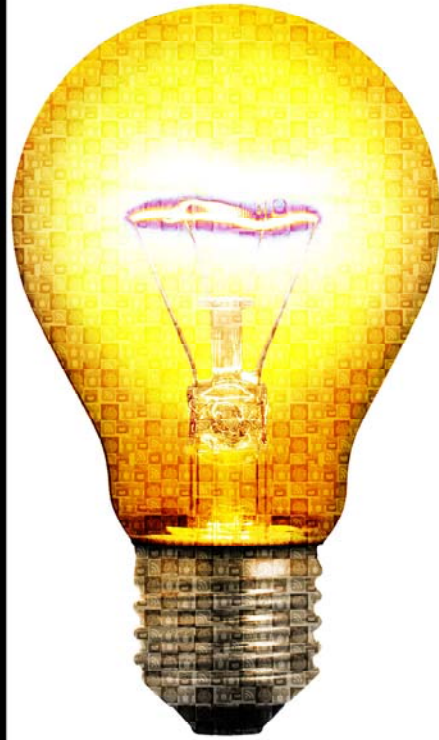
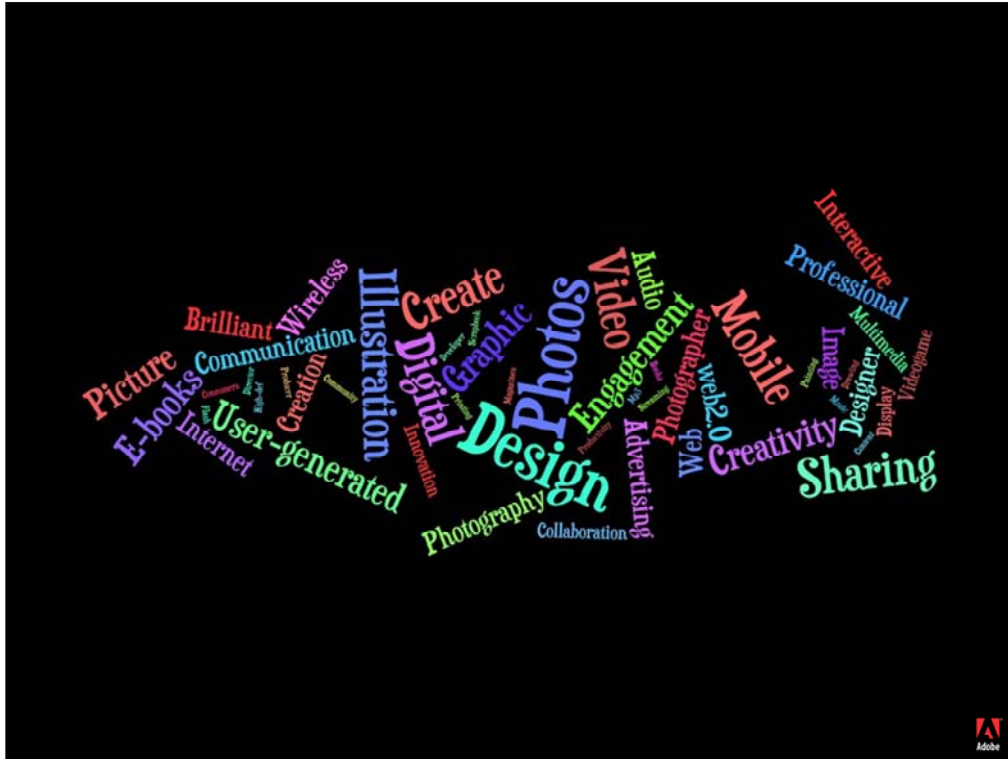


# **A Creative Approach to Communicating at a Creative Company**

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Adobe Systems  
October 21, 2008



This case study focuses on how our team promotes research and library resources to audiences around our company through as many channels as we can, including blogs, wikis, RSS, surveys, social bookmarking, tabling, and other methods. It's an innovative environment, so we try to be innovative ourselves in how we communicate.



