

A PRESENTATION TO  
**FAST COMPANY**  
BY MEKANISM

FEBRUARY 2010



# AGENDA

ABOUT MEKANISM

THE BRIEF

OUR APPROACH

IDEAS ON THE FLOOR

THE CONCEPTS

1. PARADOX

2. WTF MAN

3. THE COVER PROJECT

4. THE FAST MACHINE





**SPORE VOTE**  
[spore.mekanism.com](http://spore.mekanism.com)



**IOC**  
[thebestofuschallenge.olympic.org](http://thebestofuschallenge.olympic.org)



**Surfwise**  
[surfwisefilm.com](http://surfwisefilm.com)

# MEKANISM

Storytelling for emerging media.

Mekanism is a creative production studio housing film, animation and interactive content creators.

We sprinkle our love of good storytelling into viral campaigns, branded entertainment and community development programs to inspire measurable brand loyalty.

**Mekanism San Francisco**  
640 2nd St. - 3rd Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94107

**Mekanism New York**  
333 Hudson St. 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10013



## COMMUNICATIONS BRIEF

Client:	FAST COMPANY	Date:	1/20/10
Project:	Viral/Community Build	Job Number:	FC001
Producer:	Katie Matson	Exec Producer:	Jason Harris
Creative Lead:	All Team	Exec CD:	Tommy Means

### BACKGROUND

#### Business Situation:

Four years ago Fast Company was on the brink of extinction. It literally was close to death, barely breathing with a punctured lung. Just kind of ugly.

But it is very much alive today and actually a kick ass magazine that too few people know about or understand or even pick up. If they did, they would see a relevant, vibrant, inspirational, thought inducing and yes sometimes even beautiful magazine.

We analyzed Google trending and FC is tied for lowest among four competitors (Wired, Inc, Forbes and Fortune) in overall searches for the last four years. They are also second to the bottom in social bookmarking mentions on Digg and Reddit (a key indicator of brand engagement). However the good news is that Fast Company leads every competitor (even Wired) in positive sentiment score of 8:1 (which indicates that for every 8 positive mentions, there is only one negative one).

The audience that is aware and understands what the brand is all about is a specific, dedicated and diehard group.

*The bottom line: Fast Company is the best thing too few people read.*

#### What We Are Advertising:

Fast Company is a 10 issue per year business magazine and website that reports on innovation, digital media, technology, change management, leadership, design and social responsibility.

Most business magazines are written by boring writers, writing about boring business people to be read by boring workers. Fast Company is different. FC covers the unexpected, surprising and sometimes inspirational business storylines. They want to inspire people and embrace the unexpected. Embrace cool jobs, inspirational people and innovative things.

# THE BRIEF



## COMMUNICATIONS BRIEF

#### Who Are We Advertising To:

Young minded and modern business executives from 22 to 52. They want to leave the 'office' at the end of the day and feel like they did something valuable. They are so passionate for their work that their job and lifestyle meaningfully blur together (they don't just clock in at 9 and leave at 5). They are not driven by just dollars and cents as they want to make an impact on their community and the world around them. Someday they would love to have their face on a magazine cover for doing something brilliant.

#### Objectives:

Fast Company has approached Mekanism to create a non-traditional viral campaign that builds awareness and overall love for the brand.

#### Strategic / Business / Marketing Objective:

1. Create online pick-up, mention, discussion and buzz.
2. Build evangelists.

### THE MESSAGE

#### High-Level User Flow:

People will find our message online through a viral program that Mekanism will engineer and track.

#### Key Message:

Fast Company is the digital and print source for the most innovative, creative and inspirational thinking in business.

#### Our Goal:

*Develop an idea so provocative, compelling and disruptive that every business leader in the country stands up and takes notice.*

# OUR APPROACH

**ALL IDEAS MUST HAVE THE  
FOLLOWING EFFECT:**

- **Talk value. Something that will get people spreading the message.**
- **Fresh, unexpected and inspirational.**
- **Element of risk (every business innovator takes one).**
- **“Damn. I wish I thought of that and I can’t believe Fast Company did.”**





# IDEAS THAT HIT THE FLOOR

# F\*CK CHINA.

No other country is kicking America in the nuts harder than the China. So Fast Company is going to rally the Fast Company community to unleash the most-badass American innovation raw power situation and unload it all over China when they're not looking.



