



WHAT SHOULD GOOGLE DO?



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AN eBook OF PUBLIC BRAINSTORMS

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WHAT SHOULD GOOGLE DO? It seems like a simple enough question. The extraordinary thing is how many people want to answer it.

Unlike almost any other brand I can think of, this one excites real passion. I wore my Google t shirt (a gift from my friend Wes at Google) to the greenmarket in New York last week. No less than five people walked up to me and, without prompting, started a conversation about how much they loved Google. A tomato salesperson grabbed me by the arm, looked me right in the eye and said, “Google changed my life for the better. Google opened doors for me that I didn’t know existed. Google is my friend. No, [and then she raised her voice a few notches] Google is my BEST FRIEND.”

Wow. That’s quite a responsibility.

It seems as though her best friend is about to reach a turning point. Google has triumphed as almost no other web site (in fact, as almost no other *company*) has ever done before. Within just a few years, with almost no money spent on marketing, they completely dominate the surfing patterns of the



entire world. Just about everyone visits Google sooner or later during a typical day online. The number of people who interact with that friendly search page is astronomical.

But things change.

Google's going to go public. Or not. They're hiring tons of people—some neophytes, some seasoned experts. They have access to tons of cash, legions of smart people and a brand that's just waiting to do something more.

So what should they do?

It's easier for me to start by telling you what they shouldn't do. They shouldn't do what just about every company with a great original idea does. They shouldn't get stuck.

A world-changing idea is rare indeed. When it happens, the founders are both happy and rich. Then they sell out—to investors, to Microsoft, to Wall Street.

Suddenly, in order to stay both happy and rich, the founders need to add one more thing to their list of objectives: predictable, profitable growth.

The obvious way to do that is to milk the current cow. To push the current business model, squeeze it, adjust it, nurture it and make it work more effectively. Productize your services and servicize your products. Make the place more “professional.” I watched this happen to people I liked. It was bad.

Sure, it’s great for the money guys (in the short run). Sure, it allows the founders to stay rich and fool themselves into thinking they’re happy. But what it really does is shortchange the opportunity. It leads the A people to hire B people, who, of course, hire C people. It gives the early execs immunity as they build sinecures and defend slovenly decisions. It creates an aura of superstition. Nobody, it seems, can identify precisely *why* the first idea changed the world, so it’s really hard to change the model, tweak the logo, rewire the systems. Mess with too much and YOU MIGHT BREAK IT!

Sorry. I got carried away there. A flashback. It won’t happen again.

So, anyway, where was I?

Oh, that's right. Not getting stuck. Thinking big. Changing the world a *second* time. Western Union couldn't do it. RCA did. CompuServe couldn't do it. Neither could AOL. Apple, surprisingly, did it three times (personal computers, graphical interfaces, digital music). Lots of companies never even bother to try.

So, if you were Google and you wanted to compound the greatness, what would you do? That was the whole question. Notice I didn't ask what they should do to make more money or have more impact or just make the contributor's life better. The answers herein address all three of these, it appears.

Before we get to the answers from the group, I'll go first (hey, it's my ebook, so sue me.)

I think Google is terrific, I use it a hundred times a day, but it's very, very transparent. That, of course, is part of its appeal. Google doesn't have a point of view or much of an experience. You tell it what you want and –boom– it disappears and replaces itself with what you asked for.

That's a great experience, but it's not the foundation for a great business. Being transparent in a world where there's no real long-term barrier to entry is a risky business. If someone else introduced a quantum leap in search, something with a great value proposition, sexy interface and clever name, there's nothing at all Google could do to keep people from walking out. There's no switching cost.

So that's what I want to address. Not the philanthropic and quixotic stuff that they might do for no real return. Nope, I want to talk about how to make Google permanent and powerful and profitable and useful, all at the same time. [the reason it might be worth reading this, if, say, you don't work for Google, is that you might be able to apply this thinking to your business as well.]



Start with the fact that Google has no permission to talk to me. At all. They don't even know who I am.

The first rule of Permission Marketing is simple. After you've spread the ideavirus, after you've got people excited about you, *ask if you can talk to them in a way that they want to be talked to.*

So, if Google asks me if they can watch what I search for and email me every three weeks if they find something I might like, I'd say yes. So would 50 million other people.

Now, Google has the ability to find things on behalf of its audience. It could go to Maytag and say, "We have three million people who searched for 'energy efficient refrigerator' last week. If you give us a \$100 rebate coupon, we'll email it to them."



Notice that this power-inverting relationship only works if Google realizes that they're working for the user, *not* the advertiser. If they pit advertisers against each other to get the very best deal on behalf of me and other users, I'm all for it.

Over time, Google's knowledge of who I am and what I want becomes far more detailed. Over time, Google ought to be able to offer more and more beneficial offers.

Of course, it gets more powerful. Most people aren't nearly as good at surfing as you are. They go to Google and type in "Lincoln" when they want to do a paper on his last five days in office (as opposed to buying a boring luxury car or visiting Nebraska). It's not Google's fault that people are dumb, but they can do something about it.

