

Google Think

How to Survive, Thrive and Jive in the Digital Economy

The Book

Jeff Jarvis, What Would Google Do?

Speed RAP

A number of traditional industries are struggling to survive the digital economy - newspapers, real estate agents, advertisers, PR, department stores... Google is one of the most profitable businesses on the planet. They're not only thriving, they're jiving! Jeff Jarvis uses Google and friends as a case study to speculate on how other drowning industries may reinvent themselves. At a minimum, it'll take a change in thinking to survive.

The Big Idea

Google is successful because it thinks about the world differently. They think in tune with the current digital environment. Don't try to copy their actions. Instead model their thinking. Google Think!

Your Challenge

Google-ize yourself and your organization. Redefine what business you're in and create an elegant design for fulfilling your outcome.

RESOURCES : anything you use to generate wealth.

ACTIONS : an act of will, a deed completed.

PROFITS : to gain an advantage or benefit.

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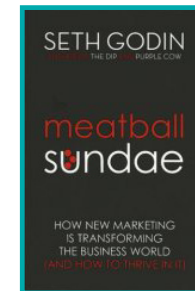
COMPANION PIECES

This issue touches on several other books we've rapped that we highly recommend. Either read the book or our [Book Rapper](#) issue.



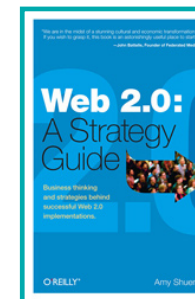
Chris Anderson
The Long Tail

Book Rapper Version
Make Money From Niches



Seth Godin
Meatball Sundaes

Book Rapper Version
Marketing Now-How



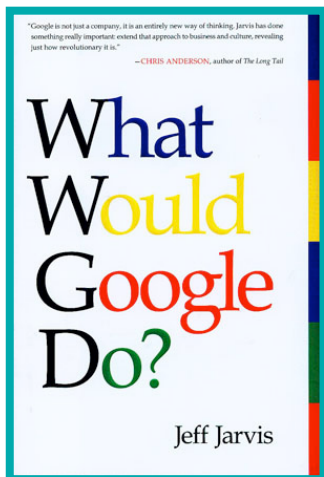
Amy Shuen
Web 2.0: A Strategy Guide

Book Rapper Version
The Great Business Gestalt

All of our previous issues are freely available from our website.

BR Review : What Would Google Do?

Jeff Jarvis; *What Would Google Do?*; Collins Business, HarperCollins; New York; 2009.



PRÉCIS

This book has two distinct parts...

Firstly, 'What is Google doing?' *Google* is one of the most profitable companies on the planet. It's a great case study for defining how business could and should be thinking and acting in our networked world.

Secondly, 'What Would Google Do' if it was involved in various other industries? Jarvis speculates on how to apply Google Think to your business.

FEATURES

Jarvis outlines 40 *Google* success principles.

Then he applies them to 20 industries... Newspapers, Book Publishing, Motor Cars, Utilities, PR, Real Estate, Manufacturing, Retail, Government and more...

BENEFITS

Is it getting tougher to make a buck in your industry? Are the old ways not working anymore? Are you under siege from new competitors? Are you looking to transform your company?

This book gives some big clues as to what you could be doing to reap greater rewards.

'What Would Google Do?' is a catalyst for an even more important question: 'What will YOU do?'

WHOS IT'S FOR

If in doubt, *Google* it. Their website answer machine can help you with the details. In this book you'll find the answers to your big strategy questions.



JEFF JARVIS

This is *not* Jeff Jarvis the trumpet player. It's *not* the Jeff Jarvis who ran *Segway* tours in Thailand either. Nor did he head up a mobile field service software provider. High school athletics is not his thing either. (P233)

This is Jeff Jarvis who's the #1 Jeff Jarvis on *Google* - of course!

Jeff's a big-time blogger, activator of 'Dell Hell' (search for it) faculty member at *NY Grad School of Journalism* and columnist for the *Guardian* in London.

Buzzmachine.com

RECOM
MEND
ATION

BOOK RAPPER THINKS...

This is a big picture book! And, I don't mean it's got a lot of photos in it.

It's chock full of high-level principles and oodles of current and relevant speculative case studies on how to apply them.

My kind of book!