# FAST COMPANY REPORTER LOCKDOWN.

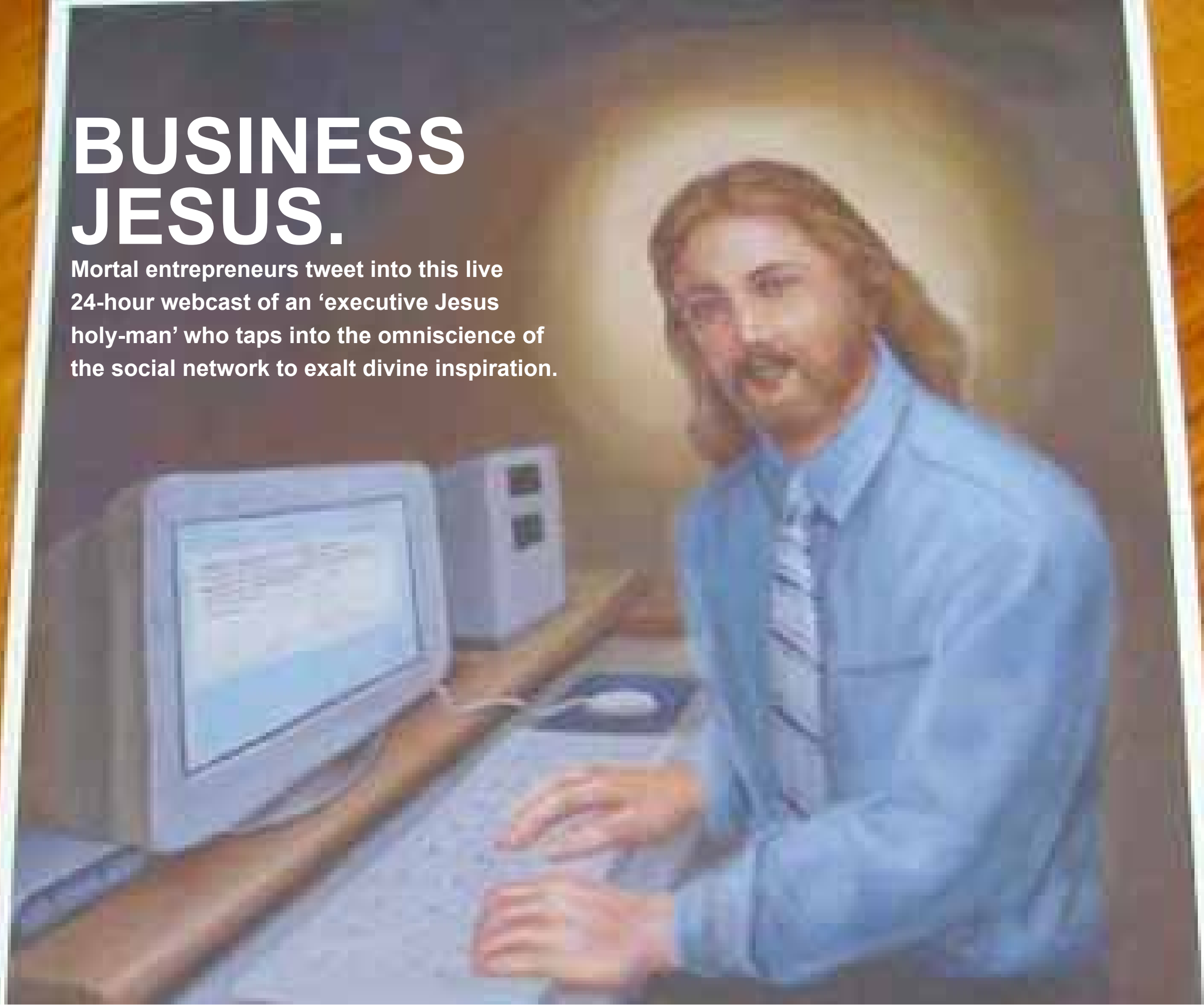
We prove that Fast Company reporters are super hard-core at uncovering a business angle by interlocking them in a questionable Sunset Strip motel for 72 hours in search of a good story.





# BUSINESS JESUS.

Mortal entrepreneurs tweet into this live 24-hour webcast of an 'executive Jesus holy-man' who taps into the omniscience of the social network to exalt divine inspiration.





