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# The BUSINESS MARKETER

INDIA'S FIRST MAGAZINE FOR PRACTITIONERS OF B2B MARKETING

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## Collateral Advantage

**Are your communications design standards adding to your company's image? Are they ensuring you get an opportunity to show prospects your real worth?**

- Dhananjay Balodi

How often have you seen good companies look great and great ones look awe-inspiring simply because of the way they come across? After your prospect discovered your company on a search engine, at a tradeshow, on the pages of a trade magazine or on an industry database, she probably visited your website or browsed through your marketing brochure. In the first two minutes of 'engaging' with your company's communications she probably formed an impression of how good your company might be and what value it could deliver in an engagement.

*Doesn't seem worthwhile. Worth a try. Must engage.*

She has very quickly 'slotted'

your company in a mental heirarchy of supplier options. *Positioned you.* You probably won the battle for her attention or lost it just there. Even before you made a sales call! Think about it. Your company's fate more often than not, is defined by what she's seeing or reading on your marketing communications.

### Managing perception

Fact: Business engagements often start with a *pre-disposition* of your business in the customer's mind. Your marketing communications – brochures, website, sales collateral - is the visible face of the company, and almost always, the first touchpoint with your audiences. Very often, they are your only chance to make an impression. What kind of perception are they building for your business in the eyes of potential customers, business partners, media, analyst and investor community as well as potential talent that might want to join you?

Ask yourself. Did it grab her *attention*? Did it evoke *interest*? Did the quality of your marketing communications create a positive image of your business?

*contd. on Pg. 2*

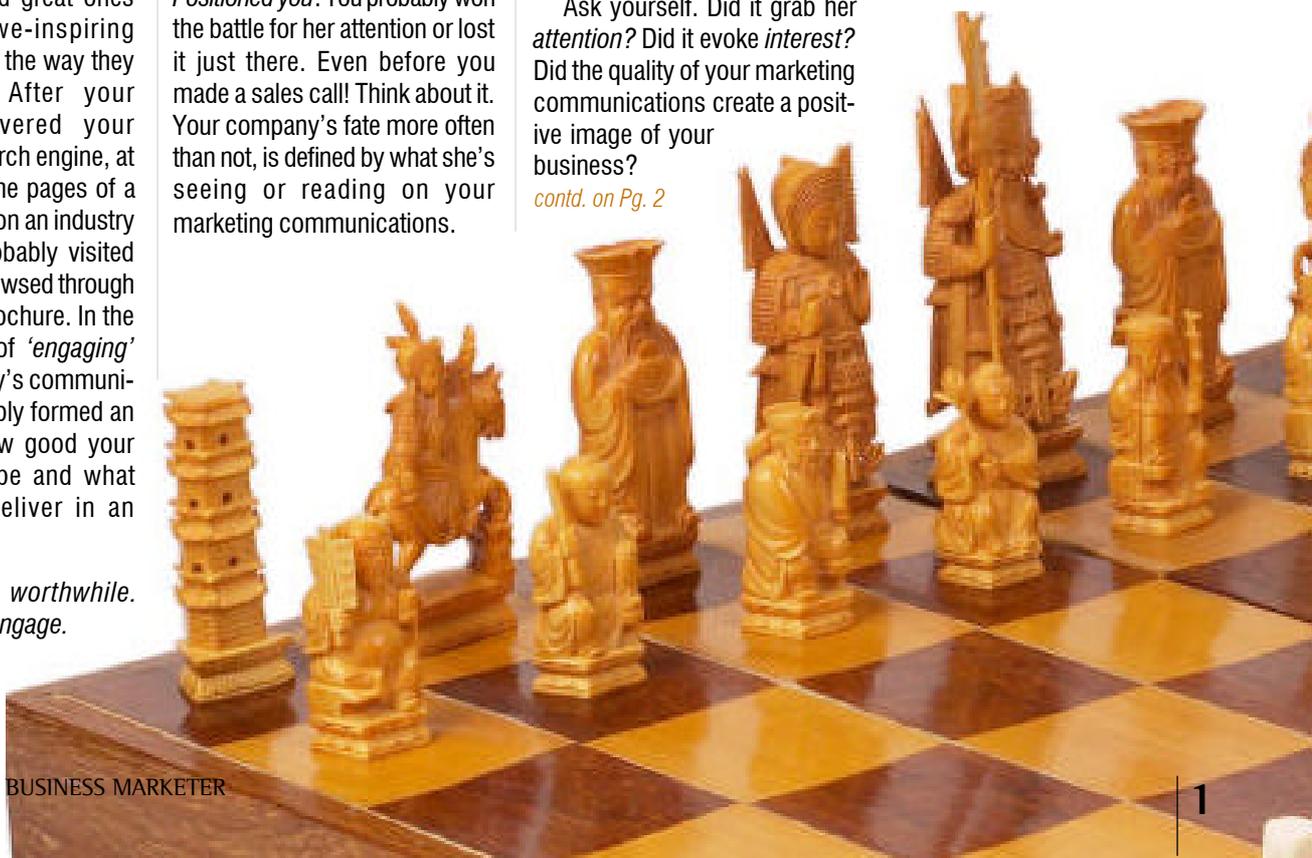
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# The evolution of a technology company

