

Groundswell, by Charlene Li and Josh Bernoff, © 2009

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1. Why The Groundswell and Why Now?

- i. Story of Digg – users posts the code to hack into DVD's on DIGG – then Digg gets a cease&desist from motion picture association – so DIGG takes it down, but users repost the code en-masse – so DIGG reverses its position – saw that it couldn't stop the groundswell. “You can't take something off the internet. That's like trying to take pee out of a pool.”
- ii. Other similar situations
 - i. Streisand effect – photos of her house she wanted taken off the internet
 - ii. Video of Comcast technician asleep on the job
 - iii. Snakes on a Plane – user group takes control
 - iv. The Other White Milk – Pork group tries to stop a breast-feeding group.
- iii. Groundswell is: “A social trend in which people use technologies to get the things they need from each other, rather than from traditional institutions like corporations.”
- iv. Why is it happening now:
 - i. People
 - ii. Technology
 - iii. Economics
- v. Like “Neoterics”, a fictional people who multiplied at the rate of one generation every eight days, we are replicating at an incredibly fast rate.
- vi. Online, people can change in an instant, although offline, people's behaviors still don't change so quickly.
- vii. Story of Bob Lutz, at the age of 70, started to blog and is getting a dialog going with customers.

2. Jujitsu and the technologies of the groundswell

	Blogs, user-generated content, podcasts	Social networks and virtual worlds	Wikis and open source	Forums, ratings and reviews	Tags	RSS & Widgets
How they work / examples		Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn --- Second Life	Wikipedia (wiki) Linux (open source) – key is collaboration .	Amazon book reviews is most common. Intuit has forum for product users.	Also called “folksonomy”, Del.icio.us is most used tagging application	RSS = tool that brings you updates. Widgets = mini-applications, bolt on to blogs, etc.
Participation	Blog reading one of most popular activities. 25% of Americans read blogs	25% of Americans visit a social networking site monthly.	22% of Americans use Wikipedia; only 6% contribute to a wiki.	20% of Americans participate.	7% of Americans use tags. [tmp: I don't think tagging will go far.]	23% of Americans have personalized homepages that rely on RSS.
How they enable relationships	Citing relationships, commenting, adding links. Blogs are a means of both communicating and getting feedback, trying out ideas without the “firmness” of official pronouncements.	Social networking is all about the relationships. (Peuplade in France facilitates local relationships.)	Relationships between the collaborators enhanced (somewhat) through “talk” pages, where they hash out what to include.	Forums and ratings are slow-motion conversations.	Subtle tie to relationships. Tags make it easier to identify things.	Get data from blogs to people faster. RSS & Widgets are tools that propagate information.
How they threaten institutional power	Totally unregulated, mix of fact & opinion...companies should monitor and police employees who post unauthorized content.	Social networks suck up time. Fads spread rapidly through sn's.	Wikipedia is 8 th most popular site on the web. Companies can be featured on Wikipedia in ways that may not be to their liking. (Nike)	One unhappy customer can have a big impact.	If you have bad pr or if you have not been forthright, your content or content about you can be labeled negatively.	Imagine a widget called “Boycott Your Company” and posted by people who think your company is engaging sweat shop labor.
How to use them	1. Listen. Google Blog Search, Technorati, YouTube, Dailymotion, MetaCafe. (Or serious listening by TNS Cymfony or Nielsen BuzzMetrics.) 2. Start commenting. Sun and Microsoft encourage employees to blog.	Many companies put up their pages on social networks. You can become a “fan” of a company like Target or a politician like Cory Booker.	1. Monitor your pages on Wikis. 2. Make factual corrections. 3. Consider using a wiki to facilitate internal collaboration. (Groundswell was written using a wiki.) Ebay has a wiki to help its members.	1. Monitor the sites important to your business. When a negative review happens, it IS a quality problem, not a review problem.	1. Search del.icio.us for your company. See how it is tagged. 2. Tag your content.	1. Make your content available through RSS feeds (easy to do). 2. Consider building a widget to support your business. UPS has a widget to tell you where your packages are. Discovery channel built a “shark week” widget around one of its most popular shows.

i. Evaluating new technologies.

- i. Twitter – will it fade or dominate?
- ii. The groundswell technology test. Remember the primacy of relationships and not technologies. Tools that facilitate relationships will spread faster than tools that don't.

1. Does it enable people to connect with each other in new ways?
2. Is it effortless to sign up for?
3. Does it shift power from institutions to people? (Wikipedia let people publish without expert approval. Twitter grew when people at the SXSW www.sxsw.com conference were tweeting with each other during the conference. [Like sitting in a boring class, passing notes or glances at each other.]
4. Does the community generate enough content to sustain itself?
5. Is it an open platform that invites partnership? (Does it let developers add on, like appexchange for salesforce or Facebook or Twitter?) Olin College kid develops app for Twitter that generates tweets when washers and dryers open up in the dorm laundry room!

