

NON OBVIOUS

15 Surprising New Trends
Changing How We Buy,
Sell or Believe Anything

WITH NEW TRENDS FOR

2011



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ABOUT THIS PRESENTATION:

THE BACKSTORY



This is the 1st Annual Edition of my Trend series curated a year of research and interviews to help CMOs, brand managers, business owners and entrepreneurs to see around the corner into the trends shaping how we buy, sell or believe anything in the coming year.

In this report, you'll see the top trends for 2011 – as well as some reference to earlier reports. If you'd like to read and download any reports from previous years, visit www.nonobvious.com



Rohit Bhargava

Trend Curator + Keynote Speaker

Nice Guy



Introduction

“The most reliable way to anticipate the future is to understand the present.”

- John Naisbitt, Author of *Megatrends* (1982)

This is not a presentation about where the world will be in ten years. It is a curated look at some of the biggest trends that matter for business globally and will grow in the coming year. As a marketer and author, the types of yearly trend predictions that I love to read are those which explain the world through business ... so that's what I have tried to do here. I hope you enjoy these trends and find them useful! Please visit www.nonobvious.com.

Why Do These Trends Matter?

Every trend noted in this presentation is supported by real life examples. In many cases, I have spent months reading about people and businesses that describe the trend and considering whether it is a trend at all. The 15 selected and included in this presentation are the ones that made the cut and have momentum to actually matter in 2012.

What Is Different This Year?

Last year, I focused solely on marketing and social media. This year, the lens is bigger – to include trends from business that will effect the world beyond just marketing.

5 Reasons Trend Predictions Fall Short

There are lots of trend reports published around the beginning of the year. Some are great and some aren't. Here are a few of the common reasons trend predictions don't work or fall short (and pitfalls I tried to avoid):

1. **Too Obvious** – Great trend predictions usually dig deeper.
2. **Tunnel Vision** – Big trends reflect on society, not just a niche area.
3. **No Proof** – Trends should have real proof happening right now.
4. **Lack Of Time** – Hastily written blog posts only scratch the surface.
5. **Self Serving** – Trends with a personal agenda feel contrived.

To download this presentation (and more exclusive content), visit the full site at www.nonobvious.com

1. Likeonomics



RT @rohitbhargava – 2011 Marketing Trend #1: Likeonomics – Influencers lend social capital to brands, helping the most HUMAN brands win.

SUMMARY

We are increasingly living in a world of microinfluence, where individual taste makers can publish anything from personal media properties to 140 character bursts of opinions. All of this content is social currency – and it is having a big impact on consumer behaviour.

In 2011, the power and reach of individual affinity will lead to the rise of “Likeonomics.”

Likeonomics is a term that describes how personal relationships, individual opinions, powerful storytelling and social capital are helping brands and their products or services to become more *believable*.

Believable brands inspire word of mouth and create experiences that people can't help sharing with others.



EXAMPLE:

Ford Explorer Facebook Launch

One of the most innovative automotive launches of the 2010 year was Ford's reveal of the new Explorer on Facebook. The effort not only introduced the new car, but used the power of social capital from influencers online to spread the word about the car and drive attention and interest on it throughout launch.



EXAMPLE:

Innocent Drinks

This UK brand has built a cult following around all that they do by not only producing fruit smoothies that consumers love, but also by telling a strong story behind those products, inviting their customers in to experience everything about them and then share their story with as many others as they can.

2. Approachable Celebrity



RT @rohitbhargava – 2011 Marketing Trend #2: Approachable Celebrity – Social media allows direct access to previously unreachable celebs.

SUMMARY

For years most people have looked in at the lives of celebrities, politicians and professional athletes from a distance. **Tabloid culture led us towards a warped and fictional view of who these people were.** In 2010, more and more of them turned to social media and the web to demonstrate their real personalities (for better or worse).

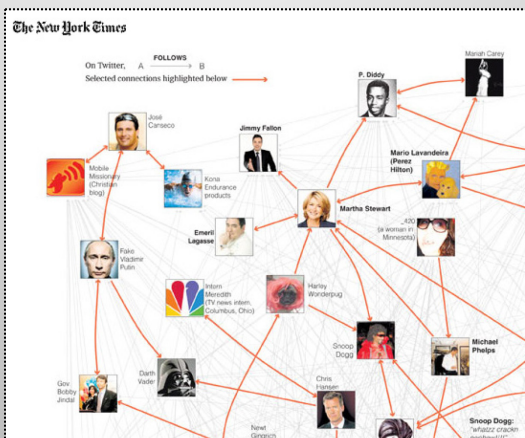
Rainn Wilson (@rainnwilson) and MC Hammer (@mchammer) are just two niche examples of stars who have built outsized followings via Twitter. Jack Welch uses social media to solicit ideas for his BusinessWeek column. Politicians are using it to understand and communicate better with their constituents. **In 2011, more people will enjoy direct access to those who seemed unapproachable just a few short years ago.**



EXAMPLE:

Cisco Do You Flip?