In the typical hi-tech start-up's pursuit of marketing, focus on solving real-world customer problems often gets diluted  
 avers **Barbara Nelson**.

**W**e've all seen the evolution of a typical technology company. An entrepreneurial founder creates a utility that she needs to simplify her daily job. Explaining it to another, that person asks if it's for sale. Based on the enthusiasm of a few friends, she convinces herself that there is an opportunity here and starts a company. She becomes a vendor. She quickly hires someone to sell the product while she handles all the technical work. Over time, she grows the company, hiring more developers and some technical support people and a documentation writer and a marketing specialist. But she continues in the role of technical leader. After the huge success of the first product, she envisions other products that people surely must need. But the second product isn't very successful and the third is a disaster.

The problem, of course, is that she no longer knows or understands her target market. Having become a president, she is no longer working in the domain and doesn't really understand the environment of the market. Instead of managing databases or warehouses or assets, she's now managing hiring and firing and financing. With her new income, she's buying toys that she could never before afford and she's really focused on her new set of interests. Because the new products haven't been successful, she challenges her executives to find new ways to generate revenue. First the new head of Development takes control. Since they only control the feature set, developers build "cool" technology leveraging the latest tools. But these products don't sell either. Now the VP of Sales takes control and we increase our sales reach, adding remote offices, paying large commissions, and having offsite meetings in exotic locales to attract the best sales people. Revenue increases a bit but not enough to offset the costs. Then someone reads a book on branding so we hire a VP of Marketing to "get our name out there" and to "generate some buzz." After watching all these departments spend money like crazy, the VP of Finance steps in to bring some order from the chaos. Since Finance can't increase revenue, they focus on cutting costs, cutting all the excessive spending of the other departments. When Finance goes too far, the founder steps back in and focuses on her roots—the technology—and the cycle begins again. The VP of Development says, "Customers don't know what they want." The VP of Sales says, "I can sell anything." The VP of Marketing says, "We just have to establish a brand." The VP of Finance says, "We have to control spending." Our focus goes from technology to revenue to branding to cost-containment, over and over again.

This story is all too familiar to those watching the technology space. And we're seeing it in biotech and life sciences, too. What the president needs is someone to be in the market, on her behalf, just as she used to be. What's missing from this cycle is the customer. The customer with problems that we can solve. And one who values our *distinctive* competence. ■

Barbara Nelson is an instructor with Pragmatic Marketing – a technology product management and marketing training organization. For more on Barbara, please visit [www.pragmaticmarketing.com](http://www.pragmaticmarketing.com).

