

# Technically Write Monthly newsletter of the STC Lone Star Community

## 2010 Lavacon: Thanks, Jack & John!

*TWStaff*, 27 November 2010(created 17 October 2010)

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tags:  
October 2010  
Lavacon  
social media



In September, I attended my first Lavacon conference. I encourage everyone to consider attending at least one Lavacon conference. It will truly open your eyes to the wealth of information and the quality of that information. The 2010 Lavacon conference, **LavaCon 2.0: The Conference on Digital Media and Content Strategies** (<http://lavacon.org/>), opened the doors of social media to others and me who were or have been skeptical about entering into this social media outlet.

As I always do, I'm going to share with you the nuggets that I took away from the sessions I attended. Feel free to email me at [jackie.damrau@comcast.net](mailto:jackie.damrau@comcast.net) if you want to know more.

### Thursday, 9/30

1. **Opening Keynote: Social Media in Business America (Natalie Malaszenko, Director of Social Media & Commerce, PETCO):** Natalie's passion for leading PETCO to work **for** the customer by *listening and including customer ideas* in their business decisions. Companies are too willing to cling to the past and want to continue doing what they have always done. They need to develop a social media disaster recovery plan for what to do when events occur. Through social media, you have a matter of a few hours to respond and **not** the standard 24 hours to make your marketing response or public statement response. Natalie provided her top ten effective social media observations in business:
  - a. ROI (return on investment) is in the eye of the beholder (define your successes)
  - b. Know that your demographic is key (give customers exciting ways of finding out about your business)
  - c. Embrace negativity, yet be ready to change
  - d. When you have fun, they have fun



Concrete Dog Park dedicated to San Diego's mascot

- e. Meet your new business partner: your **customer** (empower your community to influence others by collaborating with your customers on a common cause)
  - f. If you don't know how to begin, just listen (know where your customer spends their time)
  - g. Tools and platforms aren't always the answer
  - h. Shock and awe can convince the top
  - i. Messages are co-created. You can start it, yet you won't finish it
  - j. But social teams expand beyond social teams. Hub-and-spoke structure uses employees who know special areas talk with customers about that area using social media.
2. **Intelligent Content: The Magic Behind the Curtain (Ann Rockley, The Rockley Group):** Ann's presentation covered how intelligent content should be structurally rich, semantically categorized, and automatically available.
    - a. *Structurally rich* means that we should apply different style sheets for multichannel publishing, filter inappropriate content automatically, and search on content by context of a particular element type.
    - b. *Semantically categorized* uses metadata and tags to enable content to be pushed to wikis and other social media venues by integrating them through mashups and pipes. Without metadata, it is almost impossible to automate.
    - c. *Automatically available* relies on data being easily discoverable, efficiently reusable, dynamically configurable, and completely adaptable.
  3. **Stop Documenting, Start Designing (Vivian Aschwanden and Jim Smith, Platform Computing Corp.):** This session talked about where and when users need information, how to let them stay in task, how many pieces you already know exist fit together to make a coherent user assistance system in the product, and then to think about what to write about. Vivian and Jim talked managing context by new markets and customers, identifying the changes by reviewing different kinds of design documents with a different focus, writing conventional documents as late as possible, communicate with your users **more through the GUI (graphical user interface)** than the document, and focus your efforts on filling gaps in the user interaction. Gathering this information still requires you to look at the standard design and feature specification documents.
  4. **Lunch Keynote: State of Social Media in 2010 (Neal Schaffer, Windmill Networking):** Neal presented an insight into the social media types—blogs, microblogs, video/photo/podcast sharing, social networking—by telling us that these are not just for marketing. All departments can work together to own the company's "Social Web" presence. Social media should become your free search engine optimization (SEO) tool with companies using their blogs to attract customers to their websites and not the reverse. Neal said that Twitter ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)) is the most used social media site for businesses to talk with customers to let them know **that they care**. A social media strategy should be objective, focus on the customer, present the company brand, and share information. Companies need to make their social media presence about **their industry** and not all about them. The most important tip he gave was to *decide what **not** to do* and get into the social media world.
  5. **Why Innovate? Getting to Point B using Digital Media (Vivian Aschwanden and Jim Smith, Platform Computing Corp.):** *Yes, I went to another session of the [Aschwanden-Smith](#) team to see what else they had to say. I learned in this session that process is the core for motivating maturity to meet team and corporate goals. Vivian and Jim (re)defined the terms innovation and social media. **Innovation** is where you create values with new ideas and concepts, values and benefits, that can be incremental or radical. The benefits of re-innovating are to promote higher customer satisfaction, increase productivity, and improve delivery reliability. **Social media** (re)defined to be a collaborative, real-time common tool that is frequently web-based within corporations. The benefits of social media are seeking process improvements, reducing team constraints, timing to connect with customers, envisioning and defining a stable set of processes, and reenergizing and innovating team interactions. All innovation can use enabling technologies like wikis, SharePoint, Live Meeting, Google docs, Skype, eSupport knowledge bases, community websites, content management system workflows, Facebook, and Twitter.*
  6. **Getting The Word Out: How to Implement Your Online Branding Strategy (Matt Sullivan, roundpeg, inc.):** Matt talked about why we use Twitter and how anyone using it should consider using an aggregator, like [hootsuite.com](http://hootsuite.com), [tweetdeck.com](http://tweetdeck.com), or [socialloomph.com](http://socialloomph.com), to be able to send out one tweet through as many media channels as possible. He then talk about LinkedIn and the perception that it's use is for purely professional reasons, that you should be selective about your personal network, display your tweets and blog content on your LinkedIn page, and that, if you are a company, you should create a good landing page and update your information via an aggregator. Matt covered blogs by saying that they should serve as a collection point for varied content, and then he talked about blog tools—Tweetmeme, SexyBookMarks, TwitterTools, Yet Another