Once they start tracking what happens after a search (which they can happily do if they have permission from people to do so), then they can discover which pages are getting clicked on. From this, and from the history of the searcher, they can radically redefine what it means for something to be the "best" page. Now, switching away from Google is very hard. Now, building an engine better



than Google is almost impossible, because the competition won't have the datastream.

So now that Google is regularly communicating with you by email and tracking your searches and how they work, they can turn that power into something designed to make the web itself better organized.

The offer: Allow any webmaster to include strictly formatted metadata that Google defines. Attach that data to links that Google controls. Call it a "plex" and have the symbol be a g in a circle, like this: © but with a G.

Anyway, click on the plex and Google automatically takes you to the *next* page most likely to satisfy someone like you doing a search like that. Pages without plexes, naturally, won't be as appealing to surfers, so quickly every webmaster will install a plex, which furthers Google's functionality and power.

Just a few more things.

Now that Google has a relationship with all its users and with millions of sites, it can start to truly unify the web. I think they ought to do this by inventing a web currency. And do it quickly and well, before Microsoft screws it up.

Because Google can get all the sites with plexes to cooperate, creating a standard here isn't hard. Because they already have a toolbar, finding a platform isn't hard. And putting something truly revolutionary in the toolbar makes it compelling to download and install the thing.

You open an account with Google. Pay for it with a credit card or PayPal.

Now, whenever you visit a site, you can use the Google toolbar to pay for content, or small items. Suddenly, collecting a ten cent royalty to read a web page for a year is easy. Buying an mp3 or a pdf is trivial. Google keeps a penny or two per transaction. That's enough.

All the stuff I've listed feels hard, especially if your mantra has been to be transparent. But all of these things are permanent, all of these things change



the user's experience for the better, and all of these things are worthy of a company that's now worth billions of dollars.



THE PEANUT GALLERY CHIMES IN: In August, 2003, I asked readers of my blog (www.sethgodin.com, click on my head) to add their own suggestions as to what Google might do. What follows is the best of their suggestions.

I haven't edited them closely, so here they are as they came to me. No endorsement should be implied... I just thought it was fun. Thanks to Ramit Sethi for compiling the list.

You may email this, post this, print this and share it. You can't, however, edit it or charge for it.
Thanks.

Google needs to set up a wall to competitors, who might someday develop a better search technology. How? Make users so committed to the Google brand that it would be painful to leave.

Google: Give me a personal Web page, maybe <http://ramit.Google.com>. Track what I click on for a week and mine your data for what other sites you think I would like. Then give me the most integrated, up-to-date personalized recommendations (news, products, essays, etc) available on the Internet.

Think about it: I could visit my friends' sites and see what they like. If I respect Jakob Nielsen's opinions, for example, I can click his Google links. Google could build communities and create new dialogues. And with every click I made, my own links would change on the fly.

The only way to get these would be to be a Google customer...and once I started, I'd never leave.



Ramit Sethi

Ramit is a senior at Stanford University, where he studies technology and psychology. He was Seth Godin's first-ever summer intern in 2003.

<http://www.stanford.edu/~ramit>

These is probably a lightweight suggestion for Google, as it doesn't have much to do with direct revenue generation, but here we go anyway.

GOOGLE FOR PRESIDENT I believe that Google, being the world champion of search engines and almost a culture of it's own could greatly impact people's desire and willingness to cast a vote in the 2004 Presidential election. As you likely know, only 51% of the eligible voting population voted in the 2000 Presidential election.

The GOOGLE FOR PRESIDENT campaign could go something like this; Google would provide a link called "Google for President." This would link to a page that asks 10 very straight forward, unbiased questions, answerable by clicking a radio button, not unlike most survey sites. After the Google-ite has finished the survey they would press a 'submit' button that would inform them that "based on your answers the candidate who most matches your way of thinking (or better words that convey that sentiment) is 'candidates name'". The page would then be printable and the Google-ite could take that along with them to the voting booth.

Given that the folks at Google are geniuses, they could ask the Google-ite to submit their zip code or street address and print out the location and directions to the nearest voting station along with their results page. Now this only works if Google can do the following;

Ensure that the questions are unbiased, clear and unambiguous.

Have some sort of reward for the Google-ite for taking their printed 'voting recommendation' to the voting station. For this I suggest an army of volunteer Google-ites who would hand out 'Google for President' buttons or stickers. (yes, there are some logistical and real dollar costs involved but they would not be that big a deal).

I know this sounds cheesy and somewhat goofy but you of all people, being the viral marketing guru that you are, know that the Googles of the world are rare and hold terrific sway with their loyal users (Google-ites). As far as publicity is concerned I think that the folks at Google could see the tremendous potential



here for more even more word of mouth infection, and they may do something good for the country as well. After all the 18 - 29 year old market is the least likely to vote in a Presidential election and the 'Google for President' campaign may just get them thinking that voting can be painless and fun.