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## Collateral Advantage

contd. from Pg. 1

Did it clearly tell her what your company or product can do for her better than competition? If you hear from her, then it most certainly did. And it is just as likely that your prospect would be willing to concede you some premium value...

Prospects looking to engage with your company have a 'perception intellect'. We see and experience it in our everyday lives. As consumers, we are willing to pick up products and pay significant premiums for a bag of potato chips that are better packaged. Its simple human psychology. More importantly, its simple business sense.

Without doubt, the first step in any buying decision – *consideration* – is determined by the way the visual communication impacts a buyer. In consumer products, it leads to an immediate trial. And in b2b marketing it leads to an enquiry or at least a request for information (RFI).

The moment of truth then. Are your communications design standards adding perception value to your value proposition? Are they ensuring your audience's desire to engage with your company? The ability to appeal to the perception intellect is the single most important barometer of marketing communications effectiveness.

Now how much is that worth to you? ■

Dhananjay Balodi is Director, Intermedia Global – a Mumbai based marketing communications consultancy specializing in b2b/ technology markets. You can reach him at [dj@intermediaglobal.com](mailto:dj@intermediaglobal.com)





# Marketing's New Mousetrap?

**Will blogs be the next media frontier for business marketers?**

Abstracted and versioned from an article that appeared in the ITSMA e-Zine dated July 2005 ([www.itsma.com](http://www.itsma.com)). Reproduced with permission.

Across the globe, marketers are discovering that despite all their efforts at targeted, micro, and account-based marketing techniques, most campaigns still rely on carefully crafted messages that are broadcast or narrowcast to specific "targets". Such precise targeting often achieves true one-to-one marketing. Unfortunately, the emphasis even in such marketing communications remains on "speaking to" rather than "conversing with."

**Blogging potentially changes all that.** Good corporate blogs can become a vehicle for stimulating discussion and building relationships. As blogging expert Stow Boyd observes, "blogs are social media; they tap into communities of interest that already exist." Not surprisingly, the most energetic and successful blogs in the tech world tend to come from the developer community, where constant give and take is a way of life. For marketers, the opportunity is substantial. As blogging moves closer to the business mainstream, marketers across the tech sector are testing blogs in numerous arenas, including:

- ☞ **Internal communication**
- ☞ **Thought leadership**
- ☞ **Demand generation**
- ☞ **Relationship development**
- ☞ **Crisis management**
- ☞ **Media relations**
- ☞ **Product and service launch**
- ☞ **Partner and channel communication**

It remains to be seen though, how marketers can use blogging and if they can indeed make the switch from one-way monologue to interactive discussion. ■

## Why blog for business?

Malmö, Sweden based web communications expert Fredrik Wacka offers eight good reasons on [www.corporateblogging.info](http://www.corporateblogging.info)

### 1 Become the Expert

Position your company as the thought leader in your line of business.

### 2 Customer Relationships

In a forum where your main objective not is to sell, you'll have a more personal relationship between you and your customers. Blogs are a fast way to join the customers' discussions, provide tips and insights or receive feedback.

### 3 Media Relations

It's every PR-consultant's dream to create a channel where media regularly check what you have to say, instead of media just being passive - sometimes indifferent - recipients of press releases.

### 4 Internal Collaboration

Use blogs as a workspace where project members keep each other updated without wasting time writing reports or searching the Outlook inbox.

### 5 Knowledge Management

Blogs works in two ways. First of all, they're an easy way for the readers to find information and resources they want or need. That's obvious and could be used internally in many organizations. Second, blogs are a tool for on-the-job learning.

### 6 Recruitment

If you establish your company as a thought leader, people in your business will pay attention. Chances are good they will see

you as an attractive employer.

### 7 Test ideas or products

A blog is informal. It's part of a conversation where people (often) can comment, and the blog can provide you with a measure of value. Publish an idea and see if it generates interest. Does anyone link to you? What do they say?

