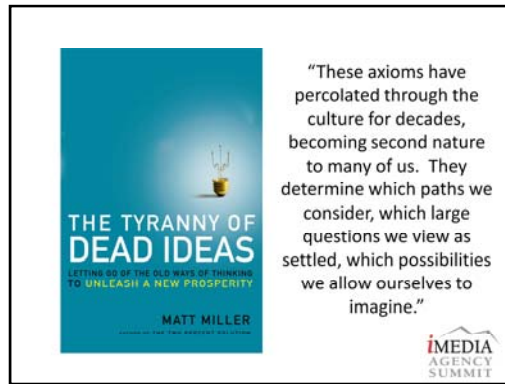


Our keynote speaker Doug Weaver is a familiar face at iMedia Summits. He helped program the very first summit in late 2001 and has spoken at dozens of events over the years that followed.

He's also been part of the Web Advertising and marketing community since *its* inception, and was involved in the sale of the web's very first banner ads in 1994. For the last 12 years his company, Upstream Group, has trained and consulted with thousands of sellers across hundreds of companies, including MTV, ESPN, YAHOO, CBS, Microsoft, The New York Times, AOL, Time Inc., Meredith, NPR and many more.

Doug's got a special perspective on the long term picture for our industry, and offers that perspective every Tuesday and Thursday in his blog, The Drift, which he's been writing in one form or another since 2001. He shared some of that perspective with this group right here in Austin three years ago when he gave us "The Oreo Doctrine," which challenged the way many of us thought about the industry and our roles in it. Today he strikes again with "The Tyranny of Dead Internet Ideas."

With that, I'm pleased to once again introduce Doug Weaver.



Credit to Author Matt Miller for underlying concept behind my remarks.

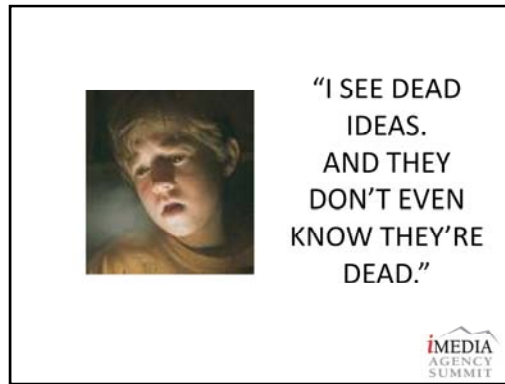
One passage in the book's introduction really made me pause:
(Read)

So I got to thinking: what dead ideas might be negatively impacting our own thinking and development?

Which concepts are we carrying forward from year to year and era to era that may in fact be crippling our thinking?

Let's pretend for a minute that the digital media and communications landscape that exists today – broadband, mobile, wi-fi, flash, social media – hadn't evolved over 16 years, but instead just sprang out of the ground whole.

If we were inventing online marketing today, how different our sense of invention might be. How much of the 'received wisdom' of how things have to be would we never have agreed to in the first place?



Over the course of the next 30 minutes I'll talk about a dozen dead ideas that I see walking around.

My purpose is to spark discussion, to foment some controversy.

Most of all it's to get the leaders of our business – you guys – to take a fresh look at many of our assumptions and practices.

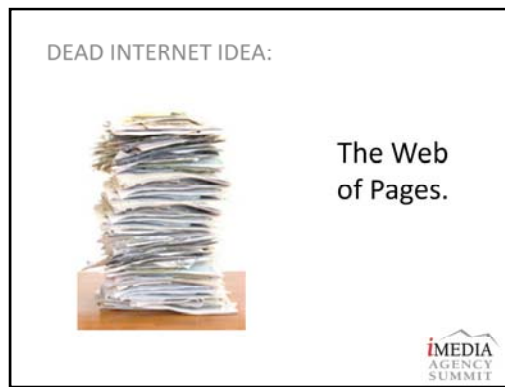
Things are far from settled, and it's way too early to limit the possibilities we allow ourselves to imagine.

Some of the "Dead Ideas" I'll call out are big, fundamental ones. Others are smaller, more tactical ideas. But they are just as lethal to our progress and profitability as an industry.

You may agree with some. You may violently disagree with others.