# THE "GOLDEN TICKET" PLAYBOY ISSUES.

We insert Playboy Magazines from the 1970's inside hundreds of Fast Company covers. I mean...who doesn't want a 70's Playboy?





# THE IDEAS

MEGALUX IN MEGABYTES



CONCEPT ONE

# FAST COMPANY PARADOX

# FAST COMPANY PARADOX

The great Fast Company paradox is that Fast Company is a compendium of brilliance about the intersection of business and technology and its impact on the future, told using technology that was developed in 1452 for printing German bibles.

Pretty ballsy—but, still, we love magazines. And we should—the feel, the process of turning pages and discovering things we didn't select from a menu, but we're instead selected for us—edited for us—by a staff that we know and trust and return to each month. Even though I don't know what David Remnick has in store for me next week, I know this, I look forward to seeing what he thinks is interesting. What makes magazines so good is that there is only limited space in each issue. The fact that they are curated for me, since space is limited, means that what's there must be good. Unlike the entire god-awful internet full of cat pictures and porn.

And here lies the rub: we love magazines, but they are archaic and remain untouched by the recent explosion of social interaction. Reading a magazine offers great pleasure, but it's a closed loop—a one-sided conversation that cuts us off from so many pleasures—namely, the ability to share what we read, and to fight about it and devour it and comment on it and denigrate it and mock it and tweet it and in the process: to own it. To become part of the content by interacting with it. This is very powerful, and it's something a magazine simply cannot do.

Great. So what. First of all, that's what the internet is for and second of all, that's the same problem every magazine faces.

Until now.

It's time to digitize the analog issues of Fast Company.

Your readers all have a Blackberry or an iPhone or an Android. Every single one of them. That's something very few publications can state confidently. And while your readers are sitting in seat 6c on Virgin from SFO to JFK, they have that phone out on the tray-table next to the copy of Fast Company they're reading. Because that's what they do. That's what we all do. Why? Because there's internet access on the plane. And, even if they're not on a plane, no matter where they read Fast Company, even on the toilet, their smart phone is always within reach.

So, let's take advantage of this: let's bring a social aspect to reading the physical magazine. Let's let people take out their phone, launch our app and comment, denigrate, discuss, tweet, and own whatever it is that inspires them. And, let's let them see what other people have added as well.





Why is this viral marketing and not editorial, you ask? Because all your comments will be instantly tweeted to your followers and shared with your friends — and suddenly my take on Amazon's screw up with the Kindle DX, that I was inspired to make based on the phone, sparks a conversation with 4 of my 400 followers on Twitter. And all 400 see that I was reading FC — and if they click the link included, they will see the article, my comments, and anyone else's as well.

## THE FEATURES:

There are a number of ways people could interact with the content in the magazine by introducing a smart phone with an internet connection:

Commenting on content. When a reader sees something comment worthy, they lift their phone, tap the spot on the page that they want to comment on, enter their comment, and upload it. Of course, they would also be able to see other people's comments as well.

All graphs, charts and data presented would be 3D, and could change over time. Much more ancillary data could be attached to stories.

Additional content could be presented. Links to videos that are being referenced or discussions or sites...any content that is online could be easily linked.

This could generate revenue from advertisers based on click-throughs to their sites. I'm sure the folks over at Land Rover would find this intriguing.

And, for smart phones with built-in GPS like the iPhone, you could have location-aware content. For example, if I'm reading an article about a retailer, and I click on the map, their locations relative to me could be presented.

This could be used creatively in entertaining ways: instead of a director's commentary on a movie, imagine recording commentary from funny people as they read the magazine: so you get to hear John Hodgman comment on the magazine as you and he read it together. This is a clever way to bring influencers into the idea, as well.

This has never been done before, because it has never been possible. But, because people love hard copies of magazines, and the ownership that comes from interaction, this will be happening very soon. If Fast Company gets out ahead of anyone else, and owns this idea, it will solidify its position as a forward-thinking magazine both in form and content.

**CONCEPT TWO**

**WTF MAN**





# WTF MAN

**FAST COMPANY IS A PUBLICATION THAT BRINGS TO LIGHT THE CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE PEOPLE THAT ARE DISRUPTING BUSINESS AS USUAL.**

We want to bring this brand attribute to life in an entertaining and provocative way.