3. The social technographics profile

i. AFOL: Adult Fans of Lego. 5-10% of total Lego sales are to adults, many of which are AFOLs. Some of the AFOLs publish to blogs; others read blogs and make comments.

ii. The Social Technographics Ladder

GROUPS (% Americans)	ACTIVITIES
Creators (18%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish a blog • Publish your own web pages • Upload video/audio/music you created • Write articles or stories and post them
Critics (25%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post ratings/review of products or services • Comment on someone else’s blog • Contribute to online forums • Contribute to/edit articles in a wiki
Collectors (12%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use RSS feeds • Add tags to web pages or photos • “Vote” for web sites online
Joiners (25%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain profile on a social networking site • Visit social networking sites
Spectators (48%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read blogs • Watch video from other users • Listen to podcasts • Read online forums • Read customer ratings/reviews
Inactives (44%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of these activities

i. Each demographic has a particular profile.

iii. Social media strategy should fit the profile of your target audience.

- i. Media company was targeting Alpha-moms. Thought they would encourage blogging, but turns out that Alpha-moms don't have time to blog [no kidding!]. Instead, they focused involving the moms in forums, ratings and reviews.
- ii. Social technographic profiles are very different by country.

Percent participation>>>	US	China	Japan	Korea	Germany	Netherlands
Creators	18	36	22	38	8	17
Critics	25	44	36	27	22	17
Collectors	12	18	6	14	12	6
Joiners	25	32	22	41	12	26
Spectators	48	71	70	39	44	41
Inactives	48	25	26	36	49	46

- iii. One key group to reach, no matter the technological profile, is the Creators and Critics.
- iv. Toys "R" Us. Has very high collector rate. Toys can facilitate this by making rating tools prominent and emailing on-line buyers to remind them to write a review a couple weeks after they buy.
- v. Forrester has a free tool to help you evaluate your customer base at <http://groundswell.forrester.com/>. [This tool is VERY basic.]
- iv. Why do people participate in the groundswell?
 - i. Keeping up friendships.
 - ii. Making new friends.
 - iii. Succumbing to social pressure from existing friends.
 - iv. Paying it forward.
 - v. The altruistic impulse.
 - vi. The prurient (gawker) impulse.
 - vii. The creative impulse. Bloggers get to create.
 - viii. The validation impulse. "People put themselves out there, and the community reassures them about their place in the world."
 - ix. The affinity impulse. Finding others with like interests.

4. Strategies for Tapping the Groundswell

- i. Companies know they need to be part of the groundswell but don't know *why*. People know they want to get involved but are nervous about moving forward.
 - i. Groundswell approach-avoidance syndrome: Anxiety at the thought of actually participating in social technologies, balanced by a similar anxiety at the thought of missing out.
- ii. First Determine 1) What are my objectives? and, 2) What are my customers ready for? If you don't enter the groundswell with a specific goal, **you will fail.**
 - i. Four Step Planning Process - **POST**
 1. People: What are your customers ready for? Use Social Technographic Profile
 2. Objectives; What are your goals?
 3. Strategy: How do you want your relationships with your customers to change?
 4. Technology: What applications should you build?

- iii. Clarity of objectives will make or break your strategy
 - i. Five objectives you can pursue in the groundswell
 1. Listening-research to better understand customers. Best for companies seeking customer insights for use in marketing and development
 2. Talking-spread messages about your company. Choose this goal if ready to extend digital marketing initiatives to a more interactive channel.
 3. Energizing-supercharge word of mouth by most enthusiastic customers.
 4. Supporting-help customers support each other. Important for companies with significant support costs and customers who have a natural affinity for each other.
 5. Embracing; integrate your customers into the way your business works, including help to design your products. Most challenging goal and best suited to companies that have succeeded with one of the other four goals already.
 - iv. Five objectives are linked to existing business functions and their groundswell alternatives

You already have this business function	Now you can pursue this groundswell objective	How things are different in the groundswell
Research	Listening	Ongoing monitoring of your customers' conversations with each other , instead of occasional surveys and focus groups.
Marketing	Talking	Participating in and stimulating two-way conversations your customers have with each other , not just outbound communications to your customers.
Sales	Energizing	Making it possible for your enthusiastic customers to help sell each other
Support	Supporting	Enabling your customers to support each other
Development	Embracing	Helping your customers work with each other to come up with ideas to improve your products and services

- v. Business to business. Companies that sell to business should use the same POST process.
 - i. The people you want to engage in your application typically have a parallel role within their companies – they're salespeople or IT professionals or buyers of office supplies.