RAP1 : The BR Google Map

PROFIT : Jeff Jarvis offers a wide range of ideas in his book. To organize them in a simple way for you to act on them we've created the BR Google Map - a five layered model for Googlizing your organization.

ECONOMY

Every business operates within a bigger context. One critical aspect for business is the economic landscape. Economics is the *study of the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services (Wikipedia)*. Whilst the economy changes through regular cycles of booms and busts, the laws of economics change less often. And, when they do, business needs to respond accordingly. What's the context you're operating within?

BUSINESS DESIGN

Ideally, a business is designed to address a particular need or desire. For instance, people want to move from A to B so we give them transport. This might be in the form of planes, trains or automobiles. The design of your business must change in sync with the needs and desires you're fulfilling.

ARCHITECTURE

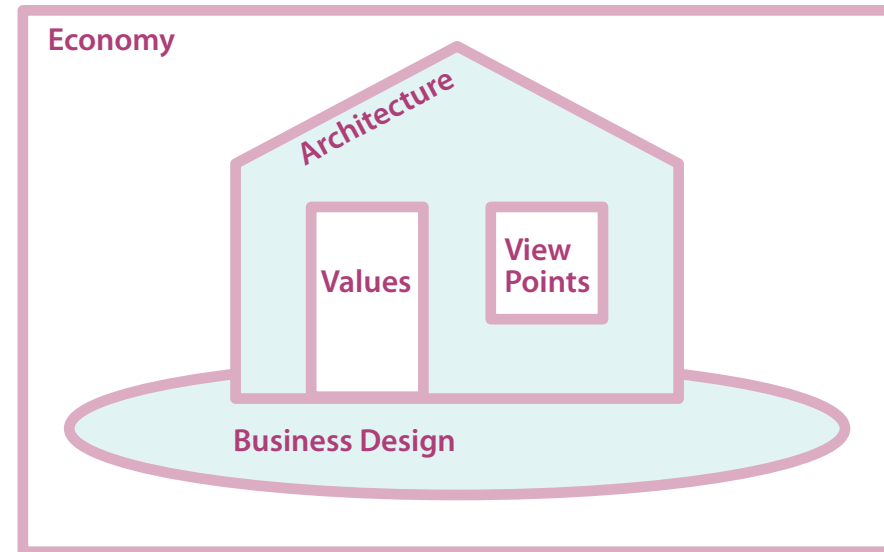
The way we structure and organize things shapes the results we get. For instance, if we pour water into a funnel it will concentrate the flow out the other end. Without the funnel water just goes everywhere. When we change our structure different results are possible. Choosing the right structure for your business is important to achieve the right results.

VALUES

The decisions we make are based upon the things we hold to be important. If being honest is valuable to you, then lying is not likely to be acceptable. These values determine what goals we pursue and the acceptable means to achieving them.

VIEW POINTS

Everyday we're faced with situations that require a response. It could be as simple as stopping at a traffic light or deciding what sort of hair cut to get. These may change depending on your viewpoint at the time or they may form part of an ongoing guiding set of principles to live by.



RAP2 : The Economic Landscape

PROFIT : Like a big storm that has washed away the topsoil, the internet has redesigned the economic landscape. What was previously profitable may no longer be. Reconsider your situation. Here's five new economic contexts to work within...

THINK SMALL

Previously, you had to be big to make an impact. And big meant centralized control in a single enterprise.

Now the collective power of millions of individuals are making their presence felt. *Ebay* is competing with *Walmart*.

Bloggers can now earn a living thanks to *Google's* targeted micro advertising. And, some bloggers are now attracting more traffic and links than major media sites.

Links and networks on platforms have changed the economics of scale.

Small is the new big.

BE ABUNDANT

The economic law of supply and demand is being challenged. Previously, if you controlled a scarce resource you could set the price for it. Think oil, airline seats and shelf space.

Now, many things that were scarce are now abundant.

Google has built a business model based upon what is abundant: information.

The more content available, the more important search becomes. And, there's more places for it to place its ads.

For more see *Book Rapper* issue: *Marketing Now-How*.

GIFT IT

The Open Source or Gift Economy is typified by armies creating *Linux*, *Apache* web server software and the *Firefox* web browser. Created without pay by passionate users.