John Tedeschi, MBA

Professional Business Coach

<http://www.johntedeschi.com>

I think they should set up a service where they store personal documents for you and make them easily searchable for information you need - all online of course. Besides that, just keep perfecting that search technology. It still has a long way to go before it can parse language to realize exactly what it is I am looking for.

Rob May

I am a 27 year old MBA with a technical background. I hope to become an entrepreneur soon.

<http://www.businesspundit.com>



I think Google should launch a telephone service—call them up with a question and they drill down the answer.

I am so addicted to using Google it kills me that I can't call it up for the 2 - 3 hrs a day I'm in my car.

My wife has worked there since 2000 and she won't listen to me about this—maybe they'll listen to you.

Mitchell Cahn

Founder of Unionwear, union made in America custom logo hats, shirts, and bags for unions, government agencies, the military, post office, political campaigns, and sweatshop-conscious organizations.

<http://www.unionwear.com>

Google needs to go offline.

What if Google tried a bricks & mortar store, one part Google, one part Starbucks, and one part Sharper Image. They could have a wireless zone where you could bring your laptop or stations where you could rent internet access (similar to Kinkos). You could get your lattes there and they would also have cutting edge products to try out. The companies that sell these products would pay for placement in the store and then if a customer was interested in purchasing they could use a special free internet station to place the order and have it shipped to their home address. Seeing an orb (<http://www.thinkgeek.com/gadgets/electronic/5da2/>) online is cool, but I would imagine the impact would be greater seeing one in person, up and running.

This store would best work in a tourist-heavy town. It could be the destination place to go to find any info you wanted about whatever city you were in. Hire local experts as customer service agents. "Where's the best place to get Chinese here? Let's go by Google, check our email, get some coffee, and find out."



Post the IO best inquiries of the week on a giant chalkboard—ultra low-tech. Make it comfortable to stick around for two hours and they could re-define the American hang-out joint. Plus I would just love to see a Google storefront. A plain, white, featureless exterior with just the logo and a door.

Michael Devers

Michael has been working full-time, in one way or another, in the music business since 1988. “One maxim you can take from me - never trust anyone in the music industry”.

<http://www.lonestarmusic.com>

Next thing Google needs to do is figure out how to master the “Deep Internet”—those web sites that can only be accessed after using passwords or jumping through other hoops, sites that are currently invisible (at least at the content level) from most search engines. That might entail two offerings: 1) a free service that digs into the free sources of information 2) a for-pay service that either charges small fees for each search (or a time-based subscription) or allows individuals to search sites to which they have paid access

Next they should look at a “breaking news” service—one designed to get to topics being discussed right now, one that doesn’t wait for the ranking process to let these sites filter to the top. An example might be the web site discussed in the allegations against the Episcopal bishop-elect that hit the news in the last 24 hours. Get it to the top now, because people are going to be looking for it.

Joe Goss



Joe is currently patching together employment from the leftovers of the jobless recovery. His background is primarily in running the recruiting operations for high tech companies such as SAP and Forrester Research.

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Companies are paying SEO's for monthly search engine ranking information. Google could offer a monthly service of site ranking reporting for a site within Google and all Google-influenced search engines. Therefore, I sign up my business for a monthly fee and receive a monthly report of my rankings. Report could either be on-line, e-mail, or snail mail for a few extra dollars. Report could be customized to include historical comparisons, competitive comparisons, etc. and charged according to detail.

Chris Huff

Mr. Huff, president of Tiger Green Productions, has been working in the Information Technology field since 1996 in the areas of software consulting, internet development, and service-level tracking. He is a Microsoft Certified Solution Developer active in the internet community educating developers in problem solving and understanding client needs.

<http://www.tigergreenproductions.com>



Regarding a future vision of Google... since nearly every business professional is using it I would make it more personal. I would leverage the inherent knowledge present in Google data with a single relationship focus:

Offer a free or modest (<\$25/yr) fee to set up personal profiles - let users put in sets of keywords/areas of interest and Google can monitor traffic/interest along with site content changes and present summary of "activity" within the areas of interest you define (and refine over time). I suppose it could do email notifications like the tool they have in BETA.

Paul Burke

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If I ran Google, I'd refocus its positioning from "... the closest thing the Web has to an ultimate answer machine," to "What you want to know *now*." After all, "Google it" has become the instant answer to almost any question. I'm sure parents are already saying it to their 3-year olds' "but why" nagging as both trudge up to the home office computer to find out why the sky really is blue.

Then, I'd expand Google's services to build on that promise. Envision the same 3 year old at the zoo asking why the giraffe's neck is so long. Via Google voice search, a little monitor next to the giraffe facts plaque supplies a host of links to answers.

Meet someone new at a party? Google them instantly via your web enabled cell phone. Need to find a great recipe for the soft shell crab and heirloom potatoes that you notice on sale at Safeway? Google it via your shopping cart interface. Co-branded partnership deals with retail companies, mobile firms, or educational institutions (Google U?) would expand the brand from searching to knowing.



Denise Klarquist

Denise is the Vice President of Marketing at Cheskin, a strategic research and consulting firm. Her passions lie in nurturing the relationship between design, business, and the experience of the customer.