But we don't just want to tell people about disrupting business as usual. We actually want to disrupt business as usual.

Say hello to What the Fuck Man. Or WTF Man for short.

He's going to disrupt and attempt to alter the mundane yet idiotic bullshit that corporate America serves up everyday. And he is going to mobilize a massive social network to help him.

For example. Starbucks drives all of America up the wall with its retarded naming of it's cup sizes. Venti is large. Grande is medium. And small is tall, or is tall small?...What the fuck man?

Here is how it will work.

Everyday WTF Man will pose a question on his Facebook application, Twitter, and YouTube pages. He will ask the audience to vote on what asinine business problem he would disrupt and change.

- Change the Starbucks coffee cup size names.
- Demand that Best Buy no longer ask for your home address when making a purchase.
- Make United Airlines change their policy of charging \$5 dollars to rent a headset.
- Demand that Wal-Mart stop making geriatrics say hello to you when you enter their stores.







Ok, so these may not change the world but it will sure be funny as hell to watch him use a massive social network to help him:

- Make prank phone calls to the CEOs
- Launch a massive letter writing campaign
- Notify every major journalistic blogger to write about weekly crusades
- Use “Improve Everywhere” style protests to bring awareness to the causes
- Convene “Yes Men” style fake press conferences to mess with journalists
- Attend corporate shareholder meetings and ask the board ridiculous questions.

We would launch a dozen or so “challenges”, and make a handful into short 2 minute films. These films will be syndicated across the Internet and submitted to shows like Colbert, Daily Show, Letterman etc.

We can even engage the audience to help us come up with these challenges that could touch many different industries:

- Hollywood
- Wall Street
- Airlines
- Fast Food
- Technology
- Car industry



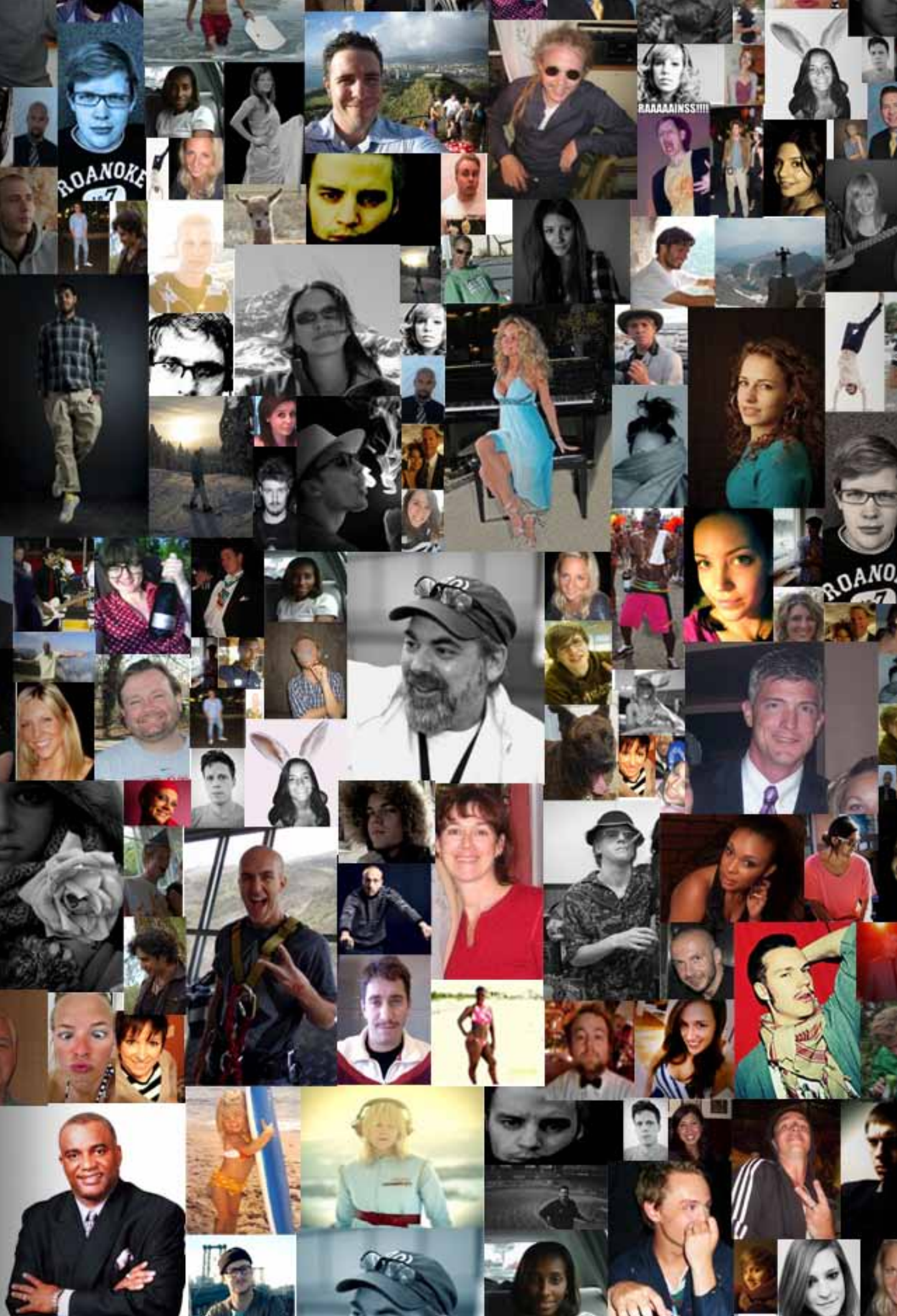
You get the idea. At the end of the day, Fast Company will take credit for being a publication that is a provocateur, an agent of change, and a brand that not only makes you think about the perils of dumb, slow, corporate America but actually inspires it's readers to do something about it.