Being part of something is important - we all want to belong. (See *Book Rapper* issue *Brand Worship*)

Start a cause, build a platform and invite people to enhance it and own it.

Now that might not be a great business model to reward your shareholders and it might be the most effective way to get the job done. Which is more important?

FIND YOUR NICHES

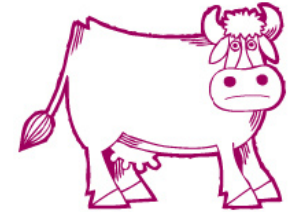
In the good old days bestsellers, blockbusting movies and Top 40 hits were what we strived for.

Now the mass market has become a mass of niches. We now live in an era of choice.

Google's advertising business is built upon niche selling - targeted ads pertinent to the page you're viewing.

The Long Tail of economics provides new opportunities for value creation through having multiple niches.

For more see *Book Rapper* issue: *Make Money from Niches*.



EAT YOUR COW!

Have you got a protected market? A closed shop? A cash cow? Well, it's time to eat it before someone else does!

The transformation of the economic landscape is changing what is controllable and profitable. What may have been viable yesterday may not be tomorrow.

If you're not willing to cannibalize your business to move forward, someone else will. It's just a matter of when...

You've been warned!

RAP3 : Your Business Design

PROFIT : When the economics of anything changes, the most profitable way forward changes too. How you design your business to take advantage of the new economic landscape is crucial. Here's five factors for you to consider...

STUFF IT!

Stuff is stale. It's inconvenient, expensive and you've got to buy raw stuff to make refined stuff.

You've also got to put it somewhere and then move it to where your customers are.

Until now, business was all about creating, packaging and selling stuff.

It's now time to build your digital equity. Digital is fresh.

Amazon do it well - so well they turned their cost centre into profit. They personalize your experience, automate your service and can provide the same deal for you and your stuff.

It's what you know that matters most.

BE FAST

When you search on *Google*, you typically receive millions of responses in less than a second. Instant answers.

One of *Google's* own principles is 'Fast is better than slow'.

The internet has changed the speed of life. Speed is now a strategic advantage.

The live TV feed is now multiplied by the millions of live feeds on *Twitter*. 'What are you doing now?' Now! Now!

How can you be faster?

GO DIRECT

Are you a middleman? If the web is hurting your business then you probably are.

The internet is a direct connector linking suppliers and customers. Think *Ebay*.

Every time you search on *Google* you can go straight to the source. Direct and to the point.

Unless you're adding a significant value difference, the place in the middle is being squeezed out the end.

And to accelerate things, the web is doing it quicker, cheaper and possibly free...

Real Estate Agents and other brokers look out!

BE FREE

In the good old days you gave away a free sample or a short-term trial to tempt new users. Now, you can give it all away. That's right, give away your whole product for no fee.

Free is a real business model. Most of *Google's* offerings, including search and *Gmail* are free. They make their money from advertising and premium services.

Whilst it may cost something to produce your digits, the cost of replication and distribution is free via the web.

Craigslist has disrupted newspaper classifieds - How do you compete with free? If someone can offer your service at no cost, you can't undercut them...

INNOVATE OR...

Who's thinking about the future in your organization? We know everyone is. And, how does your business design reflect this?

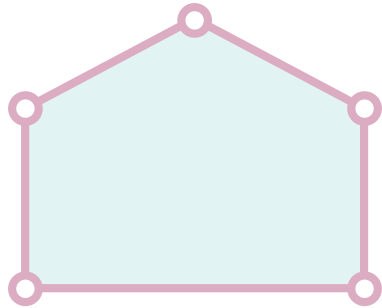
Google gives the majority of employees 20% free time. That's one day a week spent working on new ideas, new products and new businesses. Everyone must innovate. Performance reviews reflect this contribution.

If management are the only ones responsible for innovation then you're lagging behind. Innovation is not about keeping up. It's about staying in business.

What are you going to do differently today?

RAP4 : Your Organizational Architecture

PROFIT : The way things are organized has changed. Our societies and institutions used to be held together by physical things like roads and bridges. Now, electronic connections are key. Here's three ways to architecture your organization...



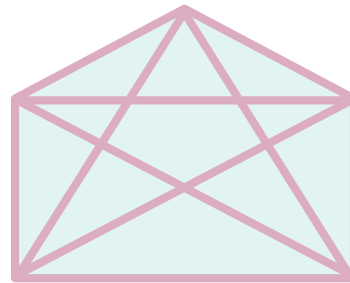
LINKS

WILL YOU LINK WITH ME?