<http://www.cheskin.com>



If I ran Google, I would develop a COMPARE function. They already have the SEARCH function down pretty well... Now add COMPARE.

Wouldn't it be incredible to search mortgages, new cars, homes, jobs, gas prices, books, the price of anything you can imagine... products... services... and COMPARE them?

It would be along the lines of www.togasprices.com but on a larger scale! Include everything that Google can search! Can you imagine having access to the list of all retailers selling widgets in the city of Toronto... or in the Province of Ontario... hey... or in Canada!... why not in North America?! or beyond!... and have their prices posted right there next to the product!! It is perfect competition! The marketplace would truly be on-line! The world could become one big Free Trade zone! Just imagine.... "Imagine there's no countries, it isn't hard to do..." Hmmm....what would Lennon say? For that matter, what would Lenin say? Capitalism isn't so bad now is it!



Andrew Blunden

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Supposedly, Google will be seeing a serious threat from Microsoft with the release of LongHorn. Microsoft could enable searching of a user's desktop, coworker's desktops, file servers and the web in a single tool. I'd use this if the web search was comparable to Google and if Google didn't have an equivalent.

Yahoo obviously has Google's ad and syndicated search business as their main target with the purchase of Inktomi and Overture/Fast/Altavista.

Therefore, I think Google needs to:

Fend off MS:

- Have a presence on the user's desktop.
- Eliminate the line between searching desktops, networks and the web.

Fend off Yahoo:

- expand advertising capabilities

Continue to innovate Search:



- introduce new search techniques.
- introduce search personalization to the masses using desktop.
- introduce search visualization tools to the masses.

Step I. Presence on the user's desktop. I'd start by building on the Google toolbar platform. Lots of people have downloaded the Google toolbar and are screaming for more search features in their browser. Google has a window to introduce a new browser before MS introduces a new one and they could do this with relatively little effort by developing a relationship w/ the recently AOL-free Mozilla group.

I'd introduce a Google branded mozilla powered browser. Additionally, the ethic behind each brands would mesh well together. Each has a techie/freedom from Microsoft hegemony oppression mentality and this group knows how to spread an ideavirus.

Step 2. Introduce New Search Techniques. I'd then license alexa.com ranking and related information data and offer the following functionality in the Google browser and on the Google website:

- popularity ranking, traffic data and patterns
- user edited related links
- visitors also visit *this* site

Since alexa launched their Google-powered search and combined it with these features, I've started using alexa instead of Google. Google could even start to contribute data to the alexa rankings by integrating the data collection tools into their browser. More data would make the rankings more statistically sound. Of course, Google would get explicit permission to collect data from users and allow the user to opt-out.

I'd also acquire Ask.com/Teoma.

Google already has an interest invested in Ask with a reserve to invest more (I believe). They would add a second strong, but underutilized brand, for their search and eliminate a very capable competitor. Google could drive traffic to

Teoma and Ask and easily raise their awareness, hopefully stealing some marketshare from msn and yahoo. Teoma's "suggested refined search queries" are also a powerful tool for narrowing down a search.

Step 4. Build out online ad serving network, software and network capabilities. Ask has a small(er) advertising network with duplicate and complementary capabilities to Google's network. It'd add some marketshare in a very competitive market.

I'd also purchase Valueclick, Doubleclick or another independent advertising network. Google's main competitors: Yahoo, MSN and AOL enable advertisers to reach targets using multiple methods that allow agencies to be creative. Although it is not as in vogue as paid search listings, there is a lot of money in it. Capabilities, such as banner ads, rich ads, content sponsorship, affiliate marketing and email newsletters are all critical to getting advertiser's money (branding and customer acquisition). Google wouldn't destroy these companies' independent images because Google does not have content of its own and would not have reason to be biased in terms of ad placement. Also,

Google has been very successful in selling search solutions to major web properties. They could leverage this to offer ad serving and intelligence mining capability software to these customers.

Step 5. Introduce search visualization tools to the masses. I'd acquire The Brain Technologies Corporation. <http://www.thebrain.com/>. After the acquisition, I'd visualize Google's algorithmic search results using brain technology and make it available on the web. Instead of seeing a list of results, we'd then see a web of interconnected results that we could then navigate or browse. We'd be able to quickly visualize the most important or relevant site in the network. This would make Google's web results browsable in a way which I can currently only do with directories or Alexa.com.

Step 6. Introduce search personalization to the masses using desktop. I'd then rebrand the Brain's personal brain to My Google Brain (maybe make it part of the new Google browser) and make it available as a free download. The personal brain allows users to map all of the files on their system, bookmarks and categories by using their natural relationships (not the hierarchical system

window's file system uses). It then allows users to visualize an interconnected web of websites, contacts, emails, files and categories. This tool would allow people to create categories and link them to search pages at Google or other search engines. Google could integrate with this and build a tool that automatically notifies my brain of changes to their search results.

Step 7. Eliminate the line between searching desktops, networks and the web. I'd then make the Personal Brain a P2P software so that people could share certain parts of their brain with other people's brains. That's where the ideavirus comes in. People would be inviting other people to have a peak inside their brains.