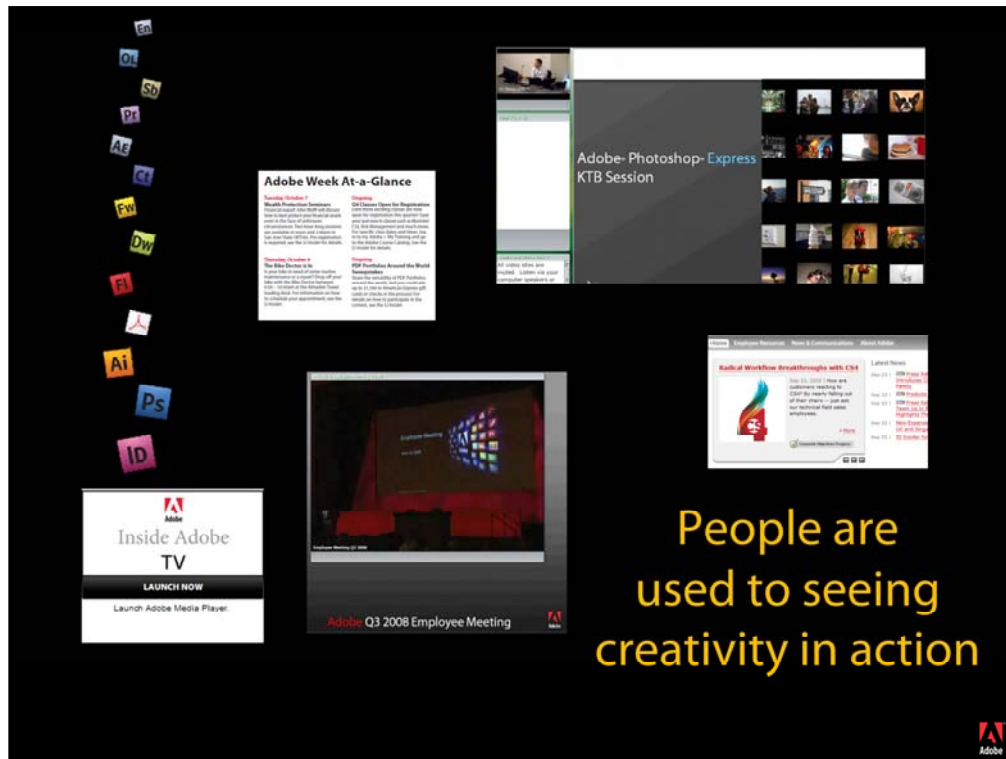
Adobe is a producer of creative software, and it's full of creative people, too. Every day, our employees work at helping other people better express their ideas.



We are part of the Information Resources Group (a part of Corporate Marketing), which manages the physical library and a market research portal, manages the purchasing of third-party industry research as well as conversations with analysts, and provides secondary research support and information skills training for the entire company.