This campaign for Cisco and their Flip cameras takes celebrities and shows them in their own personal lives and travel – a side most of us never get to see. Aside from showcasing the products perfectly, this campaign demonstrates how social media is driving more celebrities to engage.



EXAMPLE:

Tweeting Celebrities

A huge percentage of celebrities are now using Twitter as a short form method to communicate with their fans – and for many this has added a layer of direct access that fans never had before. In addition, it is a new revenue stream as they begin to sell sponsorship of these tweets.

3. Desperate Simplification



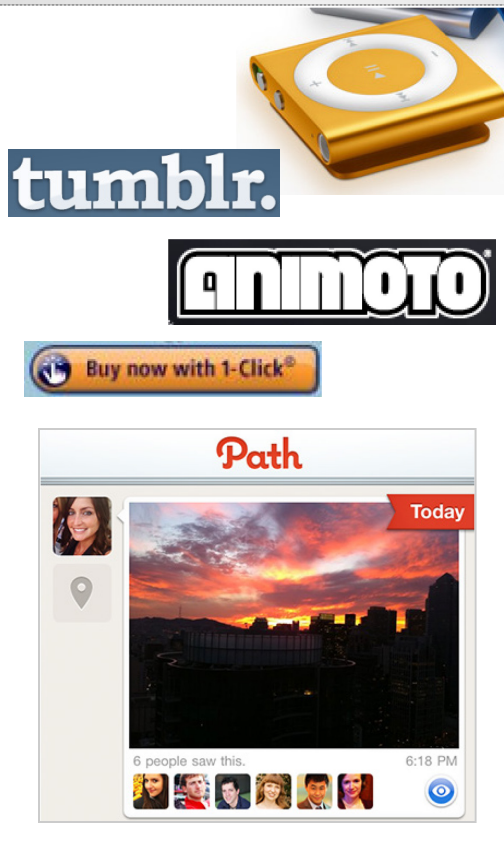
RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #3: Desperate Simplification – Information overload is leading consumers to seek simplification.

SUMMARY

To say that we are all overloaded with technology and information is a major understatement – yet much of the past innovations that have received the most attention have led to more complexity, not less.

In 2011, simplicity will become a desperate necessity. Consumers will cling to those small tools and personal processes that allow us to feel more in control of this deluge around us.

Friendship management (and “de-friending”) will continue to grow, and as **people seek more balance in their lives**, entrepreneurs and smart marketers will build more products and sites to help them achieve this.



EXAMPLES:

iPod, Tumblr, Animoto, Amazon, & Path.

iPod Shuffle: The new iPod Shuffle doesn’t do much, but stands out for its simplicity.

Tumblr: Simplifies blogging as more people start personal blogs to share their lives, or build a personal brand to help with their job hunt or careers.

Animoto: One of a host of sites that let you take content you already have and easily compile it into a more shareable format – like video.

Amazon: Still the ultimate example of simplification in retail – with their one button ordering process.

Path: One of the first of a new trend of simplification in social networks, Path users can have a MAXIMUM of 50 friends.

4. Essential Integration



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #4: Essential Integration – Marketer's biggest problem continues to be integration in 2011.

SUMMARY

The number one problem that nearly all Fortune 1000 companies share is a lack of integration. Whether due to infighting between departments or predictable conflicts between multiple agencies with different criteria for success ... **integration is a major unsolved problem.**

Conversely, some of the biggest marketing success stories from the past year have been due not only to good creative and strategy, but also to a level of integration that is highly difficult and rare to achieve.

In 2011, integration will continue to be a huge challenge met with varying degrees of success ... the single big thing that will keep large numbers of marketers up at night.



EXAMPLE:

Old Spice Guy

One of the most popular campaigns of the year, the most unique aspect showcased by Old Spice was the power of integration – where digital works with print and TV to create a complete campaign instead of just one isolated great ad or website.