Peter Caputa IV

President and Founder of WhizSpark Corporation, an event planning and promotion software and service provider.

<http://www.whizspark.com>



How about a “Google Kiosk” in the malls that would search a database of inventory from every store... with prices please! Of course if no one is stocking the item you request, what a great lead! Google then sends the lists of most requested “no stock” items to the retailers and wham-o!

Tim Yates

Tim.Yates@ttiinc.com

I would start over again from this point in time while running the original Google-in other words run my new site as a competitive site to the original to see if there is a way to improve on the entire concept and technology-new design-layout-also a little “paradoxical intention” may work as well-try killing the whole concept and in doing that it may grow even greater than it is at this point.

Walter Paul Bebirian

I am a photographer - Photographing since 1958.

<http://www.575488trillion.com>



I'd use the Google model to create the central source of streaming media. Instead of going to NBC or CNN or ESPN or whatever movie maker, newspaper, or any other streaming info source, I'd go to Googlestream, type in "Kobe" and see any and all streaming media available about that city in Japan... what, there's another Kobe in the news?!

Ron Richards

Ron Richards is the marketing manager for a banking software company. He uses the internet for marketing, streaming, communications, and research.

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I would launch “Google Omnipotent” ...a way to move among networks to find relevant info by combining and synthesizing info from internal corporate info (databases, intranets, and personal computer files... with the right permissions, of course) as well as external info from the Internet.

The problem today is silos of information... lots of knowledge exists, but it’s not synthesized properly for human navigation or even accessible. For example, if I’m a product manager trying to launch a new product at Cisco. I want to see the most popular internal launch process info (docs, excel, ppts, web pages, e-mails, IMs, etc.) used/viewed by Cisco employees as well as external info from websites, experts, discussion boards, blogs, etc.

Today, I can search Google externally. I can also purchase a Google Enterprise appliance for internal searching. But I can’t combine the two from one, intuitive interface. Google Omnipotent would be a Purple Cow.

David Morse

Chairman, New England Technology Marketing Summit



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I just realized if you put in a ISBN / or UPC code directly into the main search bar at Google.com it does not give you a list of retailers who are selling that product.

If you go to Froogle.com, it does, however, the list of quality retailers is not extensive (I want to see info from half.com, ebay, amazon.com, powells, alibris, etc.).

This brought me to the following 3 suggestions.

- 1) Consumers should be able to enter a ISBN/UPC/ or various product code directly into the Google.com site and have a regular results page and a link that allows you to see the Froogle.com results page if your looking to purchase.
- 2) Google should license retailers a API solution that allows their product data to be continually updated with the Froogle.com purchasing site. Google could either charge for the license or give it away free, but charge a small transaction fee when a consumer purchases using a Froogle link.

3) Google should use the Froogle.com data to give consumers information on what are the best as well as quickest selling books, music, dvds, etc. Froogle could give as much purchasing information as Amazon currently does for their users (actually more given that they will have data on all purchaser not just the ones of one vendor.) They could give all that "people who bought Purple Cow also bought Purple boots" exponentially better than Amazon does.

What is great is that Google can play with Froogle.com as their commerce brand without ruining the integrity of the main Google.com search engine.

Andy Louis-Charles

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Andy Louis-Charles holds a bachelor's degree in Industrial & Systems Engineering from Ga. Tech, and a law degree from Univ. of Florida. Andy



is both the V.P. of Wind & Rain, Inc., a socially-conscious real estate development corporation which revitalizes & rebrands urban communities and the founder of the Not-Only-For-Profit Forum, which tracks the operation of market-based businesses that pursue a social mission.

If I were in charge of Google I would be working on three changes:

First, investigating whether the search engine can be made to be trusted. A simple example. I often use `inurl:pdf` in a search, because experience has taught me the papers I want to read are most often pdf, not html. Can this be built into the engine?

Second, whether to offer to do searches for a fee. For example, all information of Paul Allen's investment in X company, delivered by email with a listing of search results and links.

Third, whether to bundle searches periodically and offer the result for a fee. I practice white collar crime. I really would pay (not much, but some) for a weekly blast of everything new on the web about white collar crime. In addition, with broadband and micropay, Google can also go into the business of selling webcast events subscriptions. For example, a student who runs a search on "Hamlet" might get a pop up window offering a web cast of the play, a critique, a lecture from Harvard. This is similar but different than



advertising and requires a much better content. Any way, if any of these ideas make you rich or famous, please remember me.

John L. Davidson

Trial lawyer, with emphasis on banking and securities law, construction law, and white collar crime. Developed strong interest in business modeling doing “corporate autopsies” of failed banks and savings and loans, none of which knew or understood the concepts of the theory of the business, or even what is meant by a business model.

<http://www.JohnLDavidson.com>



Let's face it, Google rocks. It's been called the "dial tone of the Internet" and it is. Because of their dominance in search, they are collecting an unimaginable amount of data from what people type into the Google search box.