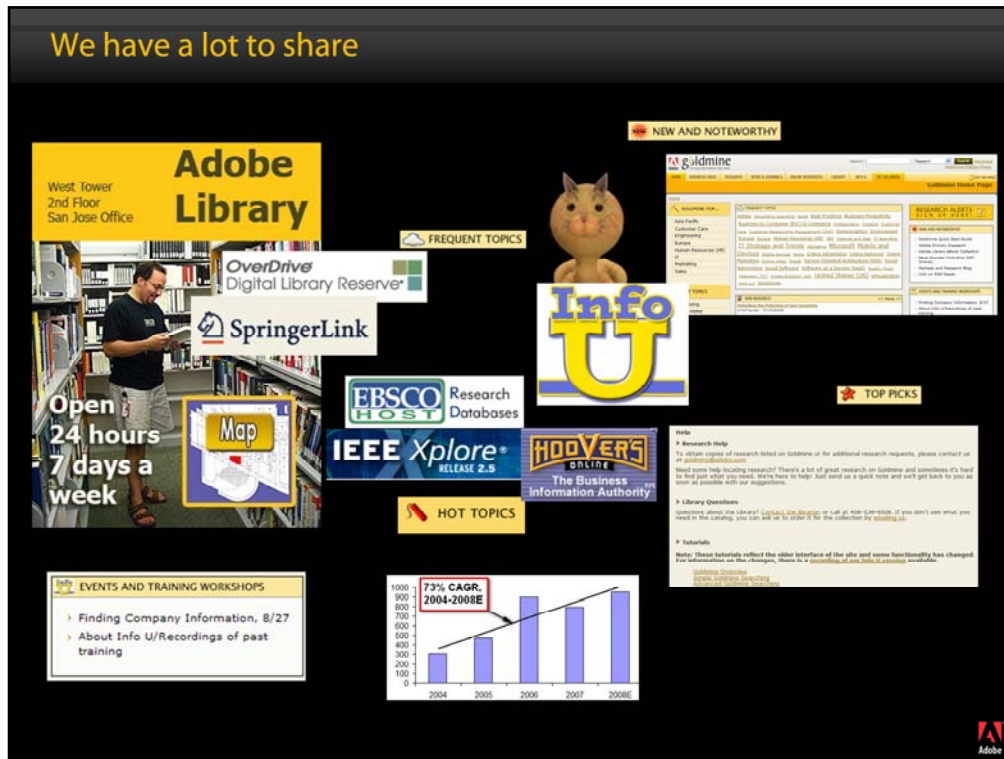
Like many of you, we want our services to make clients better informed and more efficient, to make decision-making more successful, and to drive strategies based on a deeper understanding of the opportunities. These can range from high-level corporate strategies to individual skills with a search engine so they spend less time searching and more time doing something with that information.

But probably also like many of you, we sometimes struggle with how to spread the word about what we can do for people.



Employees are around information presented in engaging ways and targeted to places they're likely to pay attention to.

- Company meetings are high-tech audio-video showcases presented live (and recorded for later viewing) at Adobe sites around the world. They often include examples of professional work done with our software.
- Informational meetings use lots of images, graphs, animation, or whatever will convey the message. Since meetings are often about our products, they'd better be made using said products.
- The intranet highlights news with graphics, executive photos, etc.
- In high-rise office buildings like the headquarters in San Jose, the elevators have signs announcing events for that week. They're not very high-tech, but that's mainly because the elevators themselves need to be upgraded to do what the employee communications people would like to do.
- Also in the San Jose office, the multi-level parking garage elevator lobbies have bulletin boards for business-related and personal announcements. Color and design grab the eye.



## We have a lot to share—we market and communicate information about...

- The physical library and online catalog
- The e-books and audiobooks available through the library portal
- Our research portal (primary and syndicated research plus other secondary info)—search techniques, alerts, new features, etc.
- Other licensed resources like EBSCO, Hoover's, IEEE & ACM
- Events (training workshops, etc.)
- Hot topics and top picks in primary and syndicated research reports
- Sources of assistance like our training series or help page
- A custom advertising tracker I produce (KAT)
- Group information for our own management

How can we get  
their attention?

It's the PMP:  
Perpetual  
Monkey Problem



How can we get people's attention?