CONCEPT THREE

# THE COVER PROJECT



# THE COVER PROJECT

## THE VIRAL EXPERIMENT

This is a viral experiment, conducted not only by Mekanism on behalf of Fast Company, but by Fast Company on behalf of its readership's editorial interests. The subject of how things go viral and how ideas and info spread online is right up Fast Company's editorial alley. The July issue would be accompanied by an analysis of the entire process, of social media's influence on business and media and marketing, and of the way social networks spread information, etc. It's a meta viral marketing experiment wrapped in editorial.

Imagine this sentence appears on your Twitter feed one day, tweeted by the guy in the office next to you: "I'm going to be on the July cover of Fast Company magazine." Then again by your former college roommate. And again by that local band you like.

You go to Facebook, and that sentence appears as the status update of 15 friends on your wall.

What's going on here?

Well, they're all telling the truth.

They will be on the July cover of Fast Company magazine.

And all you need to do is tweet or update your status with that same sentence, and you will be too.

Yes, Fast Company is going to put the profile picture of everyone who tweets or updates FB with the sentence "I'm going to be on the July cover of Fast Company magazine" on the cover of their magazine. In July.

The July edition will be published with thousands of individual profile pictures from these social media hubs. (Foldout covers might be a good idea, too). Its going to be unlike anything that's been done before.

Here's the thing: we know that a lot of people will love this magazine when they find out what it's all about. But how do you give people who've never picked up Fast Company magazine a reason to find out about it, or go to their website? How do you get more people to finally notice this brilliant magazine?

Put them on the cover, of course.



Now, I realize that FC usually puts innovative and creative business leaders on its cover. Which these individual profile photos don't necessarily represent. But taken as a whole, as a representation of social networking, it certainly seems like a worthy cover topic – these are the people businesses are innovating for. (One thought - perhaps each cover collage of photos creates another image, like that of the faces of social media leaders.)

And even in the Digital Age, being on the cover of a magazine is still a huge, never in a lifetime novelty for people. Even if it's a tiny picture among many others. It's tactile. It's published. It lasts forever. And these covers will be visually arresting. Ultimately, they are an analog visualization of what digital virality means.

But it doesn't stop on the newsstand. Online at [Fastcompany.com](http://Fastcompany.com), visitors would find an amazing, visually compelling interactive gallery section all about the covers and the people on them. There would be charts and metrics which track the way the campaign spread, the exponential growth of the numbers over time, the patterns the virality took. Using a "magnifying" search function, you could find your own picture and the corresponding cover to help you find it on the newsstand or order a copy. (Oh yeah, I forgot to mention that little bonus bump: If you're on the cover of a magazine, you'll probably buy that issue of the magazine. This idea is going to sell a lot of copies of Fast Company magazine to people who have never bought it before.)