Think about your average supermarket. People coming in, buying stuff and leaving all day long. Now, let me ask you a question. Can you tell me, for each of the last 20,000 people that walked in the store, "What was their purpose for going in?" Well, you can look at what they bought. But what was on their mind when they walked in the door - what problem were they trying to solve? No idea, because we didn't have someone standing at the door asking them and even if we did we might not get the truth.

Think about Google. 200 million searches a day and by the very text people type into the search box, you know exactly what's on their mind when they go there - what they're looking for. That data is extremely valuable to businesses. It's a market research treasure trove. New product designers and people

planning to launch a new business could greatly benefit from this. Even political candidates. (In the last month, were there more searches on “Issue #1” or “Issue #2” related to the election?) If I were Google, I would start a new line of business to commercialize access to the database of search requests people are typing into Google. A keyword research tool on steroids, packaged for the business world. There are some attempts out there to do this but nobody has the data that Google does. If done right, like almost everything Google touches, this could be a goldmine.

Dan Murray

Dan is Internet Marketing Strategist at Ravenwood Marketing, Inc. which he founded last year in Boulder, Colorado. The company helps clients sell products and generate sales leads over the Net, and only gets paid on performance.

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I'm not even sure if this is possible, but it would be amazing if they pulled it off. Google Research Library.

Google gets licenses for every e-book, full-text article, and electronic text available and makes them searchable. They of course wouldn't make the full-text available, but they give their standard search result. With biographical information and a link to Amazon (who would of course give them referral fees). If there is any complaint about Google, it would be that they are only reliable as the content they are searching, and anyone can make a web page these days. So they offer highly reliable content searches. I don't know. Just a thought.

Thomas Knoll

<http://www.dydimustk.com>

There's a tremendous opportunity for Google to be a retailer for online commercial publishers, those that serve both the consumer and corporate markets. Google should build a transaction infrastructure that supports micropayments.

Commercial publishers will find a way to charge for online content that is now free. *Wall Street Journal*, *London Times*, *Financial Times*, and the *Economist* all have content on their websites which is available only to subscribers. *Business 2.0* announced yesterday that they will do the same thing, and it's likely other TimeWarner properties will follow. Once a transparent and simple micropayment transaction model takes hold, these companies will be in a position to make good money selling individual features and special reports. KeepMedia, Louis Borders' new business which will sell aggregated magazine subscriptions online, is really an incubator for the future sale of individual articles. Google could easily introduce a new search category called "media", where search items (not unlike Froogle) included pricing, author, source and summary metadata.



Alex Gault

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Google should stay the course, and add local Google like Yahoo. They should then sell local “advertising” for a very low price. Local could be very specific...down to each small suburb (such as Cupertino or Sunnyvale). The small business advertising potential is relatively untapped by Yahoo and ripe to pick for Google.

Neal Greenberg

Neal is the VP of Sales and marketing for Intellect Lab. In his spare time, he is the President of the Jewish High Tech Community(www.jhtc.org), and on the Board of Directors for the Kitty Petty ADD/HD Institute (www.kpinst.org)

<http://www.IntellectLab.com>



If I ran Google, one thing I would do is create some incredibly awful search engines under another name so people would still be thrilled with the simplicity and focus Google offers.

John Z. Nittolo

John Z. Nittolo is the world's first CEO- Chief Evolution Officer. His mission is to inspire, advance, and sustain the evolution of human development in mind, body, and spirit.

<http://www.mvpinstitute.com>

Google should keep doing what they do best, but build on that. So many of these companies did great things, but they got caught up in the sexiness of other medias and all of a sudden, they wanted to become web broadcasters or providers of everything internet related. So let's break this down. What does Google do best? Search. What else can you search for? Pay to search for long lost relatives. Search for the best price on business equipment (CNET perhaps?). Pay to search for credit history or long lost money. Pay to search for car history reports (maybe Carfax). The list goes on, but I believe that Google can become an even greater success if they build on the very thing that they dominate, searching, and not get caught up in the excesses of success and the whims of fanciful execs. Stick with what got you there, but grow before somebody else has the chance to build a better mouse trap. Anyway, that's what I would do.

Matt Prielipp

Matt lives in Avondale, Arizona USA with his very lovely wife and two daughters, ages 5 & 8. He actually works for Sierra H Broadcasting, a company with two stations, Mega 104.3/99.3 and Energy 92.7/101.1, but in his spare(?)



time, he continues to work towards building his own business, dabuzz marketing solutions.

<http://www.dabuzz.com>

I would recommend that they achieve two goals: The first will make them a bigger player in the Web development sphere (which will allow them to greater influence the Net generally - and the second will allow them to gain market share of their current user base.

1. As the engine of simplicity and strength and the new owner of Blogger, why don't they capitalize on this compound power? Google should quickly redevelop multiple tiers of Blogger that can be used for the enterprise, for small weblogs, and for medium sized companies looking to manage content. The products could be marketed and sold based to anyone and everyone who needs content management, which is everyone. To date, there are too few good, easy-to-use and integrate content management systems. (Macromedia could have done the same thing with Contribute, but the product isn't there yet.)