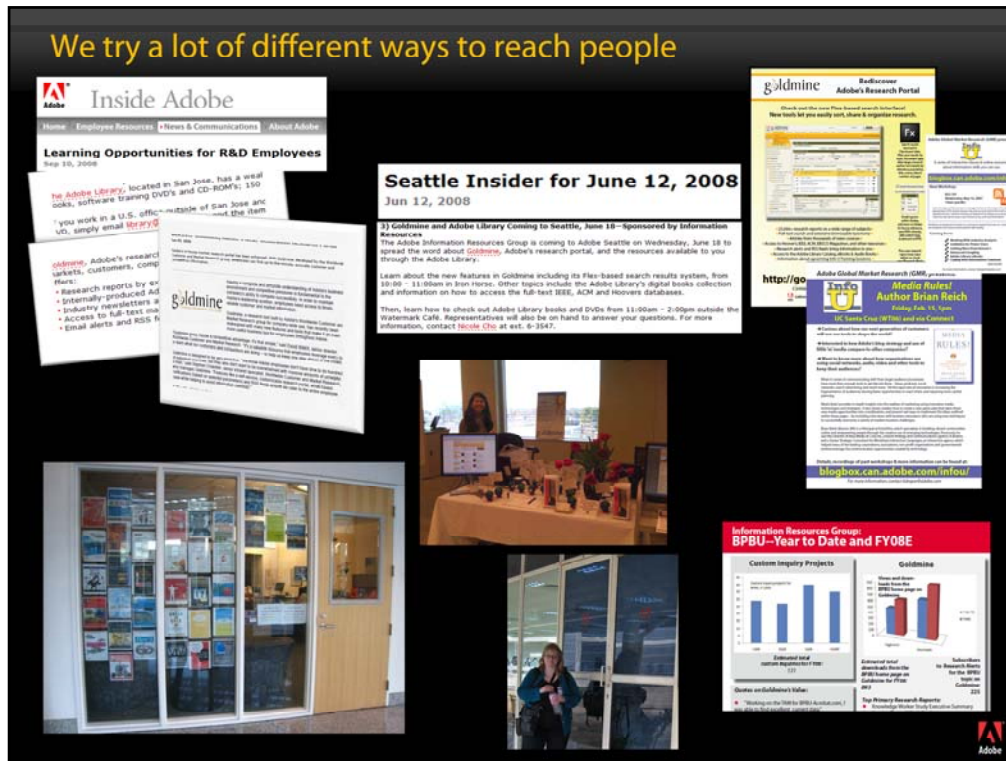
It's the PMP: the Perpetual Monkey Problem. People are so busy and so concentrated on their immediate work that they sometimes have to block out getting any more information just to keep it all under control.



We've discovered that we have to get creative to grab attention in this creative company. Not only does every communication need to be eye-catching and to sell what we can do, but it also needs to serve as another way to market ourselves. Every email, every poster, every handout should market our "brand." If someone has been at the company for a while and still hasn't heard of us, it's not for lack of trying on our part.

Now Emily will discuss some of the ways we've tried to do this, including the ever-popular candy, cookies, and T-shirts.