### 8 Search engine listing

Well, this has nothing to do with relations. But Google and other search engines reward sites that are updated often, that link to other sites and most importantly, that has many inbound links. Start a blog at your regular site and your ranking on search engines will be boosted.

# Changing Times

All these years, concepts, insights and practices in b2b marketing in our country have been guided almost completely by practitioners of consumer marketing. Pick any business magazine or publication devoted to marketing and you'll see a pre-dominant expression of ideas and experiences from the world of packaged goods, retail and durables.

Technology and b2b marketing however, has evolved significantly over the last few years. It has learnt to adapt and innovate around consumer marketing practices and apply concepts such as branding into its own unique contexts. A few significant trends are impacting this evolution of Indian b2b marketing. These include:

- ▶ **MNC influence:** Industrial marketing majors have set up 100% subsidiaries ever since the renaissance in Indian manufacturing and the economy at large, has made India a lucrative market. They bring a higher order of sophistication to marketing practices.
- ▶ **Product marketing:** A new breed of entrepreneurial start-ups in hi-tech sectors are daring to think 'products' viz. services and their ambitions are global. The result is, that product management is now a serious function at most companies.
- ▶ **Global talent:** The reverse brain drain in talent isn't limited to software professionals. Tech marketing talent too is finding India an attractive employment base.
- ▶ **New-breed marketing services:** An emerging breed of marketing services companies are bringing a more relevant set of skills to service technology and industrial marketing businesses.

Despite these trends, mainstream business media's attention to the non-consumer sector is yet to outgrow the huge fascination it has had with the stock market performance of IT majors. Sadly, there are few stories and analyses on the operational challenges in marketing that the tech sector is dealing with. And indeed, on how progressive changes in marketing at these companies are transforming business.

**The Business Marketer** magazine is a humble attempt at seeking an identity for the Indian b2b marketing fraternity. A forum where they can speak in their own voice on issues, ideas and practices that uniquely concern them.

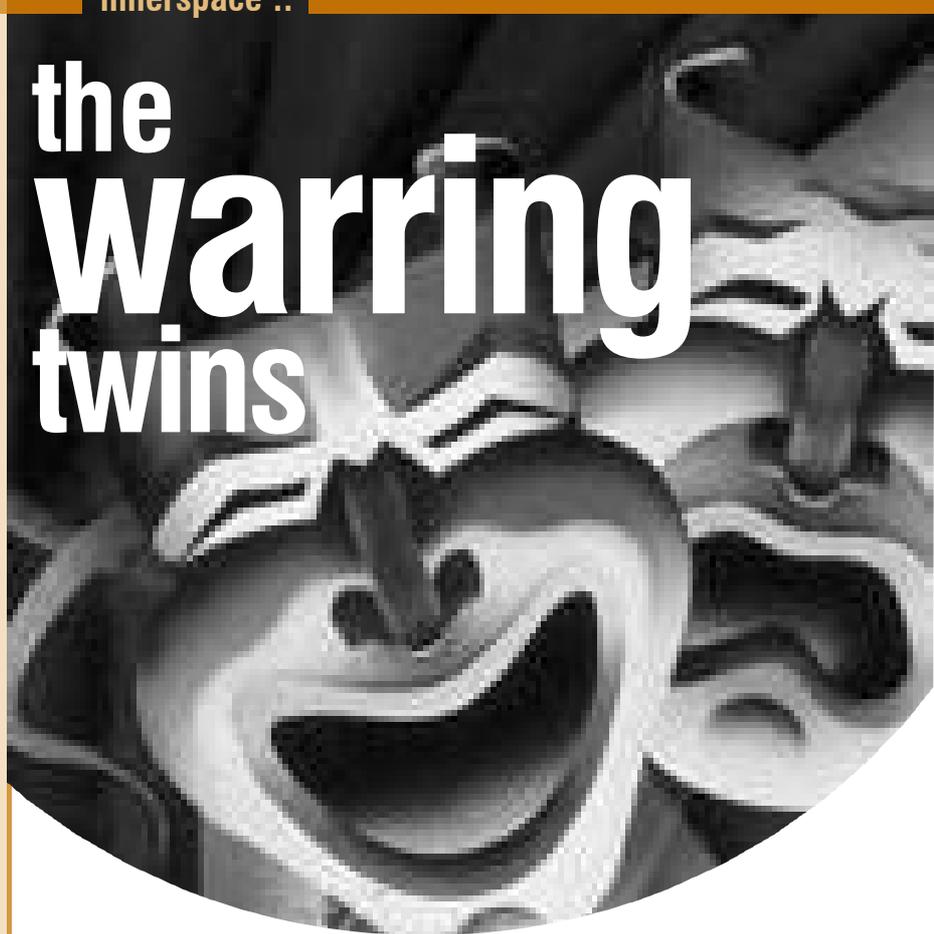
I invite you to participate wholeheartedly. Wishing you a fantastic 2006!