- vi. Advice about developing your strategy
 - i. Create a plan that starts small but has room to grow. Create a rough plan – what you will do first and how you will measure success, and if you do succeed, how you will build on that success.
 - ii. Think through the consequences of your strategy – how will it change your company, your traditional marketing & PR strategy, consequences for suppliers and distributors, legal consequences, etc.
 - iii. Put somebody important in charge of it – an executive who reports quite high in the organization. Regularly brief the CEO.
 - iv. Use good care in selecting agency and technology partners. Work with people who have created multiple applications before and understand your brand and your technology.
- vii. What could go wrong
 - i. Strategy ill suited to the capabilities of their customers.
 - ii. Customers engage but not in the way you expect.
 - iii. Initiatives floundering or changing direction frequently-reexamine choice of objectives.
 - iv. Things *will* go wrong. When problems arise, go back to POST.
- viii. No turning back
 - i. You cannot ignore this trend. You cannot sit this one out.

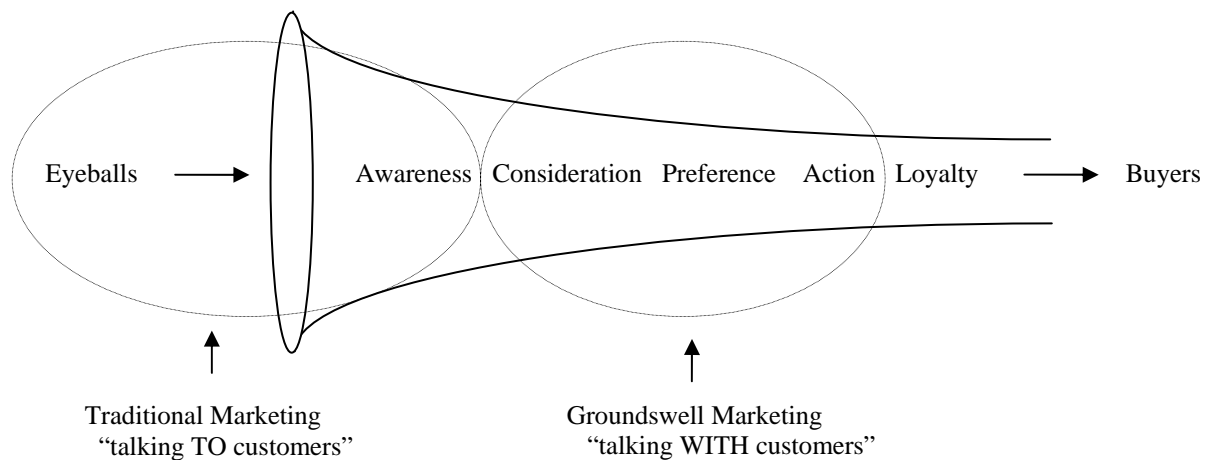
5. Listening to the groundswell

- i. Your brand is what your customers say it is. Listening is the key.
 - i. Companies listen now through market research. Market research is very good at finding answers to questions. It's just not so effective at generating insights. Surveys will answer questions you can think up but they can't tell you what you never thought to ask.
 - ii. Two problems
 - 1. You won't hear from everybody, you will only hear from people willing to talk.
 - 2. Volume. Need to apply some technology to boil the chatter down to a manageable steam of insights.
 - iii. Two listening strategies
 - 1. Set up your own private community.
 - 2. Begin brand monitoring-hire a company to listen to the Internet on your behalf.
- ii. The relationship between buzz and sales. When online promoter activity went up, sales went up in the next month. When the activity went down, the sales went down.
- iii. Listening is the most essential neglected skill in business. In the era of groundswell, listening is easy. Not listening is criminal. Six reasons why:

- i. Find out what your brand stands for. You know what message you're trying to get across. How is it different from what people are talking about?
 - ii. Understand how the buzz is shifting. Start listening and you have a baseline. Keep listening, and you understand change.
 - iii. Save research money, increase survey responsiveness. Some research money should go to listening. Brand monitoring is not a substitute for traditional research, but it can fill in the details once you've identified a trend.
 - iv. Find the sources of influence in your market. Who is talking about your product? Once you find the influencers, you can cultivate them.
 - v. Manage PR crises. You'll hear about it earlier if you're listening. Brand monitoring can function as an early warning system.
 - vi. Generate new product and marketing ideas. Your customers use your products and services all the time. They generate intelligent ideas and they will offer you those ideas for free.
- iv. Develop your listening plan
- i. Check the social techno graphics profile of your customers. If creators and critics make up 15% of your customers, then you can use brand monitoring effectively. If creators and critics are very high, 30% or more, then brand monitoring is an imperative. Less than 15% means you are listening to a narrow slice which isn't remotely representative.
 - ii. Start small but think big. Start with a single brand.
 - iii. Make sure your listening vendor has dedicated an experienced team to your effort.
 - iv. Choose a senior person to interpret the information and integrate it with other sources.
- v. Listeners inevitably feel the temptation to respond by talking within the groundswell. If you are listening now, expect to be talking soon