Hyperlinks make the internet work. We click from one page to another, one site to millions of others. Permalinks are an address that can be found forever - and linked to.

With links we no longer need to repeat what someone else has said - we can just connect the dots. We can find anything and anyone, including the source of an idea and the best ideas. There's no point copying anymore.

This means we can concentrate on what we do best and merely link to the rest. This promotes specialization. Generalists like department stores and newspapers are being out-linked by specialist niche blogs and online boutiques. **Google** helps us find them and click-on-by through their advertising and search links.



NETWORK

WILL YOU JOIN MY NETWORK?

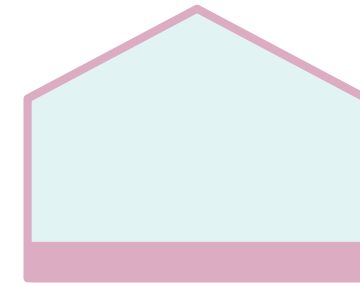
A network is a collection of connections. They're links that take you from one world to another. **LinkedIn** is a set of connections, so is **Wikipedia**. People and things.

In the old world, companies wanted to control and own everything - including you! If they had content they built a wall around it and controlled entry.

The internet is a decentralized world - no one owns it, no one controls it. It is literally a network of networks built one link at a time.

Google thrives on network effects (see **Book Rapper** issue **The Great Business Gestalt**). Their search results get better with every search. Google doesn't own the content or try to control it. They merely help you find it.

With networks, the more connections you make the better.



PLATFORM

CAN I USE YOUR PLATFORM?

A road and a stadium is a platform and so is the internet. Platforms are the infrastructure we build our networks upon. A platform lets you do stuff.

Traditionally platforms like TV or radio have been closed and controlled. You could submit your content but first it needed to be approved by editors, producers and gatekeepers.

Now, open platforms enable others to achieve their own goals whilst building the value of the platform at the same time. **Google Maps** is a platform you can add your content to and create your own mashup. So are **Facebook**, **Flickr**, **Ebay** and **Twitter**.

You can build your business on top of someone else's platform or launch your own. Either way, it's a chance to help more people achieve their goals.

RAP5 : Your Prized Values

PROFIT : What's important to you? What rules are you playing by? What values do you hold dear? With the arrival of the internet, some of our old values no longer support us. Here's six things Google values for you to consider...

LISTEN

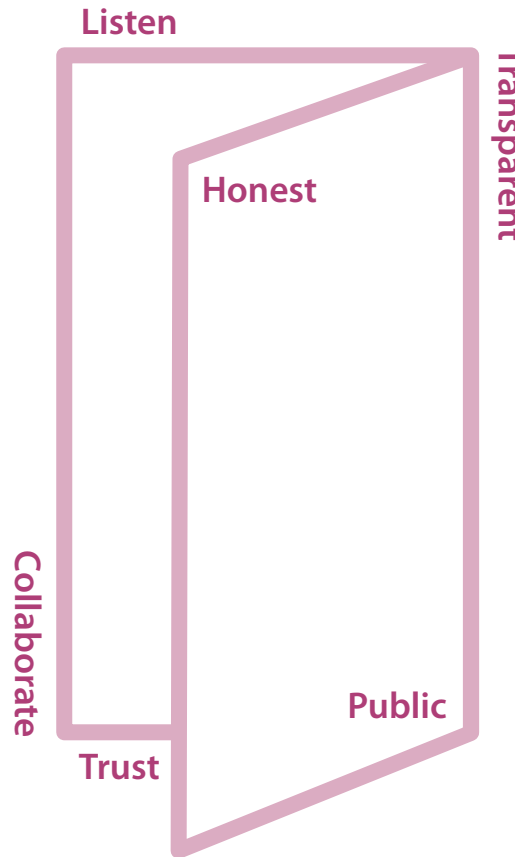
Google often avoids making decisions. Instead, they let us decide for them - they're listening to the crowd. Likewise, *Starbucks* and *Dell* are listening to blogs, forums and give-us-your-idea platforms. *Flickr* amplifies the crowd by displaying their most popular photos. And, *Amazon*, compares what you bought last time with what others are buying. They're all in the game of helping you get a better experience. Are you?