**Dhananjay Balodi**

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# the warring twins



**In many businesses there's a rift between sales and marketing. Sales sees marketing as ivory-tower, know-it-all who stay away from the real action, while marketing sees sales as demanding egomaniacs that are never happy with the tools provided. Here are some reasons why they are joined at the hips but not in the head.**

## Extroverts vs. introverts

There's no question that sales and marketing folks are wired differently. By and large, sales people are extroverts who feed off the energy of meeting new people and persuading them to buy. No other person in a company is as motivated to meet and befriend strangers.

Marketing people, on the other hand, are more analytical and reflective. They happily spend time on solitary duties like analyzing data, reviewing copy or generating budgets. A bigger part of their day involves being by themselves.

## Field work vs. office work

Most sales people hate sitting at their desks. Their lifeblood activities - making sales calls and entertaining customers - happen outside their office. Have you ever watched a sales person in a day long meeting? It isn't pretty. Conversely, marketers must spend large blocks of time in their offices. Their lifeblood activities - gathering and analyzing information, and coordinating projects - necessitates making an office the hub of their daily activities.

## Sales thinks in days; Marketing in years

Ask any marketer how far out they plan and they're liable to answer "three years". Ask a sales person the same question and they'll answer "thirty days". Because Marketing grapples with strategic tasks like developing new products and finding new markets, its time horizon by necessity is longer. Sales with its monthly quotas and weekly targets cares little about events 30 days from now.

## Marketing's view is 30,000 feet; Sales' is 3 feet

Because a marketer concerns herself with groups of customers (segment), she is obliged to view the business from a 30,000 foot perspective. But Sales views the business from just 3 feet - the distance between them and a prospect.

This creates ongoing conflict. For example, a salesperson in the region sees nothing wrong with requesting a special, one-time-only promotion for a preferred customer. But the marketer sees this as potentially angering customers, prospects and sales personnel in other regions. ■

Variable Data Printing :

# Enhancing one-to-one marketing communications

Ever since one-to-one marketing matured as a concept, marketers have looked at ways to integrate customization techniques into mainstream marketing communications programs.

Personalized communications though, isn't new as a practice. Mass customized letters using mail merge - a technique that links names and text on a database to an allocated space on a printed document - have been in vogue for some time now. But effecting graphically rich, high-flexibility mass customization hasn't been either technically easy or cost-effective to achieve. Now, an

emerging technology called variable data printing (VDP) enables marketers to overcome such cost and flexibility challenges.

The genesis of VDP lies in the transformational changes traditional commercial printing has undergone in the recent past. Offset printing is being challenged by a new breed of 'digital' printing systems that provide similar quality of reproduction without the need for cumbersome film and plate processes i.e direct printing off a computer output.

