



Web 2.0 Showmanship - Look out Oscars

By Edward F. Nesta

The major award shows need to recognize Web 2.0 Showmanship as it is knocking on their doors.

Awards are a way of recognizing excellence in a field. So, how does Web 2.0 come into play? Well, what brings you back to the theater? What is it that captivates your attention on a TV show, or on the many broadcasted Awards Shows? Showmanship! Wikipedia defines showmanship as - "Showmanship applies to the skill of making an artistic performance distinctive, effective, and appealing to an audience."

If you think about what is happening with the Internet and the current attention grabbing concepts, you have a glimpse at what is being called Web 2.0. The idea behind the next generation of attention grabbing formats (Aka Web 2.0) is to captivate an Internet surfer's attention while attempting to retain and involve the person with their product.

The creativity that has gone into developing formats to draw, retain, and involve people are definitely worthy of a place within some of the most notable awards shows. I am not talking about awards such as, "The Best Web Site using more than two Colors," "Best eCommerce site with the most colorful shopping cart process," or "Best Web Site Developed for Under \$50," as these are run-of-the-mill awards, and sometimes I think web sites award their own awards; hey, you never know. Though, what I am looking at is the Granddaddy of Awards.

If you think about the Award Shows and Ceremonies, - Oscars, Grammy's, People' Choice, Tonys, Golden Globe, Screen Actors Guild (SAG), Visual Effect Society, and the more targeted awards such as AARP, and NAACP Image Awards, you have just scratched the surface of opportunities for the creative people behind the Web 2.0 revolution to be recognized.

Take the pod casts, imagine an award being handed out at the Oscars in the category of "Best Pod Cast" or "Best Foreign Pod Cast Inclusive of Speech and Images and under 10 Minutes in Length." Just think about the creativity that goes into some people's pod casts, and a select few, though definitely not too many, do show quite a bit of artistic performance.

With respect to Social Networks, the awards would go out to the developers of the web sites and their creative concepts to engage, captivate, and attempt to retain users (example: Facebook, MySpace, Flickr, Flixster, Couchsurfing, Classmates.com, and on and on). There is a lot of money, time, and creative energy put into establishing a presence that people will gravitate to and hopefully they will stick around for awhile. The "Best Social Networking Site of the Year" goes to XXX! Just think about the potential financial benefits that may be achieved. It seems to work for a film that wins a "Best Picture of the Year," "Best Actor," or "Best Actress" award, as film studios hope that people will buy tickets to the recognized productions. With respect to Social Network Web Sites, they as well would hope and pray that a prestigious award would generate traffic and maybe, just maybe, one of the social networks will finally financially break-even, or better, maybe one of the Social Network sites would actually turn a profit.

In the case of blogs there should be a place in the Literary and Related Awards (probably more in the 'related' category) to honor the free-flowing text that is being produced at an exponential pace on the Internet.

Another Web 2.0 process is folksonomies, defined as "freely chosen keywords used to provide exposure and presence instead of controlled vocabulary." This would be a natural fit for the music industry to honor some of the current music formats of 'freely' chosen words instead of controlled

vocabulary. Attention grabbing words and phrases may conflict with the concept of "content is king," but hey the idea is to grab your attention and keep you coming back, or in the case of music, they are looking for downloads (legal versus pirated).

So you have it, the next generation of opportunities for Awards will come from the Web 2.0 showmanship; it may not be as crazy as it sounds. Now go out and do a casting call for your next Internet Marketing expert.

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