6. Talking With The Groundswell

- i. Story of management consultant, reading Engadget, sees video of iPhone being blended. Amazing! Decides to inquire and shocked to find this blender costs \$399, but still decides to buy it. The video is the work of George Wright, director of marketing for Blendtec and is part of a viral video program and website called "Will it Blend?" (www.willitblend.com). Sales at Blendtec have grown by 20% as a result of this program. They don't just have the videos; after the video, they engage customers in a conversation, sign them up for a newsletter, etc.
- ii. Traditional marketing vs. Groundswell marketing
 - i. Traditional = shouting (think mass marketing, public relations)
 - ii. Groundswell = conversing
 - iii. The Marketing Funnel



- iv. Techniques for talking with the groundswell
 1. Post a viral video
 2. Engage in social networks and user-generated content sites.
 3. Join the blogosphere
 4. Create a community
- v. Case Study: Ernst & Young engaging in social networks. Example of how they use Facebook to engage applicants in a conversation. E&Y Facebook page is filled with info, videos and other traditional advertising elements. Lets students consider E&Y at their own pace and, when students are ready, E&Y will literally have a conversation with them.
- vi. Make friends with Adidas....Company pages allow users to "connect", use their images, learn and engage.
- iii. When brands should use social networks
 - i. Use the Social Technographics Profile to verify that your customers are in social networks.
 - ii. Move forward if people love your brand.
 - iii. See what's out there already. The presence of a website around your brand shouldn't necessarily deter you.
 - iv. Create a presence that encourages interaction.
- iv. Case study: HP blogging
 - i. Developed a blogging policy first.
 - ii. Biggest benefit is that the company is now talking with customers who are in the middle of the funnel. In one instance, an HP blogger helped get the word out about a fix for a printer driver problem. In another instance, HP was able to respond to some trash talking by the CEO of Sun Microsystems.
 - iii. Groundswell authors recommend calculating the ROI of blogging efforts (and pretty much all activities). Don't continue if you don't think it's going to pencil out.

- v. Tips for successful blogging
 - i. Start by listening. What do your customers want?
 - ii. Determine a goal for the blog.
 - iii. Estimate the ROI.
 - iv. Develop a plan.
 - v. Rehearse.
 - vi. Develop an editorial process.
 - vii. Design the blog and its connection to your site.
 - viii. Develop a marketing plan so people can find the blog.
 - ix. Remember, blogging is more than writing. If you're not getting a dialogue from your customers, your blog is not working.
 - x. Final advice: be honest. Make an honest assessment.
- vi. Case study: Procter & Gamble's Beinggirl.com
 - i. P&G couldn't talk to girls about tampons, so instead they started a community to let girls talk about the challenges of being a young girl. Subtle branding at the end of messages/responses for P&G products.
 - ii. Very expensive to run a community like this one: \$3 million per year. But still pencils out for P&G when you look at lifetime value of customer.
- vii. What strategy makes sense?
 - i. Viral videos > if you have an awareness problem (like blendtec)
 - ii. Social networks > if you have a word-of-mouth problem
 - iii. Blogs > if you have a complexity problem...your product is very complicated.
 - iv. Communities > if you have an accessibility problem...your customers are buried deep in the funnel and you are challenged to reach them.
- viii. Remember, traditional campaigns have beginnings and ends, but groundswell marketing is a conversation without beginning or end.

7. Energizing the Groundswell

- i. Story of Jim Noble, who had a zipper fail on his bag and the company, eBags, replaced it the very next day. Jim Noble becomes a raving fan of eBags and regularly rates and reviews their products.
- ii. Energizing means figuring out ways to promote word of mouth. Fred Reichheld and The Ultimate Question are both mentioned.
- iii. BzzAgent is a company that, for a fee, will send your product to its "buzz agents" and, if they like it, generate positive word of mouth buzz for your company and product.
- iv. Techniques for energizing enthusiasts
 - i. Tap into customers' enthusiasm with ratings and reviews
 - ii. Create a community to energize your customers
 - iii. Participate in and energize online communities of your brand enthusiasts.
- v. Case Study: eBags