I say bring it.

I'll wrap up my talk with enough time left over for us to get some of your thoughts. And also -- hopefully -- for you to offer up some "Dead Ideas" of your own. So here goes.



This is a big, foundational, assumptive idea. And it's also dead as a hammer. THE WEB OF PAGES

two and a half years before we launched the first web banner ads on Wired Magazine's Hot Wired site, Tim Berners Lee invented hypertext and gave birth to the web itself. And it was a really different looking web. **It was a web of people.** Academics and scientists and intellectuals and bohemians who all pretty much knew each other. Hypertext was simply the mechanism – the plumbing to share with each other what they were reading and writing. Then the suits showed up; the corporations, the media companies, and everybody – EVERYBODY -- built a big gaudy website.

As Peter Allen famously sang, "Everything Old is New Again." Social Media and web 2.0 tools have illuminated the social graph. Sophisticated audience technologies able to queue up consumers based on who they are, not just what they happen to be looking at. We are **not** just a web of pages anymore. We've gone back to being a web of people. There's not one web there's two. AND YET.....

We continue to focus on creating advertiser 'destinations' – more PAGES – at the expense of **really** exploring the potential of "the web of people" And we're continually handcuffed to dead idea number two....



Moving people.

2010 we have the ability to identify and speak directly to the consumer.

2010 we have the creative capabilities to bring storytelling, animation, interaction and video right into the ad unit.

2010 we have sophisticated measurement of exactly how that consumer interacts with that ad

But we still value what we valued back in 1995. Getting that consumer to go somewhere else (a jump page, an entry form, a website)

Write this down: **WE CALL IT AN IMPRESSION, NOT A TRANSFER**

Moving people from place to place on the web is a dead idea.

Answer this: Does it make more sense to market to the consumer where **she is** or build a communication strategy to **move her to where we wish she'd go** and **then** market to her?

Even many of you who rail about the clickthrough rate as a bad metric have not shaken the overarching obsession with the **BIG DEAD IDEA** of moving people around the web. It is the disease, and it's spawned a couple of really nasty tactical symptoms:



Like the idea of Optimizing click rates. DEAD.

WRITE THESE NUMBERS DOWN: 78; 1,000; 975; 956.

explain

Make no mistake; burning through inventory with the ultimate goal of maximizing a click through rate is **our industry's version of strip mining.**

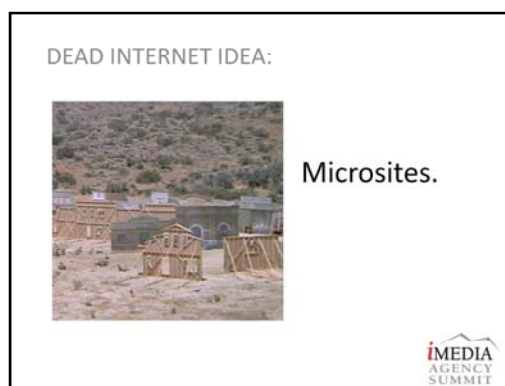
Problem with strip mining, of course, is that it treats all that inventory – all those **billions of pages** and consumer interactions – **as just so much slag**; Waste material to be discarded. It also has an obviously detrimental impact on the landscape – both economically and visually.

It causes us to carpet-bomb consumers with a mind-numbing frequency of “click me” ads.

It wastes the time and talent of the publisher's sales and service organization, and pulls agencies away from their real missions of strategy and creativity.

It prevents us from really exploring the true value of the impression itself.

There's no right way to do the wrong thing. Unless and until we walk away from the dead idea of optimizing to the click, unless we set the expectation for click rate at zero, I believe our creative and economic potential will go unfulfilled.



Click rates and moving people aren't just dead ideas on a site-to-site level; the problem is also an internal one.

The Microsite is a dead idea.

Digital cousin to the "advertorial" or "special section" in magazines and newspapers. But with one huge difference: we know when nobody's looking at them.

For 15 years we've built **little Potemkin Marketing Villages** for advertisers. "Oh sure, we can create allergy content on our sports site.....we'll get right on that!"

We then suffer a massive, self inflicted click-through wound.