TRUST

Trust is like oil in your car engine. You need to have it for everything to run smoothly. Without it, friction will develop that may lead to further problems. If you're controlling your customers with limited choice, then you're not building trust. *Google* trusts us. Their search engine is based on the belief that we know best. The pages we visit count for something, they're like a vote of support that is rewarded by a higher ranking. *Ebay* relies on trust in their feedback rankings. *Amazon* trusts your reviews. *Prosper.com* offers person to person loans - they trust you and your money!

PUBLIC

The internet is a public place. Duh! That might be obvious and did you realize that every mention, blog, tweet, pic and comment is being recorded? Being public is a control issue - letting yourself and the information about you be seen. You don't really have a choice online. There isn't any privacy anymore. Be aware that you're potentially on show. Be upfront, honest and transparent. Being public also has a collective value - the wisdom of the crowd trades on the publicness of the web. Use it to your advantage.



TRANSPARENT

What are you keeping secret in your organization? And, why? Who are you protecting? In the old days, journalists, TV producers and the like were able to 'promote' news they had a self-interest in. Today, they'll be found out. Someone always knows the truth and now we have the means to get it out to whoever wants to listen. A better strategy is to be open. Transparency is crucial to involve your audience in your process. It hands over control, builds trust and you can benefit from the expertise of your customers through open-source networks.

COLLABORATE

The co-creation of products has a number of benefits. You're likely to create a better product, you'll align your product with what your really customers want and they'll take ownership of it - promoting it, improving it and discussing it. The simplest way is to blog about what you're up to. Let people comment and contribute so we all win.

HONEST

As a kid, you might have done 'it' because you didn't think you'd get caught. That doesn't work on the web. With *Google*, almost anything can be found. This makes it way too hard to try to hide behind deceit, spin and misinformation. The most trusted people are the amongst the most honest. Trusted bloggers are blunt, direct, to the point, real, authentic and make no apologies for their opinions. The internet has a human voice.

RAP6 : Useful Viewpoints

PROFIT : We all need our rules of thumb, our reference markers and personal viewpoints to succeed in life. Google has their's and they may just help you break through or fine-tune your business. Here's eight samples for you to consider...



TRUTH WILL SURFACE

In the era of control and limited information sources, hiding your errors from the public was a reasonable strategy because you could often get away with it. Today, if someone knows we all know. Blogs, *YouTube*, *Twitter* and the like provide the means to share what we know and find the truth together. It's best to admit your errors, declare your conflicts of interests and be transparent.

DO WHAT YOU DO BEST

Links promote specialization. They also make it easy to highlight the source and the best in that category. Do what you do best and link to the rest.

DATA DECIDES

If a company arises out of the self-image of their founders, then it's to be expected *Google* is obsessed with data. Search results are not personal favourites, they rely on the wisdom of the crowd. The more others like your web page, the higher you'll be ranked by *Google*. Other decisions are made the same way: measure and test.

A BETA LIFE

Google's Gmail was in beta or test mode for over five years. What does beta mean today? It's a presumption that things are never perfect and you're still working to improve them. Constant innovation is the new normal. Taking this even further, it means making your work available as soon as it is viable. Constant use then gives you the feedback to constantly enhance it.

DON'T BE EVIL

When *Google* launched on the stockmarket, founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin announced that 'doing good' things for the world even at the cost of short term gain would in the long-term be in the best interests of the company and its shareholders. In other words, don't be evil!

SIMPLIFY

Google's home page is the ultimate in simple. Let me search. Done. No fluff, nothing to slow it down. Enough to get the job done. No more. Got it?

BE FOUND

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is pretty much based on how to be #1 in your search keywords on *Google*. Are you searchable? Can you be found on the first page of *Google*? For Business and Personally? Most people won't find you through your home page, they'll search for a question and land on your site if you have the answer. As Descartes might have said, "I'm on *Google*, therefore I exist."

GET OUT OF THE WAY

An unlikely new leadership ethos is embodied in the words of *craigslist* founder, Craig Newmark. Once you've got your platform ready, your network growing, then there's only one thing left to do: get out of the way - let the people to do their thing. Hand over control!

RAP7 : What Would Jarvis Do?