- i. There is no community of luggage users, but business travelers are definitely critics, according their Social Technographic Profile. That meant that they would be likely to use ratings and reviews, which is what eBags did. Bazaarvoice builds rating and review systems, which eBags used.
 - 1. Story of eBags customers who had liked a particular product and then started complaining about it. eBags told the manufacturer, who at first didn't admit to a problem, then later admitted that they did have a problem. eBags customers helped the mfr see the problem quickly.
- vi. Case Study: Constant Contact
 - i. Constant Contact customers don't like to be considered spammers. CC knew that its customers liked getting together with each other to talk about how to market to their customers. CC customers are generally small business owners, trying to figure out how to get their marketing right.
 - ii. CC built a community called "connect up" where their users are helping each other solve their problems, encourage new users to stick with it and generate referrals.
- vii. Case Study: AFOLs (adult fans of lego)
 - i. A community of lego users already existed, so Lego chose to not replicate that community. Instead, they created a Lego Ambassador program. These Lego Ambassadors get information on new Lego products and then spread the word; they also listen to other AFOLs and highlight their desires to the company. Lego Ambassadors are paid in Lego bricks.
- viii. Advice: Don't start energizing unless you're prepared for a long term relationship. Energizing usually leads to embracing, which means turning those energized customers into an integral part of the company's products and processes.

8. Chapter 8 – Helping the Groundswell Support Itself

- i. Story of a family, the mother of which was carrying twins and her water broke prematurely. She goes to the hospital (Mass General) and begin a series of very tense days. Loved ones are calling the pregnant mom and she and her husband end up repeating the same story over and over, getting stressed out. Then the hospital tells her about Carepages, a patient blogging system where a family can post updates on their status, as well as receive messages and support from their friends and family. Mother says, "We couldn't have made it without the Carepages...we cried when we read [the posts]; it helped me get through each day."
- ii. Traditional customer support is expensive: \$6-20 per call. Companies have been attempting to reduce customer support costs by posting more information to their websites, as well as outsourcing phone support. What companies are also beginning to realize is that they can harness the power of their customers, to help each other out. Just like the way we help total strangers who are looking for directions, so are customers

- willing to help out complete strangers whose only commonality is their use of the same product or service.
- iii. Case Study: Dell Customer Forum. Story of Jeff Stenski, who answers questions on the Dell Customer Forum website and does not get paid. He is an engineer who just likes to help people. Caterina Fake, founder of Flickr, calls it the culture of generosity. Li & Bernoff, the Groundswell authors, call it the search for psychic income.
 - iv. “Any company whose product raises a lot of questions should consider forums.” Story of the TV show Jerico, where fans banded together on a discussion forum and, when the show was about to be cancelled, somehow converged on the idea of sending the producers twenty tons of nuts (a character had said “nuts” to protest the absurdity of life). The show was not cancelled.
 - v. Case Study: Bearing Point Wiki. Bearing Point is a technology consulting firm. They help large companies implement technology solutions. Their challenge was sharing the masses of information that they had developed, as well as collaborating with their customers on all of this information. See www.openmethodology.com. “By opening itself up to collaboration with its own clients, Bearing Point has enabled them to feel that they are solving problems together.”
 - vi. To make a blog work, you will need:
 - i. People with a common interest (and expertise) in contributing.
 - ii. Content.
 - iii. Patience and policy. Too lenient and you’ll get site that can’t get control. Too strict and people won’t contribute.
 - vii. Making forums and wiki’s work...how?
 - i. Prime the pump. Be prepared to get things started. Only 1 to 5% of all customers will actually participate.
 - ii. Start small, but plan for a larger presence.
 - iii. Reach out to your most active customers.
 - iv. Plan to drive traffic to your community.
 - v. Build in a reputation system. Yahoo answers works better because the people who answer questions get points that builds their reputation.
 - vi. Let your customers lead you.

9. Embracing The Groundswell

- i. Story of Del Monte – Identified a customer segment “Dogs are people too” and setup a MarketTools, a private community to reach that segment and research and determine products to make, such as vitamins and minerals, packaging and sales strategies. As a result of this program, Snausages Breakfast Bites were launched. Key takeaway – “Product development is hard. Why not let your customers help you with it?”
- ii. Embracing Customers – a new kind of development

