

next tuesday afternoon

August 12, 2008

More and more, I find myself in conversations about Web 2.0. More often than not, more than one person in the group gets a quizzical look on their face and I already know what they're thinking. What the heck is Web 2.0? I'll try to make it as simple as possible.

Everybody agrees that the the bursting of the dot-com bubble in the fall of 2001 marked a turning point for the Web. Many naysayers thought it was over-hyped, when in fact bubbles and consequent shake-outs appear to be a common feature of all technological revolutions. In Lisa Davis-speak, it meant that the Web was metamorphosing from being to kid to the unruly, and often irritatingly vocal stage of teenage-hood.

In this era of teenage angst and change, the Web has become influenced more and more by its users. This is a critical distinction, in that the prior applications of the Web were based on old or antiquated processes, such as "top" corporates telling "bottom" customers what to think and believe. In today's Web world, this is as old as Methuselah himself.

The advent of social networking sites is a huge part of Web 2.0, in that they give freedom to ordinary folks to have their say about any subject they choose, sometimes in a formal social site, such as Facebook or LinkedIn, or in the looser confines of topic-specific blogs.

Many companies have rushed into blog-dom as if it were the Holy Grail. And those of us on this side of the fence let out a collective groan, because often the main point is missed. Starting a blog without other critical processes in place is a whole lot like putting the cart before the horse and has the ability to create more harm than good if internal processes are not set up to manage the negatives that may come streaming into a business.

At the end of the day, my favorite explanation for defining Web 2.0 is that it is simply the second generation of the Web. For most, it's time to set aside an adequate investment to get up to speed, so you're prepared for the coming of a presumed Web 3.0. By then, the Web will be a full grown adult.

I'm Lisa Davis. Let me know if I can help you in any way, please feel free to visit at OneAlliance.com and I'll be back next Tuesday afternoon.

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