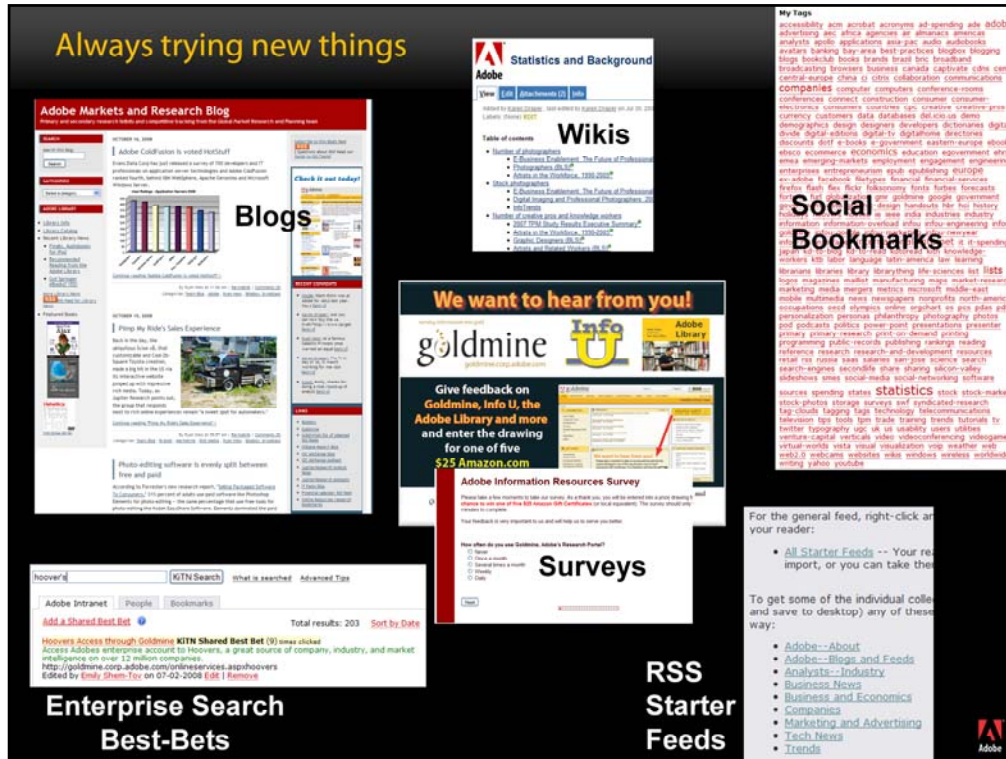




## We've tried a lot of channels, including traditional ones....:

- Notices of events in the site email newsletters
- Occasional articles on the intranet home page
- Time at other groups' staff meetings
- Signs in the elevator lobbies and break rooms – though those sometimes get lost in the chaos of other flyers
- New employee orientations and internal fairs (here's Nicole at a professional development fair)
- Links from other internal sites to our portal
- Color copies of book covers on the library window
- Mailing lists
- Visits to offices around the world (here's a photo of Karen at the Bangalore office)





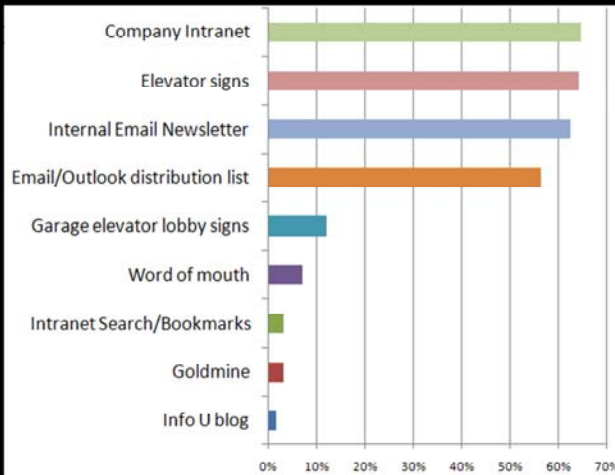
### ...And some newer ones:

- A blog to highlight internal and external research tidbits, new library books
- More appearances in the site newsletters, including links back to the blog and portal
- Elevator signs
- In-person appearances at other office sites
- Tabling, including promoting a summer movie-themed series of information skills classes
- Training classes with related blog and wiki
- Wikis for research projects
- Surveys of all employees, regular portal users, interns, training class attendees
- A user research study
- One-click feeds to get new users started with RSS
- Cross-marketing of tools at every opportunity
- Social networking

No one way will do...



In general, which communications channels are most effective for you to get information about internal Adobe events such as Info U?



A recent study of attendees of our Info U training series demonstrated how the multi-channel approach is necessary. The company Intranet and signs in the elevators were the preferred options, followed closely by the internal email newsletters. Unfortunately each of those channels is out of our direct control and has space limitations. The most effective element under our control was the email/calendar distribution list, but we need to continue to publicize that for it to be effective to a larger audience.

So, we try to be creative about getting out in front of people...