### How VDP works

VDP uses digital printing technology to vary one or more elements in a printed piece during the course of a print run. Far more than mail merge or overprinting, VDP supports changes in text, graphics and even layout! Content - text, graphics and images - is drawn from a computerized database as per programmable



**Far more than mail merge or overprinting, VDP supports changes in text, graphics and even layout!**

'business rules'. These rules define which specific elements to use and where they ought to be placed on the printed piece. As a result, whether a print run is 10 pieces or 10,000, variable data printing makes each piece fully customizable in a given print run.

### Beyond customization

With VDP not only can you achieve high-quality, full-colour customi-

zed communications, you can also significantly bring down costs of collateral production. For products and services that are evolving and prone to high degrees of specification changes, you can now have brochures that can be kept up-to-date and printed on-demand. No need to stock an inventory of brochures that can quickly get outdated as product specifications change. ■

Source: efi's Future of Printing whitepapers.

### VDP is also known as:

- ▶ Personalization
- ▶ Customization
- ▶ VI (Variable Information)
- ▶ One-to-one marketing communications
- ▶ Versioning

# 'Think Again'

There is just no way any management with any intelligence and foresight cannot recognize the value of a corporate image. It is the best, single marketable investment that a company can make. - Malcolm Forbes

We are in the twilight of a society based on data. As information and intelligence becomes the domain of computers, society will place more value on the one human ability that cannot be automated: emotion - will affect everything from our purchasing decisions to how we work with others. Companies will thrive on the basis of their stories and myths. They will need to understand that their products are less important than their stories. - Rolf Jensen, Copenhagen Institute For Future Studies



A lady, sitting next to industrial design guru Raymond Loewy at dinner, struck up a conversation. Why, she asked did you put two Xs in Exxon? Why ask? he asked. Because, she said, I couldn't help noticing Well, he responded, that's the answer.

**M**arketing communications folks are up against it at most b2b marketing companies. It's a constant struggle to prove their *raison d'être*, to make the organization see meaning and reason behind their every move. Everyone looks at marketing communications with suspicion and sometimes, derision (the brochure guys!). And of course, when asked for an opinion, everyone is an expert, eager to tell you what to do with the creative! Worse, your

boss isn't happy to hear that. Mr. Ghosh's terse 'will revert asap' email to you sent four days later, quickly becomes old enough to move into your trash folder.

You've somehow managed to yank the job out off Mr. Ghosh's clutches barely convincing him that the sixteen additional lines of copy he's written will be 'built in' into the final draft, when your big boss decides to throw the creative to a 'high powered' committee for feedback. And there goes your four-weeks-in-creation campaign, ready to

upmanship, the committee ends up adding twenty new lines of copy. Before you know, your corporate ad campaign has enough text on it to befit an eight-page product brochure!! "Why don't you also add this?" "How about a box highlighting our technical features?" "Wouldn't a big shot of our products be appropriate?" Expert suggestions fly in thick and fast.

Frustrated, you suggest to your big boss that the final outcome seems 'out-of-brief' and that the agency be called in to sort things out. The agency heads are summoned, key insights on communications design and media are shared over coffee and banter and very quickly, your original marketing brief begins to sound like gobbledegook...

Your boss of course, wouldn't want to disagree with his boss and so, your agency has a whole new creative route to take. That's easily another two weeks before they can get back.

Meanwhile, you can already sense the excited Shakespeares hovering on your back. On office aisles, at the watering hole, at the canteen and even in the loo, you get some enthusiastic advice and thoughts on the campaign. Every now and then, you get asked, "When's the agency reverting?" You shudder, gather your wits, manufacture a 'you dont have a clue how deeply I appreciate your interest' smile and brace yourself for another tryst with the resident Shakespeares...

Sounds familiar? ■

## Shakespeared?

**Marketing communications projects can often get mired in a phenomenon called the 'Resident Shakespeare Syndrome'. Here's a humorous take on this corporate malaise.**

campaign can become a weapon that senior managers can use to settle scores with their peers!