Publisher is unhappy because she must burn ever increasing levels of inventory and editorial credibility to get consumers to go someplace they may not really want to go. The agency is unhappy because they almost always end up with an unsatisfying resource/return ratio.

Answer is "site in a box" via expandable flash ad units. Using Point Roll or EyeWonder or Eye Blaster you can bring all the Microsite functionality to the consumer where they are, instead of trying to move them to where you wish they were. In a medium that's truly consumer driven, it stuns me that it's taken us this long to come to grips with the deadness of the Microsite as an idea.



Another big thematic Dead Internet Idea is the idea that we're somehow the spiritual heirs of the advertising business that's existed over the past 75 years. **We are not. We are its antithesis.**

Let's get one thing straight. To the marketer, advertising has become a shady concept. Advertising is a cost to be managed down. (LISA DONOHUE: "be a business accelerator rather than just the largest cost item"). This is why the procurement people – the same forces that control the cost of light bulbs, bottled water, aluminum siding and office supplies – are now being pointed at the cost of advertising.

We are all infatuated still with the sexy mystique of advertising. It's why we tune into the ad-porn spectacle of Mad Men when it's in season. But worshipping at the altar of advertising is a dead idea. For one thing it's too economically limiting. The Web provides a platform for solving so many of a marketer's needs: promotion, consumer education, compliance, retail co-op and so much more. We can draw on so many budgets that don't have 'advertising' written on them.

It's time for us to make up our minds that both agencies and publishers are now MSOs – Marketing Services Organizations – and then embrace the kind of holistic, solution-driven thinking that allows us to walk that walk.

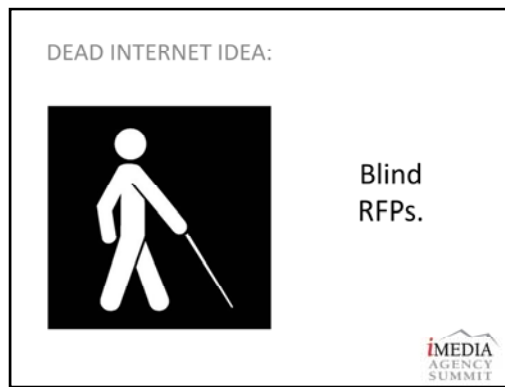


As we walk away from our false advertising legacy, we also abandon it's most notorious dead idea: : **'The Campaign.'**

We say we are focused on the subtle management of the consumer relationship. We say we are a listening culture that keeps the marketer in constant two way communication with the consumer. We say we have the tools to make this a reality and talk 'with' the consumer instead of 'talking at' them. **It's time to be who we say we are.**

"Campaign" thinking has no place in that future. The idea that we'll create the 'brand message du jour' and then overrun the consumer's camp with a coordinated 'attack' of media and messaging is, I think, dangerously anachronistic.

In its place I'd offer a different vision of marketing execution and challenge the industry to come up with even better ones. I suggest that we elevate the idea that there's fundamentally a relationship between the consumer and the brand and then act accordingly. As brands have new developments and offerings, they're treated as subtle new chapters in an ongoing "ALWAYS ON" relationship. And always – ALWAYS – we're keeping the audio turned up....listening to the open audio channel that social media enables. Adjusting, conversing, rewarding, explaining, answering.....I think these are the skills that replace the conquest-based thinking inherent in 'the campaign.'



There are RFPs and there are RFPs. What I call ‘the blind RFP’ -- the one that (a) the sales organization doesn’t know is coming and (b) that asks for late stage pricing and ideation, is – yes – a DEAD idea. At best the RFP is huge challenge to profitability for sales organizations. They go into full ideation mode, generating ideas and mock ups and packages that -- 95% of the time -- never see the light of day.

At worst they are a cynical reverse auction, fueled by the desperation of being left behind, that are designed to drive down prices. We are here to co-engineer marketing ideas together; that’s how we create sustainable value.

But we can’t do that until we shut down this silly beauty contest that satisfies no one and only creates tension and distrust in our relationship. Agencies, if it’s really a “request for pricing,” then say so. If a site or network doesn’t have a legitimate shot at making a plan, you do them no favors by engaging them in this “illusion of fairness.” Shorter lists and more focused work is the answer.