- i. Innovating with help from your customers is not a new idea, at least three books have been written on the subject. Democratizing Innovation, Outside Innovation, Wikinomics.
- ii. When it comes to collaborating with your customers, really bringing them into your development and innovation processes, seeing the real truth, is challenging because companies are typically not setup to listen to this feedback and work with customers in this way. Historically, most companies have developed everything internally.
- iii. The Groundswell effect is that customers are chomping at the bit to tell you what to do and are actively complaining and praising your product on forums such as blogs, videos and review sites. They are now part of your process because they can look over management's shoulders via these channels.
- iv. If you have embraced the Groundswell, then you have opened a channel of communications with your customers and they are now getting deeper into your company. **Embracing the Groundswell is defined as making customers an integral part of the way you innovate, with both products and process improvements.**
- iii. By embracing the Groundswell, you can move more quickly.
 - i. Customers don't take long to tell you what they want – as soon as you are ready, you can quickly tap into these sources of innovation.
 - ii. With customers in the loop, innovation happens more quickly because you can iterate and make continuous improvements. Once you tap into customer feedback, you can continue to ask more questions to continue to refine products.
- iv. Case Study – Salesforce.com:
 - i. Speed and rapid product evolution is important.
 - ii. Developers and marketing often disagreed on new product features.
 - iii. Launched IdeaExchange and invited customers to itemize development priorities.
 - iv. Inputs and votes on the sawbanner issue, an advertisement at the initial login that many customers found irritating. Ultimately, the customers won.
 - v. IdeaExchange is now driving one-half of the new product features and provided a speed and velocity lift to the process.
 - vi. This type of program only works if you can engage your customers – Dell example of a less effective program because of the customer type – Dell is selling to consumers who are less passionate about products as compared to Salesforce.com's passionate user base.
- v. Case Study – Credit Mutuel:
 - i. French regional cooperative bank with 10 million customers. Their slogan: "the bank you can talk to."
 - ii. Focus group feedback determined the slogan was hollow and customers felt they could not talk to the bank and change anything.
 - iii. Bank decided it would listen and act on customer suggestions.

- iv. Created ad program and website “If I were a banker” and rewards customer suggestions with a weekly iPod drawing.
 - v. Received tens of thousands of suggestions – put thirty top suggestions online for voting.
 - vi. Results: bank has aligned itself with customers, tapped into a major source of innovation, bank is listening and customers are noticing, has not abdicated its responsibility to be a good bank but has tapped into its customers to prioritize areas for improvement.
 - vii. This is an example of Crowdsourcing – asking the Groundswell to provide you with ideas – must be careful to not do continuous crowdsourcing to keep the groundswell on your side.
- vi. Case Study – Loblaw's:
- i. Canada's largest grocery chain and retailer – also makes President's Choice store brand (PC).
 - ii. Drives and supports continuous review of President's Choice products.
 - iii. Has over 300,000 customers registered on its website providing positive and negative product reviews.
 - iv. Signage and banners in store encourage customer participation.
 - v. Goal is to increase store brand product market share at higher margin for Loblaw's.
 - vi. Lesson: Other stores and brands could easily do this but they are not humble enough – can you really afford not to embrace and listen to your customers?
- vii. Summary
- i. When it comes to embracing your customers, it doesn't matter what type of business you're in – if you have customers, they can help you.
 - ii. When embracing your customers, remember to balance between skill and humility – you can accelerate innovation by starting a conversation with your customers and using your skills to understand and exploit their knowledge.
 - iii. Embracing the Groundswell can shorten the distance between you and your next successful innovation.
10. How connecting with the Groundswell transforms your company
- a. This chapter examines how consumer marketing giants Dell and Unilever, gained advantage by implementing many of the techniques and embracing the influence of the groundswell in multiple settings to work with their customers.
 - b. For consumer marketing companies such as these, marketing strategy and media spending has been a highly centralized and controlled process. These new techniques require that companies let go of control and trust that their new creativity will engage the groundswell. Companies need to learn to embrace low-cost, low control social technologies which in many ways are the opposite of mass marketing.