Picture this. Two weeks into your corporate campaign development, you get accosted by your boss. "When's the new creative expected?" he asks. "Well chief, the latest artworks are with Mr. Ghosh since last Tuesday. He strongly disagrees with Mr. Ramesh's inputs and is considering some changes to the copy" you say, helplessness dripping in your voice.



be torn to shreds by the resident Shakespeares and Van Goghs.

Everyone has two color preferences and three headline ideas. In between heated deliberations and exercises in one

# Jargon World

**The business world is replete with fancy new jargon. Thanks largely, to the new economy and to MBAs figuring out creative ways to make themselves look smarter than their peers. We've all used or heard some. Here's a few though, that take the cake.**

**elevator pitch:** A pitch to a corporate executive, or bored janitor, as the elevator goes from floors 1-10 and you have a captive audience.

**facetime:** refers to time spent speaking face to face, especially to senior management.

**scope creep:** The temptation to add more and more features to a product release until it becomes a confused mass of incongruous elements, twisted and evil.

**level set:** To get everyone on the same page, singing from the same choir sheet, etc.

**long pole item:** A "long-pole item" is the most essential element of a system or plan, upon which all other elements depend. A linchpin, as it were. Comes from camping terminology.

And if you thought that was too much, here's the ultimate definition.

**'value chain':** A business methodology that helps companies manage marketplace variability and complexity, and align company strategies with execution processes.

whoa!!

# Five Powerpoint mistakes to avoid

Amongst the most used form of b2b marketing communications, the Powerpoint presentation can be an extremely potent weapon for building the right perception of your business and often, in closing a sale. Sadly, it's also the most abused. Here are five things we all know but need to bear in mind when we chug out our next Powerpoint.



**1** Excess Content: First and foremost, your presentation is a 'communication'. An obvious but often overlooked fact. What do you want to say? Who do you want to say it to? What do they want to hear? Keep your target audience in mind and ONLY present information that is relevant to the situation or context of engagement. For instance, if you're making a sales pitch for a specific product or service, avoid slides on your corporate history or your company mission/ vision or profiles of your top brass. Stating the objective of the presentation and getting directly to the point helps!

**2** Callous Design: Like it or not, Powerpoints are also a visual communications medium. Pictures, colours and neatness of layout talk about you and your company. Cluttered, shabby presentations that carry excessive text, several jarring colours, ugly cliparts and multiple font types and sizes reflect poorly on your image. To your audience, a callous attitude to design means you're company is probably as disorganized, and that it doesn't think the customer is important enough! Think about this: You dress up formally, wear your best shirt and tie, polish your shoes and get a close shave before that important presentation. Why not give your Powerpoint's visual feel the same importance?

**3** Overlooking Delivery: How will you deliver the presentation? Will it be off your laptop/ PC? Will it be via slide projection? Will you leave behind a copy with your customer? Will you put it up for hosting on your website? Will you need to print copies?

Each of above points needs consideration since they impact language, copy and design. For instance, if you want to leave behind a copy with your customer, he ought to be able to fully understand the content without the need for explanation. If it's going to be shared as an electronic file or printed, several design considerations come into play. You can't for instance use specialized fonts. Plus, some of the animations may not work on a different version of Powerpoint...

**4** Reading Off Slides: Delivering a presentation is a skill. If you're in sales or in top management, some verbal skills are a given. Use it effectively to enhance, illustrate and accentuate what's on the slides. Build in anecdotes, examples and conversational tones to support the points on the slides and INVOLVE your audience. Preparation is the key. It might help to keep notes handy while delivering your presentation.

**5** Ignoring Branding: Pick five presentations from executives across your company and check if they bear a similar and CONSISTENT visual identity. Chances are, you'll find very different styles and templates in use. Propagating a consistent brand identity can drive home an important message - the company seems systems-driven. Use the standard template provided by your marketing/ corporate communications team. Don't tamper with your logos. Use house colours. Say the same things that all colleagues or your top brass say i.e try not to invent your own versions of facts...Remember, good branding is about consistency.