2. Google should partner with an organization (perhaps Mozilla) to provide a next-generation browser that can run on Windows/PC. Mac's Safari is almost doing this, though there are many bugs to work out and with Microsoft and



Netscape semi-leaving the browser world, there is a window of opportunity for someone to create a fast, standards-compliant, and lovely new Web browser.

Andrew Boardman

MANOVERBOARD.

<http://www.manoverboard.com>

Games.

Video games to be exact.

The future is now and thus it has been dubbed “interactive”. CDs are obsolete, DVDs while solid, are fairly static as a market. Google needs to address the need, and void as I see it, of interactive and online gamers. Exactly how that can manifest itself is unclear since it is rapidly changing. I suggest videogame rentals/sales [especially used, why let EB take all the profit], classic arcade play on line [via existing JAVA emulation technology], and alternative on line game servers for those tired of traditionally run servers and to fill the requirements of older games with on line play capability that are no longer serviced by the manufacturer of the game.

Google need not worry about flavor of the month but rather build on the vast and rich history of videogames and the people that love them. I ought to be able to “search” Google [perform a ‘Google’] to find info on ANY game I want, find a server that I can play it on, demo I can download, or buy it or



rent it if I desire, all with one click. Nobody out there puts all of that at my fingertips with one search. Nobody.

Mark Wolfe

The Central Scrutinizer - Scrutinizing Since 1993

<http://www.phillyclassic.com>



Free GoogleMail (yeah, I know, it's been done)...BUT with Google's PageRank or AdWords technology keyed to whatever profile options or keywords the user selects when he signs up for his free email account.

SO, every time YOU send an email to ME it performs a regular Google search of the keyword options or profile I personally selected and gave permission for, and displays the top five ads & top five search results in the email somewhere. OR, alternatively, display the results/ads every time I log into my mail account... so that it displays them on the first page I see after signing in.

The keywords/profile can be changed at any time just like we change our other optional email features like signatures, etc. Anyhow, that's what I'd try... Google could charge their AdWords clients more for including their results in the emails (since it's a guaranteed direct/targeted marketing situation) than for people who use the original search engine, because their Googlemail subscribers will be guaranteed to be performing a search just by using their mail. Therefore, customers have pre-selected themselves by signing up for the



email and submitting their keywords/profile, and are a more profitable group to market to, and Google can charge the advertisers more.

Chris Stearns

(a budding genius who Google really ought to talk to).

chris@gogear.biz

Google subscription service on topics to pull together all views on specific topics- kind of like Drudge, but on a much larger scale.

Invest in TiVo type technology to “re-make” TV into a more interactive, choice-based medium (i.e. search for shows, content, etc)

Become the philanthropy web presence where web advertising that follows you around (voluntarily) will contribute to charities (of whose choice?) based on time and usage. These would be mixed with ads that added revenue for Google

Add a forum for people who search on the same keyword or series of keywords (and want to be listed) can talk (to compare notes on specific topics, etc)

Incorporate voice recognition (and other technologies) into engine so that cell users can be directed to specific sites (like WAP, but voice-based)...

Provide translation services to web sites for foreign visitors (to increase readership). Also, work to reduce trade barriers of e-commerce, especially

Intellectual Property based goods and services through unifying the .com with the .country into a more coherent searchable

Add a “business to business” site for searching to help businesses trying to research products and services and to help businesses increase their web presence more efficiently.

Build a “one sign-in” infrastructure that allowed shoppers, business buyers, researchers to easily and securely communicate with sites without needing to sign-up everywhere (then control access to this kind of like EBay protects their customers with rules)

Provide “premium,” subscription based research tools that involve more AI and human intervention (like some cell phone services are starting to provide today, but more focused on research ownership)

Provide education-oriented searching for schools, universities and academic research in general that was a more “finite” and “controlled” “mini-web”



Create universal, secure Internet currency (an idea that has been tried before, but never “post boom” by such a well-known company). The goal would be to break down international currency/trade barriers and provide secure/maybe anonymous purchase of all sorts of goods and services.

Geoff Nesnow

IT guy turned marketing and sales guy. Problem Solver.

<http://www.livevault.com>

They are making almost as much money as eBay, so I think they are doing quite well, but if they really want to monetize their News service I'd suggest they actually make it personalized and something they could charge for.

They can't put contextual ads on the news.Google.com page because it is too generic. They certainly could put the ads on the new Google email news alerts...and I think they out to continue down the path and use all the data they scrape to allow me to make my own newspaper of just the sections and the sources I am interested in. ...and put some blogs in there as well as the major sources. (There are web services out there that do this today www.MyWireService.com, www.BlogLines.com.)

Google has helped change the way we interact with information on the internet, I think they could continue down this path with improvements to their news service.

[Disclaimer: I made MyWireService and perhaps I'm doing myself a disservice by even announcing to Google that they should put us out of business, but we



certainly see them as potentially our biggest competitor, esp. now that they own Blogger too.]