EXAMPLE:

Best Buy Twelpforce

Turning a new model for customer service through social media into the basis for an entire ad campaign is unheard of in the bricks and mortar retail space ... but in 2010, Best Buy stood out for doing exactly that, and received many accolades along the way.

5. Rise Of Curation



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #5: Rise of Curation – Brands that curate information win more trust & attention from consumers.

SUMMARY

One way to deal with the vast amount of information out there is through content curation. I wrote back in 2009 about how I felt the Content Curator would be the next big job of the future. In 2010, this started to become a reality as more companies hired people in these types of roles.

As Google presents millions of results for any query, **the important role that curated content will play in the future is to offer each of us the chance to filter and share content on subjects we are knowledgeable about online**, and provide this expertise for anyone.

Marketers, in turn, can use this need for curation in their 2011 plans to provide a much needed filter to help find and bring together useful or entertaining content.



EXAMPLE:

Paper.li Custom Newspapers

A startup that got lots of buzz and new users in 2010, this site lets you easily create a “custom newspaper” on any topic using RSS feeds. The sleek interface and ability to share your creation makes this a curated option that could last.



EXAMPLE:

The Pharma & Healthcare Social Media Wiki

Collecting examples of social media usage by an industry extremely wary about using social tools – the Pharma Wiki is at once an essential curated resource, and an example of how curation can be used to demonstrate an expertise for a services company.

6. Visualized Data



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #6: Visualized Data – Complex data becomes a strong marketing asset through visualization.

SUMMARY

The real time stream of sentiment on any topic readily available online is leading to a vast amount of data so dense that it can be virtually useless. To make sense of it, more and more **event managers, news organizations and brands are turning to data visualization as a way to leverage the data and tell a clearer story.**

A growing number of marketing agencies are offering data visualization capabilities and this is a niche that will continue to grow tremendously in 2011, for everything from **sharing real time sentiment with consumers to creating better and more compelling visuals for senior management** to keep or increase marketing budgets for the rest of the year.



EXAMPLE:

52nd Annual GRAMMY Awards

Earlier in the year, the GRAMMYs used social media more actively as a part of their show – and relied heavily on data visualization as a way to show fan sentiments, enable live voting and generally add more visual interest to the data they already had.



EXAMPLE:

CNN's Magic Election Wall

As the mid-term elections came around in the US, it was another opportunity to show on a national stage the importance of visualizing complex data – and CNN had their touch screens ready. For hours their anchors moved votes around and projected results with visualization.

7. Crowdsourced Innovation

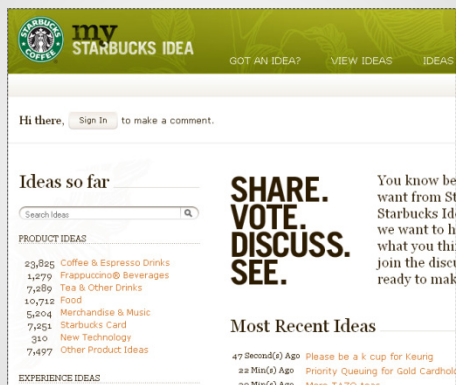


RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #7: Crowdsourced Innovation – Brands turn to crowdsourced platforms to collect ideas from consumers.

SUMMARY

Crowdsourcing as a term and idea is nothing new, but 2011 will likely be the year where it becomes a core part of many organization's social and customer engagement strategies. With several high profile corporate examples like Starbucks and Dell – **there is more attention on the potential value of launching branded crowdsourcing platforms like these.**

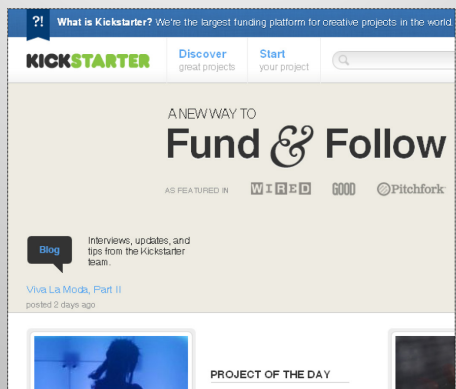
Additionally there is an increased understanding from customers about the concept of crowdsourcing, which means **it will no longer be just a way of engaging the social media savvy** – but rather a much broader audience who will share their ideas and thoughts with brands simply for the reward of recognition and being heard by the brands they purchase from every day.



