looking forward to next month's discussion!

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/WwZ-EBagxsl/>

Google Analytics Improvements - Site Engagement Goals, Mobile Reporting, Multiple Custom Variables

Last year, after attending the [Google Analytics Authorized Consultant's Summit, I blogged about wonders](#) such as advanced segments, the API, and custom reporting. This year, there are some pretty cool additions once again, including:

Multiple goals
Engagement goals
Mobile tracking and reporting
Advanced analysis
Multiple custom variables
Analytics intelligence
Custom alerts
Goal Improvements - Engagement Goals & 20 Goals / Profile

Now you can define pages per visit and time on site as a conversion. Additionally, remember that time you could only have four goals per Google Analytics profile? Those days are finally over! Now, 20 goals per profile are comprised of four goal sets each containing five goals. In other words, you can track up to five goals in one goal set, and see the total aggregated conversion rates for one set, as well as each individual conversation rate.

Mobile Tracking and Reporting You can now better measure mobile marketing efforts within Google Analytics with expanded mobile tracking. It supports PHP, Perl, JSP and ASPX in this release - and, of course, JavaScript. [Here are some instructions.](#)

Advanced Analysis - Advanced Table Filtering Previously in Google Analytics, you could only filter reports by text (pageview name, search keywords). However, you can now filter by metrics (bounce rate, time on site, etc.).

Multiple Custom Variables Finally! Custom variables allow you to segment users by naming their cookies with relevant information. For example, once someone logs in you would name them "member" and segment accordingly. Previously in Google Analytics, you could only store one variable per user/cookie using the setVar method. Now, however, you can track multiple variables per user/cookie! I'm really excited about this one. [Some instructions and more details are here.](#)

"Intelligence & Custom Alerts" I'll just let [Google Analytics tell you:](#) We're launching the initial phase of an algorithmic driven Intelligence engine to Google Analytics. Analytics Intelligence will provide automatic alerts of significant changes in the data patterns of your site metrics and dimensions over daily, weekly and monthly periods. For instance, Intelligence could call out a 300% surge in visits from YouTube referrals last Tuesday or let you know bounce rates of visitors from Virginia dropped by 70% two weeks ago. Also, you can now set up daily, weekly, and monthly triggers. I'm not that excited about this one, but this will be a big deal for some users.

These are some really awesome improvements! As [Google Analytics says](#), these new features are powerful, intelligent, and flexible. Any questions?

Some Related Videos

Engagement Goals and Multiple Goals Video

Google Analytics Advanced Table Filtering

Google Analytics Pivoting & Secondary Dimensions

Google Analytics Intelligence and Custom Alerts

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/ty7SjnH46lQ/>

Improving Local Search Listings

When thinking about local search listings most people think of the [Yahoo!](#), [Bing](#) and of course, [Google](#). Other well-known listings may also come to mind: [Yellowpages](#) or [Superpages](#), but marketers should not discount the smaller players in the market.

Many of these smaller local search sites offer valuable resources that you may not find in some of the larger, such as reviews, recommendations, photos, and promotion features. Even more important, however, listing your business in all local search directories makes it easier for your customers to find information on your business, which is critical to not only driving more traffic to your web site, but also generating more phone calls and delivering more customers thru the door.

A few tips to note when working with local listings:

Keep your listings updated – double check listings that are already in directories. It can be more harmful to your business to have wrong/incomplete contact information than no listing at all. Keep your listings consistent – customers often perform multiple searches when researching a product or service. Inconsistent information not only confuses customers, but also reduces credibility. Include keywords in descriptions and categories – most searches on local listings directories are keyword based, so use effective keywords in your description to ensure that your listing shows up in search results. Remember that most local listings are free – by not listing your business you are missing out on free, targeted traffic in your area.

Here are some examples from the collection of smaller, local-search directories:

[Merchant Circle](#): A great place to build out your full profile inclusive of maps, special offers, newsletters, blogs, and reviews

[Insider Pages](#): A quickly growing player among local search listings, Insider Pages also allows you to add photos, coupons, and reviews

[Yellow Page City](#): Yellowpages may be the primary go-to when searching for a business, but Yellow Page City also draws in a decent amount of traffic, offering your basic business listing.

[Yelp](#): While several other local search sites offer the option to review a business, Yelp is probably your best bet for actually getting reviews. It is rapidly becoming one of top websites for business reviews.

Do you have any other websites, resources, or tips for improving your local search listings? If so, feel free to share them in a comment!

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/c46iMuanlZY/>

Design or Marketing - Chicken or Egg?

So, what comes first? Marketing or design? Design or marketing? One often dictates the other, or one holds the other back. "Classic chicken or egg situation."

I was reading a [post this morning about the iPod Touch](#), and this quote struck me:

I'm a firm believer that a good design strategy expresses a product's marketing concept, or great marketing should be a reflection of a design's intent. They are quite interrelated, especially if a design or marketing strategy is consumer focused.

So which comes first? I think that's actually the wrong question. The title of this blog post suggests a false choice. Why do we have to choose?