Just because we're a corporate library doesn't mean we can't take advantage of the buzz around National Library Week (or at least use it as another chance to promote ourselves.) We were shameless – we hung up signs down the corridor that said “Cookies in the Library” and “free t-shirts.” We put the t-shirts in the back so you had to walk through the stacks to go pick one up. We got a lot of people into the library that had never stepped foot in there before. Just propping the door open and having an “open house” was a great thing to try. We also took the show on the road and brought flyers and books to our SF office and let people check them out right there. It is amazing how many people remarked, “we have a library?”

**Summer Blockbuster Campaign**

**Info U Blockbuster Summer Training Series**  
Your ticket to information

**Coming Attractions:**

- THE GOLDMINE RESEARCH PORTAL**  
and the NEW FLEX SEARCH INTERFACE
- Rediscover goldmine**  
Goldmine, Adobe's Research Portal, has a whole new face based on a new interface and new tools to help you find, organize and share research more easily.
- FINDING INFO on companies**
- THE FEEDS: THE READER AND THE KNOWLEDGE**
- THE CHRONICLES OF RSS**
- THE GOLDMINE FOR ENGINEERING**

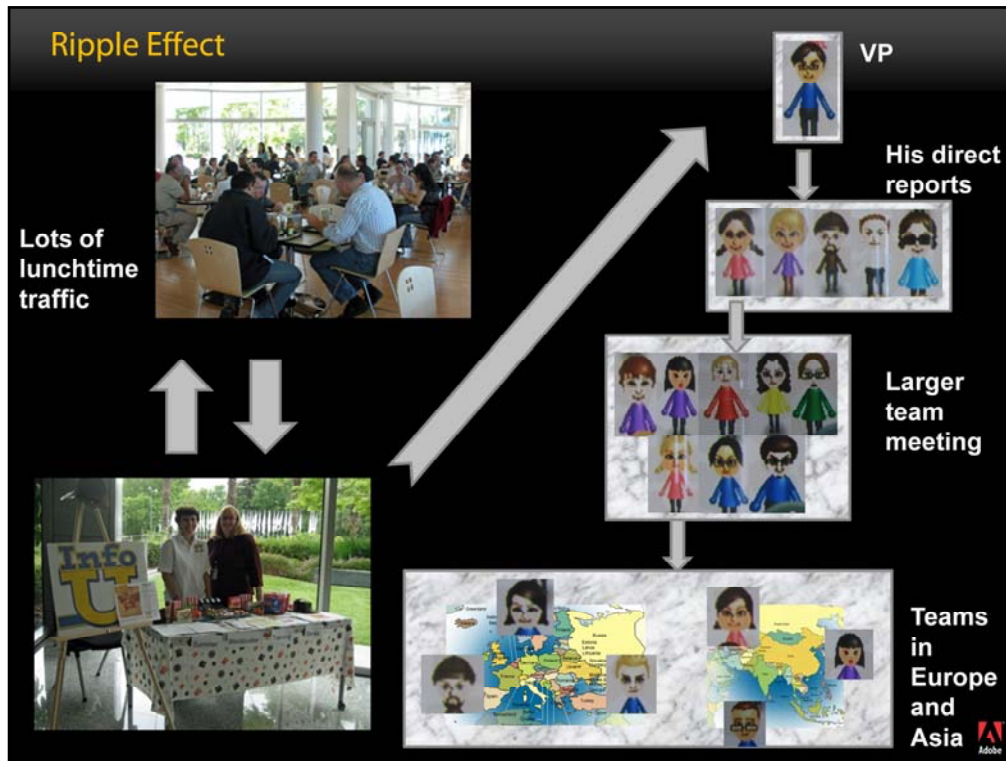
**Info U**

**For showtimes, locations and more information, visit:**  
<http://blogbox.can.adobe.com/info>

**Flyers, blog posts, promotions, props, candy**

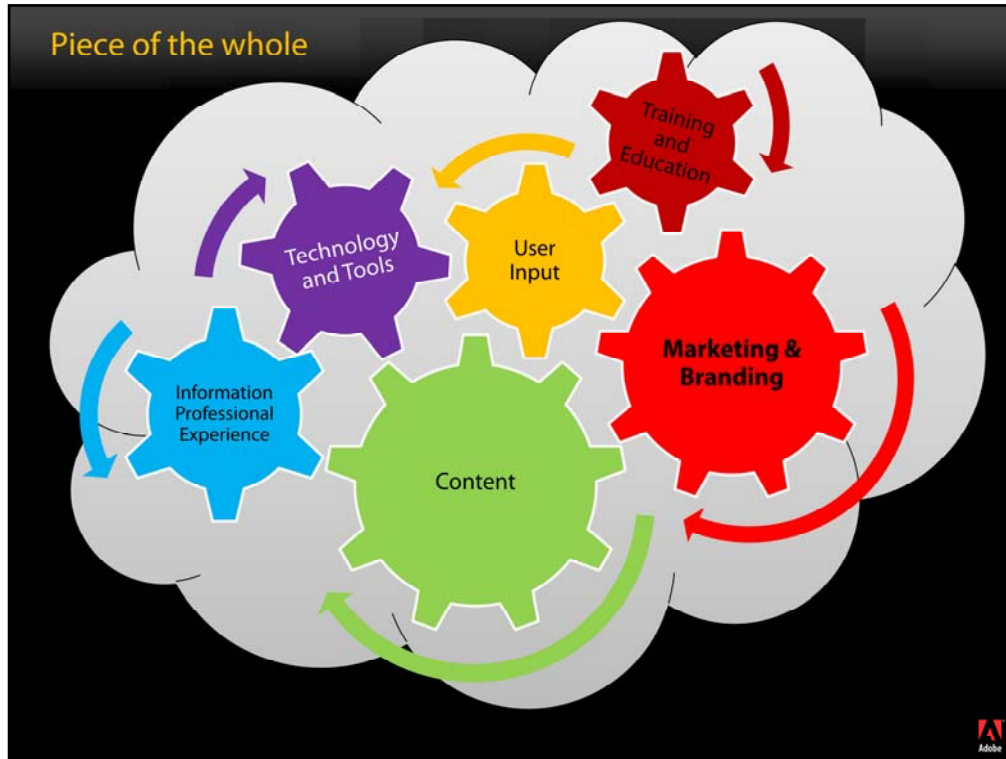
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We saw some great results from our lunch time tabling. Not only were we able to be visible to the large numbers of people coming to the café for lunch, but we were able to have some great conversations with the people who stopped (giving out candy encouraged some curious people) and were able to answer questions and get feedback from users.