EXAMPLE:

My Starbucks Idea

This site continues to gain traction for Starbucks as a way to encourage consumers to share their ideas for improving the Starbucks experience. Along with Dell's Ideastorm site and a handful of others, the success of these efforts will lead more brands to consider a similar model in 2011



EXAMPLE:

Kickstarter

A platform for creative ideas to get funded, Kickstarter has gotten a lot of attention over 2010 for enabling creative projects to get funded based on the generosity of social networks of interested people. From charity to corporate improvement – this type of innovation will likely increase in 2011.

8. Instant PR & Customer Service



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #8: Instant PR & Customer Service – Real time communication transforms essential business functions.

SUMMARY

Many would argue that the one marketing discipline most affected by the rise of social media and real time content online is PR. Responding to this, however, in 2010 many PR teams and agencies stepped up with much more sophisticated methods for offering instant PR. In addition, customer service came to the forefront as not just a tool for servicing existing customers, but a hugely powerful marketing channel as well.

In 2011, these two disciplines will continue to lead most businesses towards creating strategies and practices for dealing with real time conversations happening online. This will create unexpected opportunities for those who have the right pieces in place to take advantage – and those who don't will miss opportunities and risk crisis.



EXAMPLE:

JetBlue's Big Media Hit

During a nationally televised Monday Night Football game, the commentators referred to the NY Giants wide receivers as JetBlue. An alert employee tweeted about it, the tweet was mentioned on air and JetBlue shows millions of Americans they care, they are listening and they are one of us.



EXAMPLE:

Zappo's Golden Philosophy

Perhaps no business has seen more attention or accolades in 2010 than Zappos – and their real time customer service has become the icon for an entire industry of customer care teams who dream of creating the type of culture and service record that makes Zappos such a beloved brand.

9. App-fication Of The Web



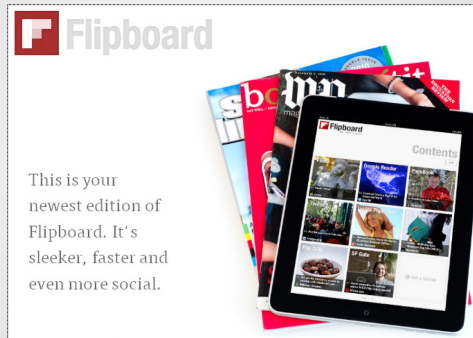
RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #9: App-fication Of The Web – Innovative apps let consumers bypass the web for transactions and leisure.

SUMMARY

On most lists of the projected hottest trends for 2010 were the rise of apps of all kinds, and looking back on the year, this fascination with apps for every task from the productive to the frivolous created a widespread acceptance and excitement about the potential uses for apps.

In 2011, as more people purchase app-enabled devices, there is a large number of activities from online banking to checking email to online shopping that will shift to apps instead of the web.

Mobile photos will become a larger part of how people use social networks, actively sharing their activities with their network online – and independent developers will see a secure and proven revenue stream through paid apps and respond to what consumers are willing to pay for.



EXAMPLE:

Flipboard

One of the most anticipated apps of 2010, Flipboard promises to revolutionize the way that we consume print media, by bringing the beauty of a print magazine into the digital world in a way that the web just hasn't been able to do. In 2011, there will be many others aiming at the same goal.



EXAMPLE:

The Web Is Dead

In this WIRED cover story, Chris Anderson declared in August of 2010 that Apps may be the real future of the web – and there are many examples in 2010 that even if the web isn't replaced completely, there is a good amount that we currently do online which we won't in 2011.

10. Reimagining Charity

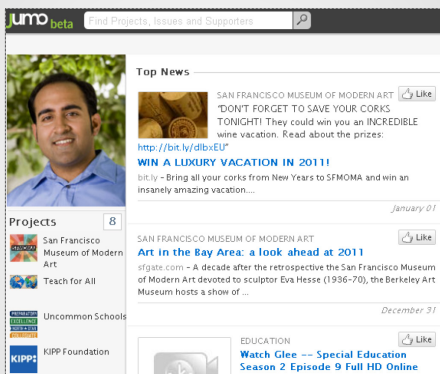


RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #10: Reimagining Charity – Brands and entrepreneurs create innovative new models for social good.

SUMMARY

It is perhaps a foregone conclusion that many of the most entrepreneurial thinkers creating technology are also driven by achieving a greater social good through the technology. This is leading to a cascade of **great new ideas for how charity and nonprofits could be reinvented for everything from donating money to sharing time and specific skills.**

Jumo and Yoxi are two such examples. Pepsi's REFRESH site is an example from a major brand, and smaller ideas like SwipeGood a site that allows you to register your credit cards and donate your change will continue to bubble up. Together this points to a hopeful future where social good will see a lot of entrepreneurial attention – leading to some big winning sites to come in 2011.