Gay Gilmore

Recipezaar: Where the Recipes Are

<http://www.recipezaar.com>



Identifying 'holes' in 'failed' Google user searches and notifying experts on related topics somewhat as suggested here:

<http://www.orgnet.com/booknet.html>

Visual Google like here:

<http://www.anacubis.com/solutions/cisolutions/viewer.html>

<http://www.webbrain.com/>

Avi Solomon

Avi is an Innovation Process Consultant who also works as a gardener in Jerusalem, Israel.

<http://www.geocities.com/avisolo>

Perhaps publish a magazine/ezone in the spirit of what Yahoo! attempted—except do it 'right.' I also think they ought to publish a free ebook featuring the most bizarre keywords used to search the web.

Don “The Idea Guy” Snyder

Possessing creative powers beyond those of mere mortals, DON the IDEA GUY rushes to the rescue with tips, tricks, tools and techniques to improve your innovation!

<http://www.dontheideaguy.com>

I'll just make it simple. For every search you do, 1 cent goes to an investment fund for long term poverty eradication and empowerment. Like the fund that we are in the loop to build up. There is in global interest of having poverty eradicated. My mind is all too set on it to think of anything more than above :).

Anders Abrahamsson

Anders Abrahamsson, born 1966 and living in Sweden, is a chairman of ON A MISSION [found]ACTION Sweden aiming at eradicating world poverty by the year 2013 through this sustainable business initiative OAM; launched this Fall 2003, "sustainopreneur" (sustainability entrepreneur) and prefers to be called Global Knowledge Nomad. He spent nine months in Uganda during 2001/2002 doing empirical research for his Master's Thesis in Business Administration focusing micro entrepreneurship and small business development as a poverty reducing factor in the developing country context.

<http://www.on-a-mission.org>



Google's biggest problem is that it does not index :

- a. Relative new comers to the Web, and
- b. Sites that are not extensively linked to by others (and hence do not feature high on its page ranking system)

Ok, so that's two problems. But, if I ran Google, I would find a way to also index the newbies and the not-so-linked sites, if necessary, under a separate category called "Newcomers" perhaps. So that the folks who search on Google will also find these kind of entities.

Naveen Bachwani

Bio : Naveen Bachwani is passionate about Technology and its impact on Business and on Life in general. He has extensive experience in the field of Communication Technology and brings a keen understanding of Business Management issues to his work.



<http://www.NaveenBachwani.com>



Online dating is big business. Consider:

* 26M Americans visited an online dating site during 12/02

* Personals Comprise the Largest Paid Content Category on the Internet: According to a [12/02] study...the Personals category grew 387 percent to become the largest online paid content category among consumers in the third quarter of 2002, surpassing Business Content. (source: comScore Media Metrix)

* I have 43 employees, and we'll bring in \$43 million this year. That's \$1 million per employee,' [uDate president Martin] Clifford said. 'We have zero cost of sales within our business...The margins are almost super-margins. (source: MSNBC.com)

Google+Blogger is an ideal combination for serving this market.

Once Google goes public, here's how I think Go_Ogle will happen:

Soon, Google will improve the searchability of "blogspace" by making it easy for bloggers to annotate their blogs with information about themselves and their blogger friends. This information will be encoded in an RDF dialect called FOAF (Friend of a Friend).

It will then dawn on people that the FOAF file is effectively a static online profile, while the associated blog is akin to a living profile (in the 'living document' sense).

With this, Googling people will come to encompass both researching people you have met -- already a common practice -- and researching people you would like to meet.

The upside potential of this, as introduced above, will prove too substantial for publicly held Google to ignore. (In addition, I believe leadership of the market for online matchmaking software is the gateway to early leadership of the market for lifelong learning and career services,



which will be worth hundreds of trillions of dollars in the coming decades. Toward understanding the relationship between the two markets, consider: according to a recent American Demographics survey, couples in the U.S. meet primarily at work (36%) or school (27%). More on 'online dating software -> LLCS' here [opportunityservices.com]).

Google will then acquire the best makers of RDF query tools and launch Go_Ogle, the mother of all online dating sites.

Frank Ruscica

I am the founder of The Opportunity Services Group, a startup provider of lifelong learning and career services.

www.opportunityservices.com



A matrimonial search. With search fields for different characteristics.

Manu AK

manu_ak@hotmail.com

M29, from Trivandrum, Kerala. Working as an Engineer in Ashok Leyland Ltd - a commercial vehicle manufacturer

Are you Unmarried? <http://www.bharatmatrimony.com/cgi-bin/bmclicksI.cgi?4d>

Register in India's No 1 Matrimony.



Leave it pretty much as it is. Why try to improve on perfection?

Andy A

web architect who currently likes: the summer sunshine, XHTML and Google's calculator.

Random Asides:

1. If we didn't include your idea, sorry. No hard feelings.
2. if you have a new idea, post it on your blog! People can search for it on Google!
3. I ran this through the spellchecker in Word and was amazed and delighted at just how many new words (blog) Word doesn't know. The world keeps getting faster.
4. Reminder, this ebook is free. You can pass it along all you like. You just can't edit it or charge for it.