PROFIT : Having modelled Google's success, Jeff Jarvis speculates on how other industries could move forward. Here's a selection of Jarvis' speculations for you to consider...

NEWSPAPERS

If *Google* ran newspapers, they'd immediately get rid of the paper. Turn off the presses - we're digital now!

They'd stop trying to control and sell their content - they'd make it free. Instead they'd earn revenue by matching stories and relevant ads.

They'd build a new platform for collaboration. Instead of 'us' journalists and 'them' readers, they'd create a network of fans, supporters and contributors.

They'd also niche it. *Google* would splinter the content into highly targeted searchable sites that appealed to smaller distinct audiences.



UTILITIES

If *Google* was in the energy business... hang on they are! 1% of *Google's* profits go to *Google.org*, it's philanthropic arm charged with the mission of reinventing our energy economy. Their key strategy here is invention and innovation. Find ways to lower the cost of energy. Find ways to provide an endless, sustainable supply so we don't have to cut back. That's the *Google* way!

PUBLISHING

If *Google* was in Publishing... hang on, they are! *Google* owns *Blogger*, one of the major blog software applications that's available for free. Significantly, they already offer one of the best ways for a blogger to make money from their posts: targeted advertising. This already makes it one of the great niche publishers too.

MANUFACTURING

If *Google* made cars they'd design it as a platform for others to modify their work. Think *Google Maps*. Here's the basic form, the basic shell, the basic infrastructure. Now, you can modify it anyway you want. Go ahead, make it your own. Design your car on top of our platform.

RESTAURANTS

If *Google* was in the food business it would build a highly efficient trail of information to determine what people really wanted. Then they'd offer this.

REAL ESTATE

If *Google* sold real estate they'd instantly cut out the middleman and link buyers and sellers directly. Just like *Ebay*. They'd provide a search facility for meeting each other. They'd provide all the stats you need to determine a good deal in your preferred location. And, they'd provide you with the tools, like *Google Docs*, to sign contracts and make it happen.

BANKING

If *Google* was in banking they'd cut out the middle man and directly link up borrowers and lenders. They would pursue peer-to-peer lending like *Prosper.com*. Getting and giving a loan would become transparent. And, with their piles of data they'd be able to advise clients on how to improve their spending habits.

ADVERTISING

If *Google* was in Advertising... hang on, they are! They offer Pay per performance, highly targeted niche ads with a self-service system.

LAWYERS AND PR

What would Jarvis do? He and his blog audience suggest that Lawyers and PR are immune to *Google Think*. The problem he sees is that having clients would prevent them from operating in a transparent way. This would shut down collaboration, trust and the sharing of data. Data sharing is core to the *Google* way.

RETAIL

If *Google* was in retail they'd provide a host of information to let you choose your selection more wisely. Reviews, stats, stories, recommendations. Like *Amazon* they'd also know exactly what you bought so they can offer personal suggestions in the future.

EDUCATION

If *Google* was in Education they'd build an online campus. All the course materials would be available fully searchable online for free. They'd build a platform for study groups to form around subjects and to collaborate on projects. Education would be a social event rather than a closed school.

Actions1 : What Business Are You In?

PROFIT : So, the economy has changed, there are new rules for designing a business, how we arrange things has altered and we need some new values and viewpoints to be successful. How do we do that? Here's our Action Plan for getting you Googled...

WHAT BUSINESS ARE YOU IN?

The most fundamental question you can ask in business is: *What Business Are You In?* When you answer that question you set a context for everything else that follows.

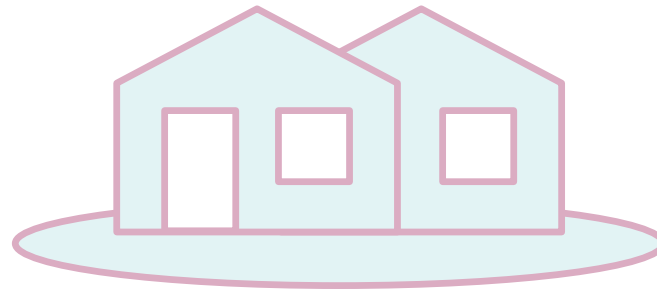
When you change your answer to that question, everything else that follows must change also.