EXAMPLE:

Jumo

Late in 2010, the new charity based nonprofit called Jumo finally launched to much fanfare. The latest from Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes, the premise of the site is to help make it easier to find causes that you want to support, and then follow them, volunteer skills or donate cash.



EXAMPLE:

Yoxi.tv

This recently launched site has an intriguing premise – that by launching creative challenges that force people to think about solving a social good in a contest style competition, we all can generate more sustainable ideas and even change the world. The first challenge was reinventing fast food.

11. Employees As Hereos



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #11: Employees As Heroes – Large and small brands demonstrate humanity by featuring employee stories.

SUMMARY

A trend that has been on the rise for the last two years now is the idea of featuring employees as heroes. It has become common in the tech industry, with leading brands like Intel and IBM focusing on the world changing efforts of their employees.

Best Buy has focused on their people as a way to compete on more than just price, and Pfizer has created engaging employee stories to aid with humanizing their brands and supporting recruitment efforts.

In 2011, the idea of humanizing brands will continue to take shape through more and more companies realizing the value they have in their employees and featuring them not only as heroes in TV ads, but also as story anchor points in describing what they do to the world.



EXAMPLE:

Intel Sponsors Of The Future

This series of humorous ads with taglines like “our rock stars aren’t like your rock stars” not only exemplified what Intel was all about through telling employee stories ... it also awakened a latent sense of pride among Intel employees about the world changing potential and nature of their work.



EXAMPLE:

IBM Smarter Planet

With the declaration of “I’m an IBM’er” – this campaign offers a vision for what impact IBM can have on the world through uniting their employees behind the idea of a “smarter planet.” The voices in the ads are meant to be the employees sharing what they are each working on to change the world.

12. Locationcasting

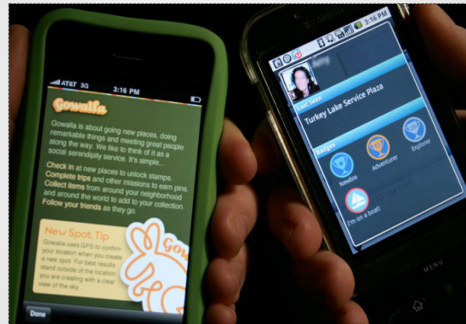


RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #12: Locationcasting – Consumers broadcast their locations, offering geotargeted marketing opportunities.

SUMMARY

One of the major benefits of marketing with mobile devices is the ability to tailor a message to a specific location that a customer is close to. This type of marketing is loaded with issues from privacy concerns to the potential for , cyber- stalking or “geospam” ... but a growing number of sites are innovating in this space because people are still seeing benefits to broadcasting their location to their own social networks.

This “locationcasting” behaviour helps people to get specific retail offers targeted to their location, and also connect with others in their social networks who may be in the same space. In 2011, brands will use this behaviour to create more opportunities to engage their customers in real life.



EXAMPLE:

Foursquare & Gowalla

The two leading geolocation sites, both let you “check in” to real life destinations to unlock badges, see special offers and share your location with your friends. Each have growing advertising opportunities are are poised to offer hyper-local geo-marketing for large and small brands.



EXAMPLE:

Scvngr.com

Describing themselves apart from either Foursquare or Gowalla, Scvngr was created with the vision of adding a “game layer” to the real world. In it, users compete to solve challenges in the real world and amass points which can be redeemed for goods or prizes. Brands can create challenges through the service to engage customers.

13. Brutal Transparency



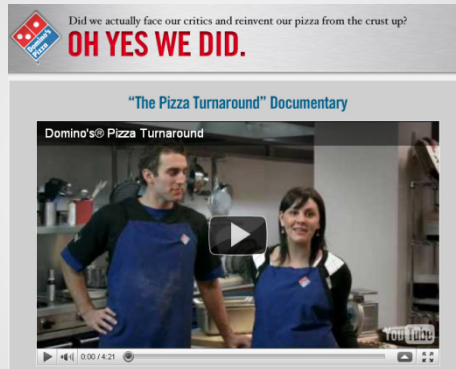
RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #13: Brutal Transparency – Aggressive honesty will lead to edgier (and more effective) marketing.