I suppose by now you realize that I believe that marketing and design are more than just interrelated, they are married. Of course, when the rubber hits the road we often see just the opposite of integration. We see designs that don't accurately convey the true essence of the company or product, and/or we see marketing that doesn't tell a story and lives disconnected from the true design. We see a hand-off...one is retro-fitted to accommodate the other. We see a good design handed off to push marketers, or we see marketing copy driving design execution. And we the people are suffering for it. We are forced to wade through disjointed experiences, rather than seamless interactions.

Of course, even if integration does take place it still comes down to execution. Thinking about the above example of the iPod Touch (sorry to use Apple as an example...sort of too easy, isn't it?), which came first? The design? The marketing? Or did they both evolve in a healthy coexistence? I'd like to think the latter. I'd like to think the engineers, the designers, and the marketers were in a room talking about everything from functionality and look and feel, to how to emotionally connect with people and position the product.

I'd like to think that it wasn't on accident or by sheer luck that [Apple's iPod Touch page](#), related emails, and in-store kiosks look, feel, and behave exactly like the actual product. I'd like to think that the seamless experience I get to enjoy is because Apple ignored the chicken or egg pitfall - they understood that both marketing and design are inextricably reliant upon one another. Just like a married couple, they are separate but act as a unit.

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/e39yHTgJ9yw/>

Twitter Takes the Wind out of SEOs Sails

SEO 101: Links matter. The more relevant links you have from domains with a high PageRank, the better. [Twitter](#) has a high PageRank, you can provide relevant links, so...Twitter is good for SEO. Right?

Wrong.

To those of you who are trying to convince people to use Twitter for the sake of SEO, Twitter does nothing for your link juice -- which, in my opinion, is awesome.

I still think Twitter helps your search presence, but it doesn't help SEO the way you might typically think. Here's why.

Twitter Adds rel="nofollow"

Awhile back, Twitter added the nofollow tag to their "Web" links. Why? Spammers. Spammers then decided to add links in their "Bio" field. Again, Twitter added the nofollow attributes. Now, as of this month (maybe sooner, I just noticed it this month), every single external link on Twitter contains the nofollow attribute - that includes the "Web" field, the "Bio" field, any links within your tweets, and even the time stamp and app links. What is nofollow?

Within a link, you can insert the following script: rel="nofollow" which tells the search engine spiders, "Don't follow that link." In other words, no link juice will get transferred from domain #1 to domain #2.

Why I think this is Awesome

Call me a purist, but I like Twitter without spam. I like it when people tweet things they actually care about, and I like knowing that spammers can't jump on to Twitter and clutter things up with irrelevant and annoying tweets. I also like that it forces companies to actually think about why they're using Twitter. SEO "experts" can no longer encourage companies to use Twitter just because it's good for SEO. This encourages tweets without meaning, very little strategic thought, and haphazard involvement - all of the things that will get you burned on Twitter.

How Twitter Still Helps Search Engine Presence

All that being said, tweets are still indexed, and so is your Twitter page. When someone performs a search, they just might see a tweet containing your brand name alongside their search phrase. If your tweets are keyword rich, people may actually find your tweets before they find your on-site page. Not only that, but it helps with brand recognition. If you [search for "Viget"](#) our Twitter handle is usually in the top 5 results.

In summary

Twitter can help your search presence through brand awareness and it possibly some long tail keywords; however, it won't do a thing for your link juice - and that should hopefully scare off most SEO spammers.

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/qBiPjyojL7o/>

Post Purchase Follow-up is Priceless

I was talking to a friend last week who recently purchased a new car. She mentioned that she was pleasantly surprised to receive a personal email from her salesperson; following-up on her purchase and asking her if she was enjoying the car and/or if she had any problems or questions.

This got me thinking about my recent car purchase.

I bought a new Mazda about three months ago and I have yet to receive any sort of post-purchase follow-up from my salesperson or dealership. The only relevant email I received was a request to fill out a survey from corporate Mazda USA:

For my friend, that quick email made her feel more comfortable and warm toward that brand, dealership and specifically that salesperson. Most importantly, she is now serving as an organic word-of-mouth-marketer – telling more people about her new car, dealership, and post-purchase follow-up and recommending that car, dealership, and salesperson to others in the market for a new car. The best thing about the email that my friend received was that it wasn't [all about sales](#), rather quite the opposite.

Post purchase follow-up gives companies a great opportunity to provide value to customers, garner feedback, and improve post-purchase satisfaction and create an overall positive customer experience. [Here is a great example](#) of how one salesperson followed up with a handwritten note (and check out the comments for other good examples).

Of course, a handwritten note or personal email may not be feasible for every company. For example, if your entire purchase process is executed online and you never interact with anyone, it would be quite hard for the company to send out a personalized note. If, however, I'm spending several hours directly with a salesperson (or in my case, 6 hours), I don't think a short email is too much to ask for. If I had received a quick call email from my salesperson you better believe I would be referring people to that dealership/salesperson and I would be more far more inclined to become a loyal Mazda customer and repeat buyer myself.

<http://feedproxy.google.com/~r/VigetEngage/~3/Xo-fYMMGyAE/>