The most common example of where this question *wasn't* asked is that of the railways almost 100 years ago. By defining themselves as being in the 'railroad business' they literally missed the boat. Er, the plane. Had they responded with 'we're in the transport industry' then perhaps they'd be around today to tell us about it.

Action : What business are you in? Are you sure? What other business could you be in? Discuss this with friends, colleagues, employees, management...

YOUR ELEGANT RESPONSE

Once you've figured out, or at least speculated on, what business you are in, you then need to design an elegant solution to the need that your industry fulfils.



The reason that businesses become obsolete is because the way they are structured no longer effectively or efficiently solves the problem they were created to fix.

For instance, the newspaper industry. If you were starting a news business today, would it involve print and paper? Probably not. That's no longer an elegant, efficient or profitable way to do news. So how would you design a news business today?

Jarvis has given us a few clues on how he would do it (See RAP7 on the previous page or read his book).

Action : Once you've defined what business you're in, start designing how best to deliver on that today. Another way of asking the same question is: If you were starting your business from scratch today, what would you create and how would you do it? This the strategy you need to implement.

Action : Here's some clues from this issue to get you started creating your Elegant Response...

Economics

- Would your business be *Big* or *Small*?
- What would be *Abundant*? What would be *Scarce*?
- How would you use *Open Source*?
- Which *Niches* would you cater to?

Design

- Would you make *Stuff* or manage *Digits*? Or Both?
- How *Fast* would you be? Instant? Live?
- What *Direct* connections would you make?
- What would you provide for *Free*?
- How would you build *Innovation* into your daily activities?

Architecture

- What *Links* would you make?
- What *Networks* would you create?
- What *Platforms* would you build?
- Who would use your *Platforms*?

Values

- What *Values* would you hold dear?

Viewpoints

- What *Viewpoints* would you affirm?

Actions2 : Profit Like Google

PROFIT : One thing Google does really well is execute. Now it's your turn. Select one action from our list of 24 below and execute it. Quickly, easily and well. Not perfect, well. Then pick another and another. Who knows you might become as profitable as Google...

Talk with your customers : Create a direct path for your customers to talk with you. Start a conversation, find out what's on their mind and build a relationship.

Streamline It : Pick a stumbling block, speed bump or something that's broken. Redesign it to create an elegant streamlined, efficient operation in its place.

Give up control : What can you give up controlling? Who can you hand the decision and ownership to? Don't abdicate your power, create partnership.

Blog It : Build your credibility by sharing and demonstrating your expertise through a blog. Enable others to get better results with less effort.

Join a network : Join *LinkedIn*, *Facebook*, *MySpace*, a *Meetup* group and a professional body for face to face contact.

Niche It : Create niche versions of your products and services aimed at very specific groups with very specific needs.

Build your own network : Use the tools of others to create your own network. A *Facebook* fan page, *Twitter* page or *Ning* platform will get you started.

Cut out the middle man : Check your list of suppliers and spot opportunities to go direct. Cut the delay and the added cost by going to the source.

Network It : Turn your organizational chart into a network diagram. Draw connections inside and outside your organization to show how it really functions.

Create Your Own Principles : Read *Google's* Principles and then create your own. Publish it on your website for all to read and comment on. Then, go live it!

SEO Your Organization : Be found on *Google* with quality content designed to attract search enquiries. Your site should demonstrate your expertise.

Free Yourself : Redesign your product offering to provide some aspect for free. Up the digital quotient to make this feasible.

Go beta : What ever you're working on, move the release date forward. Get it out there ASAP as a beta. Invite others to improve it with you.

Cut the Crap : Remove the spin, the misinformation, the sales bluff and the PR fluff. Create a new communications policy - an honest, direct one!

Collaborate : Create your next product so it can be designed by your customers. Open source it, create a cause and invite others to play with you.

Accelerate : Create your product faster, deliver it faster, get paid faster, get new customers faster, get existing ones coming back faster... Go! Quick!

Visit the Website : Check out all that *Google* has to offer. Refine your searching. Use *Gmail*, *Google Reader* and *Blogger* to mobilise your info.

Go Live : Practice going live and living live. Open closed doors and release your news as it happens. *Twitter* is a real time outlet. A tweet a day keeps the...

Design Innovation : Create a deliberate plan for everyone in your organization to contribute to your future. Creating it, building it, fulfilling it, relishing it!