SUMMARY

Transparency is one of those overused marketing words along with authenticity and conversation – however in 2010 we started to see examples of an extreme sort of transparency that led to Domino's pizza running brutal ads showing focus groups comparing their pizza crust to cardboard and Southwest Airlines attacking other airlines for charging all kinds of fees.

Both examples demonstrated that **an extreme sort of transparency can be a competitive advantage because it reveals an unexpected aggressive honesty that consumers welcome.**

In 2011, brands who can use a similar sort of brutal transparency will emerge as big winners against meeker competitors.



EXAMPLE:

Domino's Pizza Oh Yes We Did

One of the standout marketing campaigns of the year featured Domino's taking a painfully honest look at negative feedback and completely remade their product. They took focus groups to tomato farms and showed real employees with empathy –demonstrating how much they really cared about making a better product.



EXAMPLE:

Southwest Bags Fly Free

Riding the wave of anger from mistreated travelers feeling fleeced by unfair airline fees – Southwest launched multiple campaigns against bag fees and change fees. Shining a light on their own fairer policies, Southwest successfully used transparency to make their competitors look bad, and themselves look saintly.

14. Addictive Randomness



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #14: Addictive Randomness – Random content creates unexpectedly engaging consumer experiences.

SUMMARY

More than the transactional moments of life, there is a power in randomness that some marketers have realized in the past. In 2010, this fact had a few ongoing examples as well as brands like the Red Cross taking advantage of it for a specific campaign – as well as sites like BrandTags exploring brand perceptions by getting people to randomly associate words with brands.

As social media continues to take an increasing role in marketing efforts for brands, **this addictive power of random content is going to lead to more consumer generated campaigns where people can add content to a central archive that anyone can browse** – creating a new engagement opportunity for brands.

WHY THE HECK SHOULD I GIVE TO THE RED CROSS?

Because the Red Cross has more than 5,000 mental health workers ready to help people cope after disasters.

Learn how: [http://www.redcross.org/why](#)

Share on Facebook | Share on Twitter

But they can't come by after my in-laws leave?

[Gimme another reason »](#)

11 reasons

11 bucks *

I'M CONVINCED!

EXAMPLE:

Red Cross: Why The Heck Should I Give?

Considering giving, but haven't quite done it yet? This site is devoted to getting you past that last hurdle by offering reasons to give along with the ability to see more random reasons with each click. The interface is addictive, engaging and viral.



EXAMPLE:

PostSecret.com

A classic example of randomness, PostSecret is a community art project featuring the secrets of strangers. Anyone who visits the site immediately understands why compelling content presented randomly can be so addictive, as these secrets offer an irresistible window into each of our humanity which we can't help reading.

15. Culting Of Retail



RT @rohitbhargava - 2011 Marketing Trend #15: Culting Of Retail – Online retailers who offer a unique and talkable experience inspire passionate users.

SUMMARY

Online retail has successfully moved from being just another channel for bricks and mortar stores with a handful of exceptions like Amazon to more sites which have built passionate followings of customers.

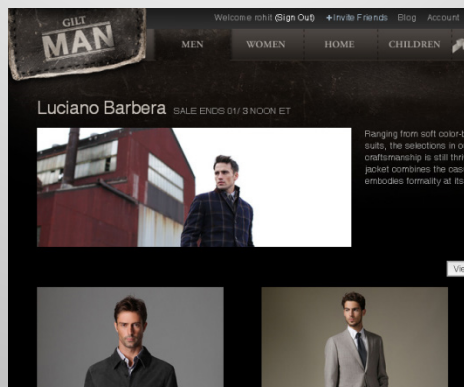
Groupon and Gilt are two of the most familiar examples demonstrating that the new world of retail in 2011 will require brands to do more than just offer a good transactional experience. **The best sites will create a passionate following of users who not only buy products they like at good prices, but also rave about their experiences** so completely that they will inspire a significant portion of their social networks to try the experience for themselves.



EXAMPLE:

Groupon

This site has sparked dozens of copycats as they pioneered the “collective buying power” movement. Among fans of the site, there is a huge loyalty and passion for the model of group purchasing, and their evangelism will lead the site to find new fans and users throughout 2011.



EXAMPLE:

Gilt.com

One of the most popular e-retail sites of 2010, Gilt continued to grow based on their mission of bringing luxury products to more audiences. Users need a personal invitation to join, and new deals are posted everyday at noon creating a sense of urgency and incentive to buy that other online retailers are actively trying to recreate.