

Business Builder Newsletter # 20: “Is It Web 3.0 Already?” November 4, 2009

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It seems like every week I receive an invitation to a webinar or seminar on Web 2.0 and/or social networking. That must mean that there are a lot of people who are still trying to figure out how to make Web 2.0 work for them and their business.

Well, I am here to tell you that the world is already moving beyond Web 2.0, and on to **Web 3.0!** The mind races!!

Let's stop for a moment and calm down with some **definitions**:

Web 1.0. Back to the basics. With Web 1.0, content is posted to a website by the owner; viewers read it but can't change it. Classic example: my website (www.LindaRink.com), which functions primarily as an online brochure.

Web 2.0. Now the information highway becomes a two-way street: web content is interactive. Both the author and the reader can make changes; the line between them is blurred. Examples of interactive content are:

- Reviews on Amazon, Epinions
- Wiki's (the most well-known is Wikipedia)
- Social networking sites (Facebook, Linked-In, Twitter)

Web 3.0. This is where things get fuzzy. Web 3.0 is still evolving, and there is yet no accepted definition. But there are some key elements which are associated with most Web 3.0 descriptions:

- **“Intelligent” web application.** Or perhaps more clearly: “individualized applications.” Guided by artificial intelligence, web usage will be automatically customized by individual, based on that individual's usage patterns and preferences.
- **Open access.** Web 3.0 applications will run on any device, computer, or mobile phone. Users can move freely from one device to the other – and from one application to another, taking their own identity with them.
- **A global database.** Others envision Web 3.0 to be one large database, eliminating silos of separate data sources.

Information Overload

Web 2.0 has opened up a vast space of published current information and opinion about almost anything. With so much content being added constantly, Information overload is a very real problem. And with social networking sites, even more so,

because there are few checks and balances. **The challenge is to determine which information is credible and usable.**

If you are making business decisions based on published data and “expert” opinions, you must be reasonably certain that your information is reliable, current, and relatively complete and/or representative. One of the most important tasks for business researchers is to sift through the data, dig deeper, if possible, and judge what to do with it. This can be time-consuming and challenging, but obviously necessary.

Is It Web 3.0 Yet?

So it’s not surprising that crystal ball-gazers envision a future Web 3.0 that eliminates information overload and duplication by bringing the data together into one large database that can be accessed in multiple ways. And that recognizes me wherever I am, and provides me with exactly the information I want. Quite a scenario!

Of course, Web 3.0 is not here yet. When it arrives, it may be called something else, and it may look and act differently from the scenario I just outlined. **But I predict it will be exciting – and it will come sooner than you think!**