This is going to get Fast Company a ton of blog and press coverage – its going to be picked up and discussed all over the web and in traditional media.

How would it all work? We would seed the concept with influencers to get the ball rolling, with them tweeting or updating with the line, blogging about the campaign (and therefore the magazine), etc. Using Facebook Connect, which users could access through the FC site or a microsite dedicated to the cover project, we could pull profile pics, map friend connections, etc.

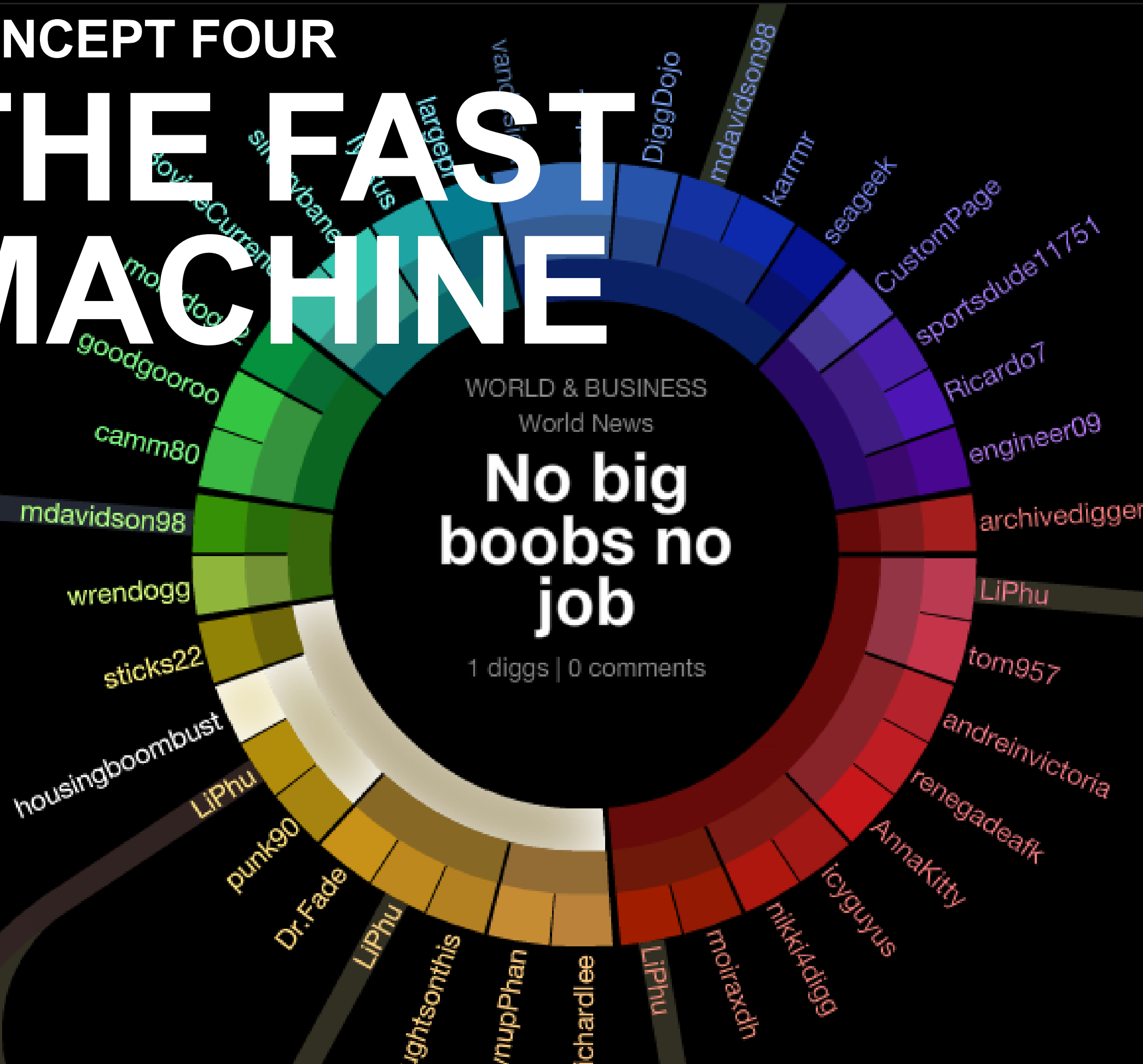
Ultimately, it's an attention-getting, easy to participate in viral stunt that will result in lots of coverage and get Fast Company the attention it deserves. And, Fast Company will forever be known to as the magazine that put me on its cover.