Publishers, you share the blame for perpetuating the blind RFP; stop getting all worked up every Thursday when the RFPs hit the building. Put some sanity and some business rules around how you respond and **IF** you respond. Let’s put ideation where it belongs; in the context of a relationship and centered on a business issue we can both address together. Anything else is nothing more than a charade.



I sense there's a creeping culture of entitlement when it comes to data. "Targeting" and "Consumer Data" are thrown around our business discussions without a lot of care. The content of our e-mails and speeches ends up in newspaper stories very quickly. Frankly, the average consumer would be terrified to hear our conversations here at iMedia. Because we can, we assume we may. And that's a very dangerous assumption.

What does the consumer **really** get in return for all this data manipulation and targeting? "you'll get better ads" is an unfilled promise. "You're getting the internet for free" is a lazy premise. We **MUST** do better than that. One can argue – and maybe I'm the first person to do so – that all this targeting and audience segmentation is actually creating an internet that's **WORSE** for the consumer. That by downplaying the need for context we're actually **disincenting** the creation of quality content and environments. I'm not calling for us to walk away from audience buying, **I'm just saying**. We've got to restore some sanity and find balance. The landscape we are destroying is the one we'll need to live in and profit from for years to come.

True that the internet privacy legislation proposed in the Boucher bill will likely **NOT** contain the dreaded opt-in cookie provisions. But for us to just celebrate dodging that particular bullet is just whistling past the graveyard. We ignore the true value exchange with the consumer at our own peril.



Yesterday Lisa Donohue talked about ‘open source’ marketing work, where we bring in non-traditional partners and let them really into the process with us. She also said that we could no longer function as a closed system where one party controlled all the access. And finally, she made a seemingly unrelated point: that our work going forward will be to understand “Why and How consumers behave like they do.”

This is why the agency as velvet rope – the agency as control mechanism to marketing access – is a dead idea.

As a practical matter, both the marketer and the media owner are both a lot closer to observable consumer behavior than the agency can hope to be. As another practical matter the pace of technological and channel evolution can’t flow completely through an agency funnel that’s increasingly underfunded and undermanned.

The strategy table is now an open table. The agency is one of many players in motion, and I would challenge those who run them to reimagine your place in that landscape. In my opinion, your future is not about controlling things. It’s about accelerating and empowering them. It’s a different attitude and a different skill set.

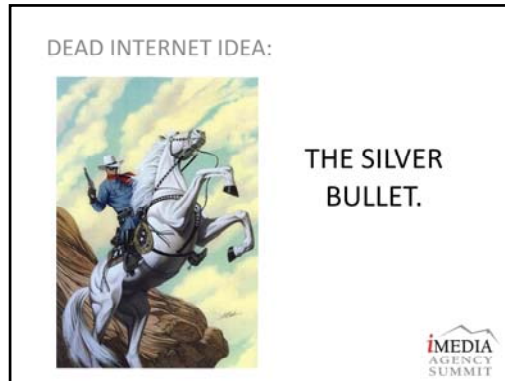


The one Dead Idea that almost certain to cause a flap it's going to be this one. The separation of advertising and editorial as a sacred premise is a Dead Idea.

Think about it; as virtually every program on television is aggressively incorporating product placement as a core revenue strategy, and as the very line between 'marketer' and 'media company' blurs, we in the digital space are keeping the vast majority of our marketing work penned up in little advertising ghettos at the top and side of our pages.

The reality is that we have one screen, one experience, where marketing and content will coexist and ultimately morph together. "Products" and "messages" will continue to find placement opportunities in what used to be thought of as content spaces. And the artist formerly known as the banner will increasingly be used as a distribution system for rich combinations of brand experience and product marketing. What used to live on a Microsite or jump page will now be distributed and syndicated through what we used to think of as simply and advertising pipeline.

My journalism professor in college is no doubt spinning in his grave to hear me say this, but the stone walls between church and state are a relic of a different, non-digital time.