Related Posts, and Google Sitemap—you can use to improve your social media presence. This session ended with three universal tips:

- a. Be relevant and engaging
  - b. Use social media to establish credit (share tips, announce successes, discuss/solve problems)
  - c. Be generous (share others' successes, recirculate/"like", comment on other blogs, and link share when appropriate).
7. **Day 1: Closing Keynote: You're Only as Good as Your Last Tweet (Crosby Noricks, Red Door Interactive):** The day is ending and the head is swimming with all this newly learned information about social media. Crosby had us laughing and learning new phrases of speech (check out the #lavacon tweet stream about "taking your pants off"). We did learn that tweets that include links are far more likely to be retweeted than those without links. The social media Twitter strategy that Crosby recommends is to **Identify** your goals; **Listen** to what people are saying; **Assign** metrics; and **Create** engaging content. And, she ended with giving us her *secret social media sauce*:
- a. Make a commitment to participate daily
  - b. Share great content by sharing it **first**
  - c. Care about your followers by providing support and solutions

## Friday, 10/1

1. **Opening Keynote: Get Ready for Socially Enabled Everything (Scott Abel, The Content Wrangler):** From Scott's session, I learned that about goog411, wordle, and how everything should be shareable and syndicable. Our social efforts should help people do stuff and to remember that *it's not about you, it's about the relationship* and that location awareness is a must. Scott then told us about the next new wave in social media which is augmented reality and that we should take advantage of it. To quote Scott, "Everything is about to change and you need to know if and when you are ready."
2. **Creating a Content Strategy (Rahel Bailie, Intentional Design Inc.):** A content strategy should be iterative, not linear as you do your research, write and edit, solicit approvals, translate, and publish your documentation. Rahel talked about the content lifecycle having a strategic component, Analysis, and three tactical components: Collect, Manage, and Publish. This content lifecycle concept is not new to me, yet what I did learn is that we need to pay more attention to the implementation. Implementation involves post-publishing (do you sunset, evaluate, iterate, or archive content?), publishing (how many channels and variations do you need?), management (components versus business rules), and technical (components versus standards). Rahel ended with this, "You need to know where you are going to reach the tactical objectives through effective strategic planning."
3. **Discovering the Hidden Treasure of Dynamic Product Information (Liz Fraley, Single-Sourcing Solutions, Inc.):** Content should be customized to the customer so that they can find the information they want quickly to keep them happy and on your site. Knowing how they use their investigative skills through social media is important. We spent time on talking about how to get your information before the C-management level by learning to speak their language and developing a row-based matrix that shows how the product information improves revenues, expands market share, and increases customer loyalty.