That's a bond I won't have with any other magazine. Ever.



# CONCEPT FOUR

# THE FAST MACHINE



# THE FAST MACHINE

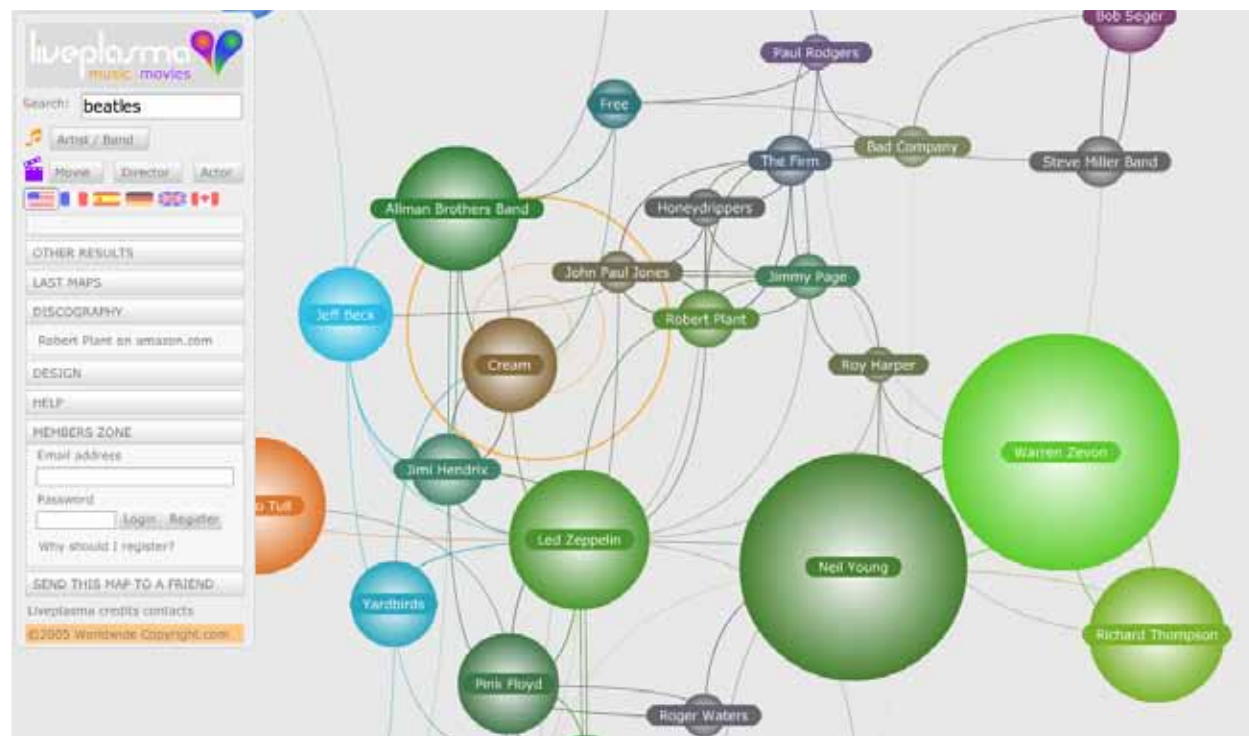
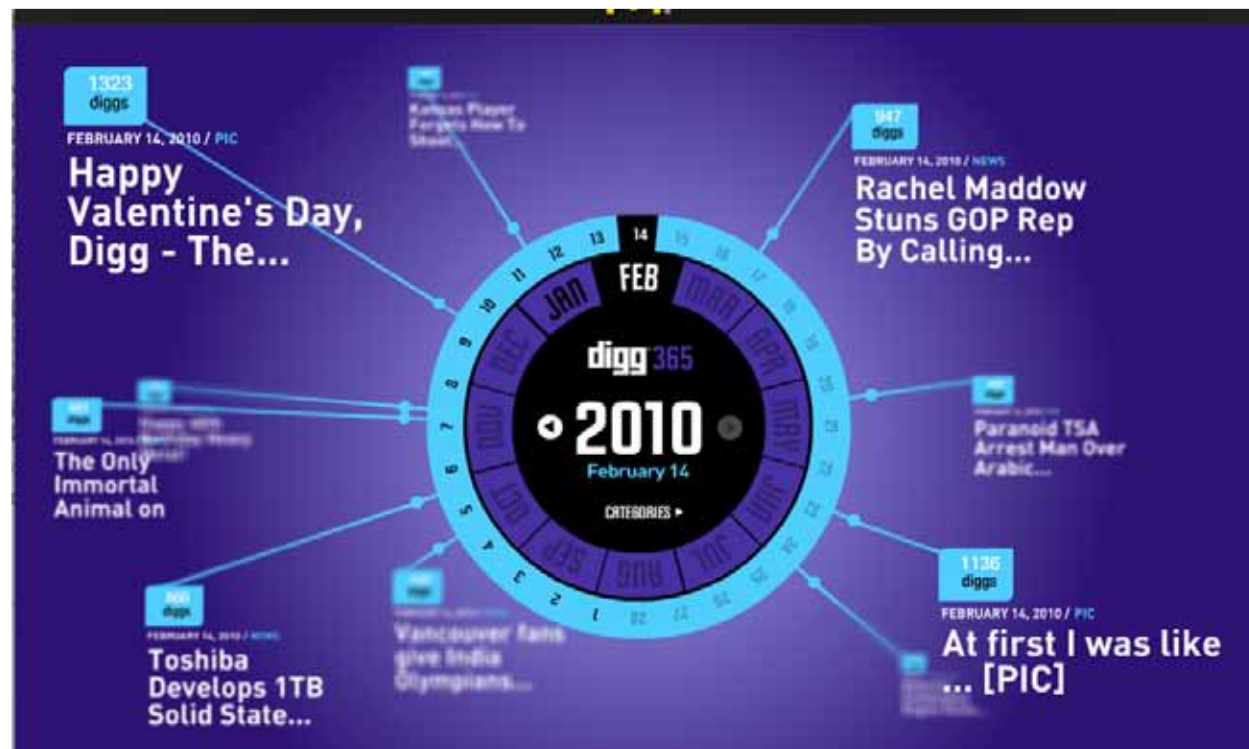
The Fast Machine is a brainstorming device powered by social media that people can use to kick-start the creative process when they are faced with a pitch, writer's block, or the general horrifying ennui that grips you when you're sitting alone in the dark, staring blankly – aimlessly – gazing at nothing but blankness and nothingness.