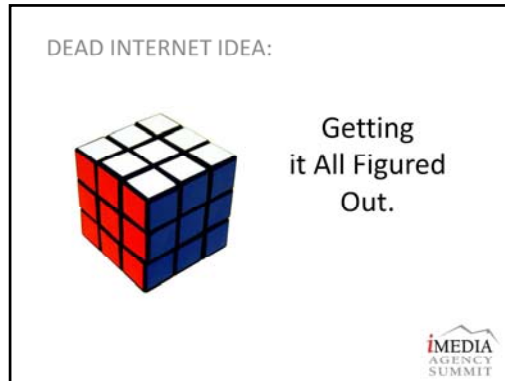
I was reminded of my next to last DEAD IDEA when Lisa spoke yesterday about the iPad, which she called the world's first completely convergent device and may change everything. But earlier, Nancy Galanti quoted great digital thinker Heidi Klum: "One day in fashion you're in. Next day you're out."

Over the last 16 years I've see so many silver bullets and holy grails come and go, starting with push technology, then behavioral targeting, now Exchanges and Demand Platforms and then...what? It's NEVER going to end.

The Silver Bullet is a dead idea. There will only be more and more bullets. More and more tools. Nothing changes the game all by itself, but everything alters the ecosystem and chemistry of what we do.

We destroy our own credibility with both investors and marketers when we talk about the latest edition of THE HOLY GRAIL.

You want a sustainable role in marketing? Become an expert in consumer behavior – the anthropologist that Lisa talked about yesterday. Focus your points of view on what the consumer will REALLY adopt and why. On which technologies and systems the consumer will really inform and accelerate consumer behavior and how each will subtly alter the landscape.

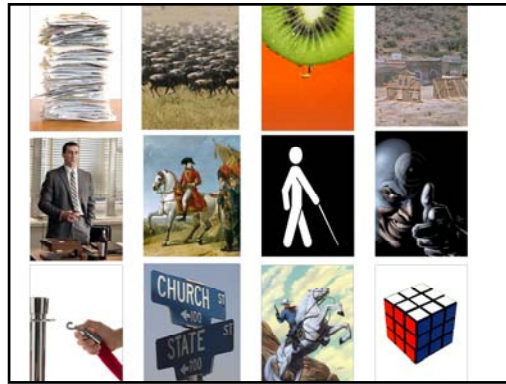


Because that landscape is NEVER going to stop changing. It's TIME TO ACCEPT THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT AS A PERMANENTLY DYNAMIC ONE.

THINGS WILL NEVER STOP EVOLVING, OFTEN LURCHING FORWARD IN SUDDEN SPASMS OF INNOVATION. Many of us want to slow the whole thing down, to adopt standards that will create a stable predictable marketplace.

But WHILE TELEVISION may have SETTLED ON GROSS RATINGS POINTS AND SWEEPS MONTH PRICING, WE in the digital world WILL **NEVER** HAVE A SET OF fixed STANDARDS for much of what we do. To paraphrase a point Lisa made yesterday, industry standards are an oppositional force to agility. And agile thinking, roles and business models are what we need most right now.

Like it or not, we live in a world of controlled chaos. It's not a place for the meek, but it's a great place for the bold to make a difference, and ultimately make their fortunes.



Here they are: 12 dead ideas. Big and small , strategic and tactical. Dead ideas that fundamentally block the realization of what we can do for the practice of marketing.

Yet they are the very ideas that we've continued to iterate and build on for the past 16 years. But make no mistake about it: **INCREMENTALISM AND EVOLUTION ON TOP OF FLAWED IDEAS ARE THE ENEMIES OF REAL PROGRESS.**

We can all manufacture very good reasons why we can't walk away from these Dead Ideas. And almost all of them are borne of fear and a perceived lack of control. Media owners – sellers – you blame the agencies. Agencies – you blame the clients. None of us wants to incur the wrath of the man upstairs. We wait for someone else to make the first move, for the entire marketplace to shift, for the clients to ask for different things.

And the worst thing continues to happen: Nothing.

This conference is about building the future of Digital Advertising. I think it's bigger than that. It's about building the future of ALL marketing . And we can't imagine that future until we unload the burden of these dead ideas that weigh us down. It's a time for intellectual leadership, and it begins with each of you.

These ideas....this debate.....it's yours now. I welcome your leadership, and I thank you for this opportunity.