- c. Three steps are required to transform corporate culture to embrace the groundswell:
- i. The transformation in thinking and action needs to occur in a step by step manner.
 - ii. A plan and a vision need to be developed to guide the organization through the step by step process required to embrace the groundswell.
 - iii. Organizations committed to this transformation need executive support.
- d. **Case Study: Unilever: Letting go of control to win over the groundswell.** Unilever product managers introduced innovative and novel approaches using some groundswell techniques to promote the Dove brand. Examples include using the NBC reality show *The Apprentice* in an episode where Apprentice teams created ads for a new Dove product. The real Unilever marketing team then launched their version of the ad to capitalize on the buzz created by *The Apprentice* appearance. Next the marketing team launched a new product on the web by developing a number of videos to promote Dove's Calming Night. Support for the product website was provided by more traditional television and print as well as online portal campaigns. The website was visited by 3 million people. Finally, after laying the appropriate ground work, the marketing team launched the Evolution video on YouTube in the fall of 2006. <http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.ca/flat2.asp?id=7134> The 75-second video, part of their "Campaign For Real Beauty," shows a time lapse view of how an average looking woman is transformed into a "beauty," including first some real make-up adjustments and then with some digital enhancements. The spot ends with the somber on-screen message: "No wonder our perception of beauty is distorted." Over 5 million people saw the video in less than one year. The video caused a surge of traffic to Dove's Campaign For Real Beauty website at a very low cost. Unilever was successful because they followed the three steps outline above.
- e. **Case Study: Dell: Going through hell on the way to transformation.** Dell's journey to embrace the groundswell began with a customer service crisis in June 2005 broadcast by a well know journalism professor and noted blogger. The blogger posted a most unflattering blog entitled, "Dell lies. Dell sucks." This post described his unpleasant customer service experience in trying to get his faulty Dell computer repaired and, ultimately, replaced. Once this blog came to the attention of the VP of corporate communication, his team began tracking blog posts. Shortly after, a cross-functional team was assembled to proactively reach out to bloggers with problems. This blog resolution team was trained to handle both customer service and technical problems. Soon Dell began creating its own blog addressing some of its technical problems head on (including a flaming notebook computer incident). Despite the negative comments posted on Dell's blog, Michael Dell was a big supporter of engaging with the customers using this technique. These initial steps led Michael Dell to

create IdeaStorm, the idea community described in Chapter 9. Again, in the Dell example the organization followed the three steps outlined above to successfully transform the company to embrace the groundswell.

<http://www.slideshare.net/marketingfacts/dell-vs-blogsphere>

- f. Summary: how to prepare for a transformation
 - i. Start small
 - ii. Educate your executives
 - iii. Get the right people to run your strategy
 - iv. Get your agency and technology partners in sync
 - v. Plan for the next step and for the long run

11. The groundswell inside your company

- a. Benefits of tapping the groundswell inside your company.
 - i. Connecting with employees is valuable for bottom-to-top feedback
 - 1. Runs against the hierarchical nature of companies
 - 2. Helps employees understand the larger picture
 - 3. Gives the employees a voice in the organization
 - ii. Way of communicating with employees
 - iii. Way for employees to share with each other, even over long distances
 - 1. Valuable for salespeople
- b. Best Buy Case Study. Started a site called Blue Shirt Nation, which is an inexpensive, internal community for sales people to communicate and share. Employee suggestions on the site have provided valuable feedback. Because of the site, Best Buy developed a better understanding of the importance of the employee discount for retaining best employees; Best Buy also found that employees would share information and feedback about products and services.
<https://mix.blueshirtnation.com/> According to the authors, there are 5 benefits of Blue Shirt Nation:
 - i. Listening- management and employees listening to employees
 - ii. Talking: communicate company-wide uniformly
 - iii. Energizing
 - iv. Supporting- promoting from within and building culture
 - v. Embracing- see above
- c. Avenue A/Razorfish
 - i. Developed Internal wiki with blogs
 - 1. Pages for projects and resources
 - 2. Personal pages
 - 3. Notes, documents, meeting minutes, etc
 - ii. Special features customized for team use
 - iii. Useful to create dialog during Microsoft acquisition

- d. Intelpedia
 - i. Intel internal wiki
 - 1. Personal/social information
 - 2. Valuable HR information
 - 3. Low cost/resource
 - ii. Integrated part of daily life
 - 1. Contains up to date information- very important
- e. Organic (international interactive agency)
 - i. Internal wiki
 - 1. Provides support for scattered employees
 - 2. Employee profiles describe their work and are kept up to date
- f. Bell Canada
 - i. ID-ah!
 - 1. Internal site where employees submit ideas for review by management and other employees
 - a. Some good ideas rose to the top
 - b. Overcame reluctance of top management
 - c. Allows employees to make a difference
- g. Strategies for nurturing the groundswell
 - i. Management must permit and even encourage dissent/open participation
 - ii. The change needs to start at the top
 - iii. Think about what level of participation you need for success
 - 10% for Best Buy, all for Organic depending on goals
 - iv. Staging works better than strong arming. If it is useful, it will be adopted.
 - v. Consider the opportunity lost by not harvesting this potential

12. The Future of the Groundswell

- Through the use of social media techniques it is possible to turn a dying business into a thriving one.
- Example: Small winery owner used blogging, Facebook groups, YouTube videos, and Flickr photos to turn a \$1 million business into a \$10 million business in two years.
- Ubiquitous groundswell is the idea that the groundswell is about to become embedded within every activity of our lives. Feeds are going to alert us to any change in content, and will be as much a part of our lives as email or browsers currently are.
 - The technology already exists; the only thing missing is the participation, which is growing rapidly.