So, what is it? Part search engine, part ideation tool, The Fast Machine scrapes the social web for the most current and relevant results from all the major social media sites that match up to whatever the user has input. Then it displays it in a 3D space. So, it's spatial brainstorming. You can look up, down, left, right – wherever – until you're fully brainstorm-saturated. And it displays all kinds of content at once. Tweets, videos, and crazy photos are now there to serve you and you only.

So, you, the user, would pull up The Fast Machine, type in a word or a phrase – wait for that damn pinwheel to stop spinning – then view the results that gloriously appear. Here's why it's unique: the results are all pulled from Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or Flickr (and there could be more...) – so what you get is the most up-to-date data (in all its forms), whims, notions, and conversations that the web has to offer. It's like asking your closest 2 billion friends for an idea. Or one gigantic Cybil-puss who speaks with genius diction in multiple languages while it picks its belly button, mistaking it for a cinnamon roll.

How the hell do we promote it, you ask? Good question. For starters, we house it on Facebook. So, it starts and ends with the social web. There will be some general geeky curiosity, such as how did we get Tweets and videos to float around in a 3D environment? – and some fwa.com-style hot-shit sites that talk about hot-shit sites will promote this...But, we'll need to pimp it with smart people to test drive it first.

For example, we'd spark it with an influencer program of the top 25 thought leaders from a variety of fields. Before launch, for example, we'd let Martin Eberhard (Tesla Motors) give it a test drive. We'd record his searches and results, then post the entire thing on the site to allow users to see his thought process. It's a strong promotion of the site, but an equally strong example of how Fast Company could let its audience into the creative thought process of today's most innovative pioneers.







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