There was also a ripple effect from the visibility. Our favorite example is a Vice President who stopped at the table. We took the opportunity to offer to give a training session at one of his team meetings and he agreed. We were invited to talk to his direct reports and one of the people at that meeting then invited us to talk to her whole staff meetings. That led to an invitation to do a conference call and online presentation to members of the team located in Europe and Asia, and we were able to specifically target the training to the content most relevant to them.



Not only is marketing and outreach a part of our roles on the team, but it is integrated into the whole strategy that our team uses to plan and stay on track. Each year our team comes up with an internal campaign to motivate our team and unify our focus – and marketing, branding and training are a big part of our efforts towards helping our clients become better informed and more efficient, to make decision-making more successful, and to drive strategies based on a deeper understanding of the opportunities.


**For more information...**

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Find this presentation on PBwiki:  
<http://kdraper.pbwiki.com/>

And the Internet Librarian website after the  
Conference

Ask about Karen's Moo cards and Moo stickers



And of course, more is on the horizon.

We're looking into things like:

- Webcasts or podcasts
- More in-person appearances, especially proactively and more often for workgroups
- Customized RSS readers with pre-populated feeds
- Taking advantage of the new digital sign in the cafeteria
- More sharing of analyst calls, podcasts, in-person analyst visits
- Newsletter

And are of course always open to other things we haven't thought of yet – and will probably have lots to take home from this conference that we'll want to add into the mix!