- Within a few years any company that doesn't engage in social media will seem dated.
 - How do homepages with static graphics and no links look today?
- Companies will be using social media to develop their products. Will make moves incrementally, and evolve products in positive direction based on the continual feedback they are receiving from customers through social media tools.
 - Companies need this connection to the groundswell to create long-term loyalty and learn directly from customers about their needs/wants.
- The groundswell will result in the increased speed of product cycles
 - No need for large product debuts and redesign – companies will use blogs to connect with customers and use feedback for design from the start.
 - Result will be a product better suited for customers that reap a better profit margin.
- The groundswell will doom corporate strategies based on deception. If you deceive your customers, *people will know*.
- The principles of groundswell thinking:
 - Never forget that groundswell is about person-to-person contact. You must be willing to connect with people you haven't met (customers, communities, etc). They are all personal activities, so don't forget you are dealing with *people*.
 - Be a good listener. Success in groundswell is about listening to everyone. We are all learning; the best listeners will end up the smartest.
 - Be patient. These applications touch so many parts of your company it will take time to get everyone to buy in.
 - Be opportunistic. Start small. Build applications that help you connect with customers (even in a small way). Then, look for opportunities to expand that success and act fast. You may not have another chance.
 - Be flexible. Groundswell always surprises people. The ones that will be successful will be able to adjust and learn from such events.
 - Be collaborative. You need others who think like you to get past resistance, and their ideas will help you accomplish your goals.
 - Be humble. You can take advantage of groundswell, but it is the people's groundswell – you're just trying to be part of it.

Reviews of Groundswell:

- Amazon Editors pick as one of the Top 10 business books of 2008. Click [here](#).
- See reviews of the book [here](#).

June 22nd, 2008

[Social Media succeeding in the Enterprise](#)

By Shiv Singh

Earlier this week I was on a panel at a [Churchill Club](#) event in Silicon Valley. Hosted by [Charlene Li](#) of [Forrester](#), the panel discussed web 2.0 in the enterprise and how social media is changing collaboration behind the firewall. On the panel with me were leaders from [Best Buy](#), [Serena Software](#) and [Oracle](#). Titled “[From Dilbert to Dude: Succeeding with Web 2.0 Within the Enterprise](#)” the panel discussed how grass roots social media efforts take on a life of their own as they move from being “under the desk server” initiatives to enterprise wide programs.

Steve Bendt of Best Buy talked about Blue Nation, a social networking site that connects employees at the retail outlets to the corporate offices and to each other. Now, the employees who are on the front lines talking to customers everyday, have a platform to discuss new products, exchange ideas and provide feedback to headquarters on what products, display formats and marketing strategies are working. It is a perfect example of a company taking advantage of the wisdom of the crowds concepts. Also, interesting is that after the launch of Blue Nation, employee retention has gotten easier as employees feel a part of something special and important. No thank you email from a CEO can compare to the satisfaction that people get when they feel they have contributed to something larger. Turnover of employees who use the site is just 8 to 12 percent while company turnover is much higher.

Serena Software is another interesting company and I blogged about them a few years ago (on another blog) when they first rolled out their Facebook Fridays initiative. Rather than trying to build a behind the firewall social networking enabled intranet, Serena chose to build their intranet on the Facebook platform. But not just that, they also built tools to allow the Facebook pages to connect with company data sources in a safe and secure manner. So rather than bringing the employees to the intranet, they went to where their employees were spending most of their time - on Facebook.

In the case of Oracle, what’s most fascinating was how quickly [Connect](#), the internal social network got adopted. Within an hour of launching the site 270 people were using it. The next morning the site had 8,000 people on it. Currently, the site has 10,000 active users who share information, news articles, powerpoint presentations and discuss budgets. This again was an initiative that began with no funding but tapped into the inherent nature of people to connect with each other in a purposeful and productive manner. Paul Pedrazzi from Oracle also discussed the risks. He mentioned that a person wearing a religious head dress like a turban could claim denial of a job because someone saw his profile picture and refused to interview him.

In discussing the [Avenue A|Razorfish wiki](#) and some client examples, I highlighted how understanding the motivations for use are important. We’re not on these social platforms just to socialize. Different people have different motivations and aligning those motivations with the social platform and the business needs is key to success. The wiki is viewed as a marketplace of ideas where people share their best thoughts and expect more in return. Sometimes the sharing even takes the form of bookmarks, blog posts and photographs - not just the regular word documents or powerpoint files. Through use of the wiki, natural experts who are the most passionate about specific topics get the attention and the focus that they deserve.

The panel was also covered in [Infoworld](#). Posted by dlabar at 12:19 pm in [Uncategorized](#)