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Peer-to-Peer Marketing

By Paul Siegel

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Why are Napster, Gnutella and similar sharing programs so loved?
For the same reason that Microsoft is so hated.

Microsoft, though dealing with the most advanced technology, is imbued with the old Superior-to-Inferior philosophy, a philosophy that is still prevalent among the big corporations of our day. Napster and similar sites follow a philosophy more in harmony with today's technology and society: Peer-to-Peer philosophy.

These differing philosophies show up in company organization, management and marketing. I concentrate here on peer-to-peer marketing, which is a synonym for helpfulness marketing.

Superior-to-Inferior Philosophy

What is a boss? Someone who is superior to you.

What is a corporate hierarchy? A ladder of successive superiors.

What is a monopoly? A superior who has the last word.

The old industrial corporation conformed to a Superior-to-Inferior philosophy. It believed in the following 3 maxims:

1 – BIG IS BETTER – The bigger you are the more superior you are. And if you are on top – a CEO or chairman – you benefit handsomely. This is why corporations participate in mergers and acquisitions. This is why companies seek to be monopolies and multinational conglomerates. This is why they have mass advertising

campaigns.

2 – CENTRALIZATION BRINGS CONTROL – They follow the old command and control concept used by military organizations: Superiors lay down the rules and inferiors follow them. The hierarchy is sacrosanct. You hear a lot these days about pyramidal hierarchies being squashed into flat pancakes. In big corporations this is not so. Microsoft offers an outstanding example of a penchant for control. It has developed the Ebook Reader, which exerts control over how you use an ebook you have paid for. Would you like to share this ebook with friends? This Reader makes it difficult for you to do so.

3 – BIG DADDY KNOWS BEST – Superiors have superior information. Superior corporations (big ones) have superior information that inferior corporations (small ones). The top level superior corporations (multinationals) write press releases that make the news, write articles to advance their ideas, get personalities to sell their products on radio and TV. They tell inferior consumers what is good for them and what to buy.

Superior-to-Inferior Philosophy is Dying

Times are changing. At one time the Superior-to-Inferior philosophy worked. It worked well. But it is less effective today. Eventually it will lose most of its effectiveness. There are 2 major reasons for this:

1 – RISE OF TERRORISM – The terrorist attack on September 11 brought our vulnerabilities to the forefront. Which buildings in New York were attacked? The biggest. Suddenly big is vulnerable. Now centralization is bad. Better to allow subdivisions to operate on their own. Big corporations present good targets. Merging is a dangerous activity.

2 – TECHNOLOGY OF CONNECTEDNESS – The Internet is THE technology of our age. The Internet gives a voice to everyone. People may connect to other people in many different ways: websites, publications, email, forums, newsletters, discussion groups, organizations, government agencies, international groups.....Every single person is connected. Superior-inferior classifications are dissolving. When you add to the Internet, the cell phone, wireless and other hand-held devices, the opportunity for the ordinary individual to be informed and to inform others is multiplying at a dizzying rate. Who is superior? Who is inferior? Everyone.

Peer-to-Peer Philosophy

Both terrorism and the technology of connectedness are leading us inexorably to adopt the Peer-to-Peer philosophy. Its 3 maxims are:

1 – SMALL IS BETTER – Small units make small or insignificant targets. What terrorist would target a home business? Small units act and react fast. There is no chain of command to slow things down.

2 – DECENTRALIZATION BRINGS POWER – The far flung Internet is less vulnerable to terror because there is no central control. A terrorist may destroy part of the network, but not the whole thing. Huge Microsoft wants to introduce centralization with its Passport software, which is expected to store everyone's

password. Hack away at Microsoft (which has already been done) and down goes the Internet. Best to resist all attempts at centralization. Decentralization also means small units can develop expertise in specific niches.

3 – COMMUNICATE WITH ALL PEOPLE – Instead of disseminating information from superior to inferior, enable all people involved to communicate with each other, to learn from each other, to work independently with each other. The emphasis is on people, not robots. Robots are merely substitutes for inferiors. People-people communication is the best means for learning, working, and improving.

Basic Marketing Pointers

As the Peer-to-Peer philosophy takes over, the effectiveness of Big Business will decline and the role of Small Business will increase. A home business will be an excellent idea. Here are a few guidelines for your Small Business, based on the peer-to-peer philosophy:

1 – Rely on people, not robots

2 – Make every employee a decision maker

3 – Increase outsourcing to keep yourself small

4 – Use people-to-people communication to learn and to help others learn

5 – Build small communities that encourage member independence

6 – Sell information expertise (e.g., ebooks) with a minimum of copyright control

Using RSS: When It's Ok To Keep Up With The Joneses

By Scott Lindsay

"Peer pressure has many redeeming qualities. It is the pressure of our peers, after all, that gives us the support to try things we otherwise wouldn't have." – Bill Treasurer

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds have a feeling of being en vogue. You know, the type of feeling that has you jumping into the river just because your friends are. The kind of thing your mother warned you about.

The truth is RSS feeds are sweeping the Internet community, but for reasons far greater than peer pressure.

Businesses involved in online marketing are fast discovering the value of making their site information RSS compatible. Savvy online business owners are finding that the application of an RSS feed provides a win-win scenario. You win because clients return to your website time after time, your client wins because they receive information from you based on their own set of preferences. In the end it is a relatively hands-free way of building trust with your client.

Building Links

The application of RSS feeds also provides a targeted opportunity to increase link building for your site. The RSS feeds include links you may have on your blog or website and allow your RSS feed subscriber to visit those links that generate traffic for your website or blog.

As web-based businesses work to integrate technologies they are finding that the full implementation of business friendly applications create greater recognition for their website and allow them to grow the business at an accelerated pace.

Unified Pressure

"Rarely do schools acknowledge the power of peer culture in defining standards, and rarely do they take advantage of this power as an engine for quality. When students themselves are in charge of projects that they care about, peer pressure can become a powerful force for high standards." – R. BERGER, Harvard Education Letter

The School of Hard Knocks has its own set of peer pressure tactics, unfortunately much of the peer pressure results in decreased business when there is a refusal to look into the 'high standards' of purposeful advancement.

Many business owners may be intimidated by the new technology or they may simply refuse to learn the new skills. The good news is there are businesses that can assist you in implementing the technology of an RSS feed. There are also businesses that can provide targeted and fully optimized content for your website that has the ability to increase the frequency that your website is utilized, information downloaded and products purchased.

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other web projects. HighPowerSites is the easiest do-it-yourself website builder on the web. Get your own website online in just 5 minutes with

at:



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