Product Sex : Combine new things together - your products or someone else's. Find complementary offers to make new bundles or mashups.

Simplify : Cut your product features back, remove unnecessary process steps. Make life easier for you and your customers.

Think Distributed : Create multiple ways for people to access you and your offers from various locations and in various formats.

Read the Book : Grab multiple copies of Jarvis' *What Would Google Do!*. Share them with your colleagues. Read it, discuss it and apply it to your situation.

Continue the Conversation : If you want more on *What Would Google Do* read Jeff Jarvis' blog at Buzzmachine.com



BR Context : Where Are We Now?

Over the past 20 years we've seen a few changes...

The Berlin Wall has fallen and the Cold War has ended. We've had some localized wars in Iran, Iraq, the Mid-East and Bosnia.

We have a black US President, a worldwide Climate Crisis, had Globalization riots and we've mapped the human genome.

The BRIC nations are now economic powerhouses, the American Financial Crisis has hit the world and Geelong finally has won the premiership! Make that two premierships!!

On the technology front, a few new gadgets have landed on our doorsteps too. The internet is here, we've all got mobile phones, GPS in our cars and MP3s on our iPods.

Reality TV and social media have invaded our lives and Gen X, Y and tweens have grown-up.

On the business front *Enron* has come and gone, the dotcom boom busted and *Google* has become one of the most profitable companies on the planet.

So what's going on? What's driving these grand transitions? How do we explain all this upheaval?

Let's take a short history tour. A really, really short tour... The history of the world in five words...

Survive, Grow, Make, Inform & Create.

Got it? Let me explain a little bit more...

At first, as we emerged from our ape cousins, life was a battle just to stay alive.

Then, we planted some seeds. We stopped being nomads, built some permanent dwellings and started to grow what we needed.

Next, we started making more and more tools, culminating in the Industrial Revolution. Natural sources of power were replaced by manmade mechanical solutions. Our towns became cities.

After this we moved to an era focussed on making better things. To do this we invented computers and the internet to use information and our newfound knowledge to automate and personalize things. **This is now - the Information Age.**

Coming soon is the next great phase, the Creation Age. In an era of biotechnology and nanotechnology we will have god-like power to create new species. An exciting thought and a story for another time.

Does that explain things? Does that put *Google* in its rightful place? Perhaps not, a few more distinctions may be needed.

Some people hold the view that we've moved beyond the Information Age or Computer Age. They suggest we're in the New Economy, the Digital Age, the Internet Era, the Conceptual Age and even the Attention Age.

Where we're at right now clearly depends upon what map you're using.

My map has the five great eras with some sub-eras within.

Within the Information Age, there have been two distinct sub-eras. The first is the rise of the computer and the second the rise of the internet.

The first era of computers emerged during the Second World War. The need to decipher codes directed attention to code cracking machines and computing power.

In the 40 years it took to create giant mainframe computers and then shrink them to our desktops an array of great businesses rose to worldwide success.

IBM, Microsoft, Ikea, Oracle, Dell, Apple, Bloomberg, and Nike represent some of the success stories of this era.

In the 1980s, the war machine also prompted the development of the internet. The US government wanted a decentralized system to manage their missiles.

The internet arrived on our PCs around 1995. Fifteen years later we have a new set of industries and businesses emerging.

This is where *Google* belongs. Along with *Ebay, Amazon, Linux, Skype, Firefox, Wikipedia, Facebook* and *Twitter*.

Whilst these examples are not all financial successes, they do represent a new way of thinking and organizing the world.

And that's what *Google* and this issue is about.

Which reminds me of an old story about a successful businesswoman who goes back to visit her favourite business professor many years later.

Whilst chatting in the professor's office, the ex-student notices an exam paper on the desk.

She points out that the questions are the same as when she was a student.

To which the professor replied, "The questions are always the same, it's the answers that have changed."

Survive
Grow
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Inform
COMPUTERS
THE INTERNET
Create

Want More?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hi folks! Thanks for reading **Book Rapper**. I think we've all got our own special genius. Mine is to take a whole bunch of information and distil it into some simple yet co-ordinated pattern. I used to be an architect. And, for me, tracking trends and working out how they fit together is just like designing a building. Cheers, Geoff



EMAIL ME...

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