More **Power** to your **PowerPoint!**

Have  
a point  
of view?  
Would  
you  
like to  
contribute?

HELP MAKE 'THE BUSINESS MARKETER' A BETTER MAGAZINE.

email your comments to:  
tbm@intermediaglobal.com

# CHECKOUT

## MUST READ: Tom Peters 'Essentials'



Disruptive management ideas communicated in a racy, irreverent style. That's what Tom Peters is all about. That's what you'll experience in this 4-part series of mini-books called 'Essentials'.

Essentials is distilled wisdom from Tom Peters' seminal book 'Re-Imagine!' available on these subjects: **Leadership, Talent, Design & Trends.**

DON'T miss buying one of these when you're next on a plane to somewhere.

## EVENT TO BE AT:

### NASSCOM 2006:

India Leadership Forum

When: 15 - 17th Feb.

Where: Mumbai.

What: All details at

[www.nasscom.org/nasscom2006](http://www.nasscom.org/nasscom2006)

## IMAGE SOURCE:

Check out

[www.indexopen.com](http://www.indexopen.com).

Great image quality, over 80,000 hi-res images and at a \$ 599/- subscription for 6 months, a steal!

## DESIRABLES:

### Sonos Digital Music System

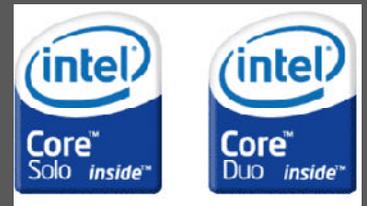


Sonos is the first and only digital music system that lets you play all your digital music, all over your house—and control it all from the palm of your hand. Best of all, you don't need a PC in every room, a music server or a wireless network. Check out [www.sonos.com](http://www.sonos.com).

Voted by Wired magazine as **Hottest gadget of 2005.** [www.wired.com](http://www.wired.com)

## BIG NEWS:

### Intel's Rebranding



**29th December 2005.** The world's biggest chipmaker said it will scrap its 37-year-old "Intel Inside" logo as part of a major rebranding that will emphasize its shift away from its core PC business into consumer products.

The original Intel Corp. logo featuring a lowered "e" will be replaced with one showing an oval swirl surrounding the company's name. The phrase "**Leap ahead**" will supplant "Intel Inside," which launched the Silicon Valley giant into public awareness and helped it build the world's No. 5 brand, worth an estimated \$36 billion, according to consultancy Interbrand.

Source: [www.in.tech.yahoo.com](http://www.in.tech.yahoo.com)

## NETWORK 4 BIZ:

Business networking is amongst the web's newest services. Connect with people and build your network on sites such as:

[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

[www.openbc.com](http://www.openbc.com)

## PERIPHERAL VISION:

### "Podcast" named word of the year.

The fast-paced acceptance of new "tech" words is changing their formal recognition just about as quickly. No less than the *New Oxford American Dictionary* recently declared the term "podcast" Word of the Year. Derived by combining "iPod" with "broadcasting" and referring to "a digital recording of a radio broadcast or similar program, made available for downloading to a personal audio player," podcast will be added to the dictionary's online version during the next update in early 2006.

Coined by journalist Ben Hammersley, BBC News points out that the term is really a little misleading, because podcasts can be listened to on any digital music player. Others believe Apple gets far too much credit since it had little involvement in the technology's development. Some go so far as to suggest



alternative terms such as "audioblogging" or "blogcasting," but podcasting seems too firmly rooted in our vocabulary.

Podcast made the *New Oxford American Dictionary* in just its second year of consideration, rather fast as these processes go. Other tech words nominated this year, but rejected, included "lifehack" (a more efficient way of completing an ordinary task) and "rootkit" (software installed on a computer by someone other than the owner and intended to conceal other system data, programs or processes).

Any bets on whether or not they make it next year?

Source: BBC News (<http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

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