Balboa Theater and Horton Plaza

4. **Lunch Keynote: Why Content Strategists are the Next Corporate Rock Stars (Mark Fidelman, MindTouch):** This session took us all back through many of the “Golden Oldies” like the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, and such. Yet this walk down memory lane (for those who remember) left that lane and talked about how social media is the new **avenue of the city** where:
  - a. Our content has to be engaging to create revenue (think about iTunes for Apple)
  - b. Fans of your content are your community so keep them engaged by getting them to contribute content
  - c. We can reduce the noise and provide clarity by connecting content with actual customer requirements
  - d. Discovering great content through the use of analytics
  - e. Setting the base for your customers that makes them want to visit and use your site to their advantage
5. **The Psychology of Social Media (Mario Lehenbauer, University of Vienna):** This session was one of the best ones I attended. Being interested in psychology from all perspectives: linguistically, socially, and through business, it was interesting to hear the research that Mario has been doing at the University of Vienna. He talked about the reasons that the Internet is so successful being that it is available 24/7, easy to use, makes people feel mighty and powerful when they log in and seed content as an active user, that it creates a feeling of intimacy as we begin connecting with others online, and how we lose track of time when we are **surfing the Internet**. Mario then talked about seeding behavior in its uses and gratification approaches, high versus low seeders, and that there is no gender differences, and concluded by talking about the focus that he is seeing on Twitter and Facebook.
6. **Integrating Content Management and Business Process Management (Katie Hicks, Hewlett-Packard):** This session covered how Katie’s group at HP is effective reusing its content by identifying gaps in technical use, partner involvement, and built-in terminology and style, and deliverable flexibility.
7. **Getting the Most Out of Twitter...Everywhere! (Char James-Tanny, JTF Associates Inc.):** Char is a *GREAT* speaker. If you ever get a chance to hear her, please do. She shared so much information with us that our heads were reeling by the end of the session. Of course, this session was for those more advanced in using social media; however, for me, a social media newbie, it gave me more reason to “try” to begin using it more. Char shared a selected number of social media applications that we should consider using, such as:
  - a. Twitter clients: [twitter.pbworks.com/Apps](http://twitter.pbworks.com/Apps); [squidoo.com/twitterapps](http://squidoo.com/twitterapps) (or just do a Google search for “twitter apps” to see how many are out there)
  - b. Twitter services: [tuttoaster.com](http://tuttoaster.com); [work.blogspot.com](http://work.blogspot.com)
    - i. Reading and filtering: [tweetscan.com](http://tweetscan.com); [tweetbeat](http://tweetbeat); [Cadmus](http://Cadmus), [My6Sense](http://My6Sense)
    - ii. Notifications: [Twitstra](http://Twitstra)
    - iii. Analysis and quality: [refollow.com](http://refollow.com), [foller.me](http://foller.me), [klout](http://klout)
    - iv. Location: [friendorfollow.com](http://friendorfollow.com)
    - v. Widgets: Flickr, Facebook, LinkedIn (*keep business away from personal*)
    - vi. Corporate environment: [yammer.com](http://yammer.com)
    - vii. Security: check your security and use “Revoke Access” as needed

## Saturday, 10/2

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1. **Social Networking, Social Presence and Social Boundaries (Phylise Banner, American Public University):** Attending a session where the presenter is an expressive poet and educator is interesting. If you know Phylise, you know that her expressiveness is unique. Let’s just say that the way she started this morning’s session off was “all the rage” the rest of the day and on the #lavacon twitter stream. Yes, we did learn stuff, so here it is.
  - a. We are public by default and private by effort. When using social media, we make a conscious effort to decide what we will share and what we won’t. Our relationships are based on common interests, which is why we connect with certain people. We determine intimacy levels by trust and define circles of exposure, trust, and curate our private lives.
  - b. The identity we create is distinct in each world we exist in: social, personal, and corporate. There’s even a word for this: multiphrenic self. Look it up and tell me what you learned.

- c. Reputation is where we decide what image we want to shape and present to everyone and depending on that image, you have to know whether you can start fresh after messing up. Introvert, extrovert, another -vert, can we change?
- d. We create our social role/capital through social contracts where the only way we are known or visible is if we openly share personal or relational content with others. Some are comfortable, others are not. Doing this online is even more frightening for some and less for others.
- e. Finally, we establish boundaries that are firm and impregnable as the price is high and carries great risk. When boundaries become permeable, movement becomes more fluid (Flanigan, 2010).

## 2. What's Your Content Doing and Where is it Going? (Lee Traupel, LinkedMedia):

Content is anything (text, images, ...) that is everywhere. It's also audio/video, social conversations, blogs-wikis-discussion groups, corporate websites, and mobile devices. Great content requires creating, publishing, and measuring compelling words and images that resonate with your audience. Determining how and where social media fits in requires looking at how using existing content, knowing the analytics, and whether ROI being received is ample. Connecting with your audience requires being engaging and having a personality, must be keyword-rich (SEO friendly), is relevant and fresh, and gets picked up by social streams (retweeted). The social web is vast, broad, and deep; it is global with no boundaries or borders, and is driven by many-to-many conversations with others and replicated. Cross-pollinating your content through the social media channels to garner business and reputation is necessary, yet be aware that it can consume a large portion of your time. For businesses, the absolutes for social content marketing are that your content must have value and be well written, integrate your community with appropriate ads, should leverage social influencers, and be measurable and quantifiable. Metrics comes with everything these days, even content. Content metrics focuses on measuring the social voice and brand mentions, capturing audience engagement, understanding how conversations reach across multiple social networks, and bringing an insight into having key influencers onboard with your brand. Lee recommended that you write a blog post once and have it retweeted, picked up on LinkedIn, and spanned through other social networks.



Hotel St. James, View 2

Do you think we learned about social media? We did. The end of each day we were exhausted with all the relevant, timely, and interesting information we received. As I said, this being my first Lavacon conference was an eye-opener. Will I attend others? Definitely yes! Should you attend a Lavacon conference? Why wouldn't you!

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Kudos to Jack Molisani, the organization of Lavacon, and to John Hedtke, who insisted I attend. Without these two wonderful folks, I probably wouldn't have gone. I'm glad I did. By the way, the photos you see throughout this article are ones that were taken from my cell phone during a walking night tour that Jack put together of the Gaslamp District in San Diego. He made sure that once we were exhausted with information, we became exhausted with all the historical elements of San Diego.



View from mine and Rachel Houghton's hotel room (San Diego Convention Center and the

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