

THE ENRICHMENT PROJECT

Badge Program

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CONNECTION REVOLUTION

Steps

1. Take a listen.

upmarket.squidoo.com/2012/02/08/we-are-all-weird

This interview with Seth Godin on his book, *We Are All Weird*, will start you thinking about the Connection Revolution. This interview is about 25 minutes. If you are interested, check out Seth's book as well.

MASS MANUFACTURING

2. No choice.

How often have you purchased stuff because "it's the next thing"? Have you gone Christmas shopping to find that one gift your child (grandchild) had to have? This is big business at its worst - creating an artificial demand to drive purchasing.

3. Full choice.

Do a search online for things you are interested in. Find small businesses that provide what the large ones cannot. These are "niche" businesses. While many "mass" businesses are struggling, these small businesses are thriving. Did you find any niches that were underrepresented? Can you picture yourself supporting or starting a niche business?

4. The music industry.

The music industry was controlled by corporations and middlemen with the actual artist not maintaining copyright to his / her music and usually making very little money. Compare it with music today. Many musicians can record their music themselves, eliminating the cost of the "mass" and doing what they truly want. Today's musicians connect with people interested in their music and have to sell a lot less. Find a musician online that has a small following that you might purchase music from.

5. The publishing industry — newspapers.

Why purchase a newspaper when you can have the news sent to you? You can also decide what news interests you so you're not overwhelmed with news. The decline in newspapers started before the Internet. How do you get your news? Compare how much you get from newspapers, television, the Web and mobile devices.

6. The publishing industry — books.

Amazon's Kindle, GoodReader, Apple's eBooks and other ebook readers are fueling the move from expensive print books to lower cost (and more easily stored) eBooks. Check out the Domino Project for a new take on publishing.

If you're a writer, you can self-publish with sites like Lulu and Smashwords. With everyone able to self-publish, the quality of books will go down as the quantity goes up. Check out a few self-publishing sites and see if this is something you might be interested in doing.



Connection Revolution

For a hundred years, the world has been consumed with mass — manufacturing, advertising and education. We're at the beginning of a new revolution - the connection revolution. Your chance to change the world has never been greater. Let's look at the mass and how it is moving to connection . . . and how you can become connected.



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7. **SOPA.**

SOPA is just one piece of legislation that big business is sponsoring to keep control, to keep the world the way it was, to keep “mass”. Explore other ways the government and big business are trying to maintain control of our lives.

8. **Etsy.**

Etsy is a marketplace for handmade, unique items. In the mass marketplace, it couldn't exist. Today, anyone can start their own business. Look through some of the businesses on Etsy see if any of these fit your own interests.

MASS ADVERTISING

9. **Television advertising.**

Television advertising is the voice of mass manufacturing – artificially planting the “must haves” of our lives. How have commercials changed? Sites like Hulu offer free viewing of shows, but commercials are now there as well. The difference is Hulu asks you if the advertisement is pertinent to you. Compare today's commercials with those of ten, twenty or thirty years ago.

10. **Social media.**

Social media is all about spreading ideas. From Facebook to Pinterest, we can all connect with friends and spread our likes and dislikes. Even if we do not support a business with purchases, we can share information about it. Look back over your communications online. How many times have you looked at a small business on the word of your online friends? How often do you share information about companies you find online?

11. **Facebook.**

Is Facebook the look of the future? Instead of targeting millions of households because you can afford to spend millions of dollars, Facebook allows advertisers to target those individuals interested in the items they are offering by using your likes, profile, etc. For a week, watch the advertising that comes up when you log into Facebook. How many of these ads interest you?

MASS EDUCATION

12. **People as a cog in the machine.**

Our current educational system is all about each person learning the same thing so each of us can be part of the machine of mass production. Look at the educational requirements for your state. Think about the classes each student must take to get a high school diploma. How many of these will really help them in the future? What classes would be a better fit for our kids?

13. **No child left behind.**

This legislation has managed to put a stranglehold on our educational system. The number of charter schools is growing to help the individual over the mass. Read about this legislation and the growing number of alternative educational choices for our youth.

14. **Youth groups.**

Scouting, sports groups and other non-educational groups are picking up the slack of our failing educational system. Each supports its own niche while some try to cover a variety of skills that our youth will need in the future. Look at one or more youth groups and see what it / they have to offer.



15. **College degree.**

The cost of a college degree often is more than the cost of a new car . . . sometimes more than a house. This puts a strain on the new graduate who needs a job to pay off the loans or his / her parents who postpone retirement due to the cost. A college degree means you can sit in a class and take a test, but how much translates to the real world? Look at your own life and explore what you learned in school and how much was a waste of your resources versus how much you actually use in the real world.

16. **Today's changes.**

Universities and colleges are looking for a new ways to provide education and experience. Unlike mass manufacturing and advertising, the educational system is working to move into the connection revolution. Programs like MIT's Open Course Ware allow you to get education for free. Mozilla's P2PU (peer-to-peer university) allows people to educate each other. Review the offerings from one of these or the other numerous free courses available online to see what you can find that interests you.

NOTE: One item higher education is looking at is earning badges that highlight skills learned instead of a certificate. Read about "badges for skills" to find out about one possible change to our educational system.

17. **Educating our youth.**

We need to work to educate our children on the new world . . . the connected world. To help share this idea, we need to understand the connection revolution. We need to give them a view of the world as it is now. As this revolution continues, the world will change. We do not know what the "next big thing" will be. Perhaps it is you or your kids who start the next big change.

18. **Connection is key.**

The only way to teach connection is to be connected. Look at the social media sites you belong to. Learn more about them. Follow what others are doing. Join the conversation.

Sites to Explore

upmarket.squidoo.com/2012/02/08/we-are-all-weird
musiciansexchangeonline.com
www.makeuseof.com/tag/10-music-services-search-engines-discover-music-musicians-bands
thefutureofpublishing.com/industries/the-future-of-newspapers
www.thedominoproject.com
www.lulu.com
www.smashwords.com
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stop_Online_Piracy_Act
www.etsy.com
www.bestoldcommercials.com
www.classictvads.com/classicindex.shtml
www.facebook.com
www.pinterest.com
www.edweek.org/topics/nochildleftbehind/index.html
ocw.mit.edu/index.htm
p2pu.org/en
wiki.mozilla.org/Badges
www.nytimes.com/2011/11/20/business/digital-badges-may-highlight-job-seekers-skills.html
trendwatching.com/trends/massmingling
www.dachisgroup.com/2011/11/the-connected-customer
www.cluetrain.com/#manifesto