

FRIDAYS AT FOUR
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Compiled by GF Strategies
Food and Beverage Consulting to Increase Profits

There's a lot of talk about social media these days. This news from the Gravity Summit on Social Media. Small business is using Twitter to advertise. A taco lunch trailer business in LA tweets where his truck will be in 20 minutes ahead of time. Hundreds of people show up and place orders.

Rodney Rumford reports that Twitter is the fastest growing business to business marketing platform.

The hot buzz word right now is behavioral targeting. Jeff Hirsh of Atlantic Science predicts that by 2020, behavioral targeting will surpass search in online ad spending.

On February 24th, Ticketmaster and Live Nation CEO's appeared before Congress to answer questions about their proposed \$2.5 billion merger. Live Nation CEO Michael Rapino said "I have two choices. I can hope the economy gets better, or I can seek a more proactive approach like the proposed merger".

A concert promoter based in Chicago Jam Productions had another view. "If this merger is allowed the combined entity will have the ability to suppress or eliminate competition". The whole game is control".

And this from Ticketmaster Chairman Barry Diller. "Ticketmaster does not set prices. Artists set the prices". Our take on this is that eventually the merger will be allowed.

New agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack was quoted at his confirmation hearing about the growing trend of local buying of food. "He will work with those who seek programs and practices that lead to more nutritious food produced in a sustainable way". There's a lot of work that can be done in this area".

From the ticket technology world comes a new firm Event Innovation. The firm has developed a system that combines stored value and social ticketing technologies. "Our tickets can not only obtain valuable customer data, they can use email marketing to build relationships, said CEO Stephen Gilfus.

From Harvard Business Schools excellent web magazine Working Knowledge (google this and make it a regular read)...comes an interview with this interesting prediction from Professor Bhashar Chakravarti. "If history is any guide, we can expect some significant industry shapers to emerge from the current crisis. In the airline industry alone, Southwest, Ryan Air and Jet Blue were founded during downturns based on the principles of delivering value. So were Revlon cosmetics and CNN".

Business Week reports that growth in the \$12 billion bottled water business has slowed to 2 percent. "The prime issues are the economy and the environment say Gary Hemphill of

Beverage Marketing Group. The big two, Coke and Pepsi are trying to go greener, by introducing lower cost brands and enhanced waters, in order to stem the growing appeal of tap water. On the other side, filter makers like Brita and Pur report 10 percent plus revenue growth this past year.

On that same topic, the Pacific Institute reports that bottled water is up to 2000 times more energy –intensive than tap water, and consumes the equivalent of 32 to 54 million barrels of oil per year in the US. Bottled water consumption in the US is estimated at 33 billion liters a year, roughly half of that carbonated beverages.

WE live you with this from a great little book **The Go Giver** by Bob Burg.

“The key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving”