

# Brand Queries As A Ranking Signal



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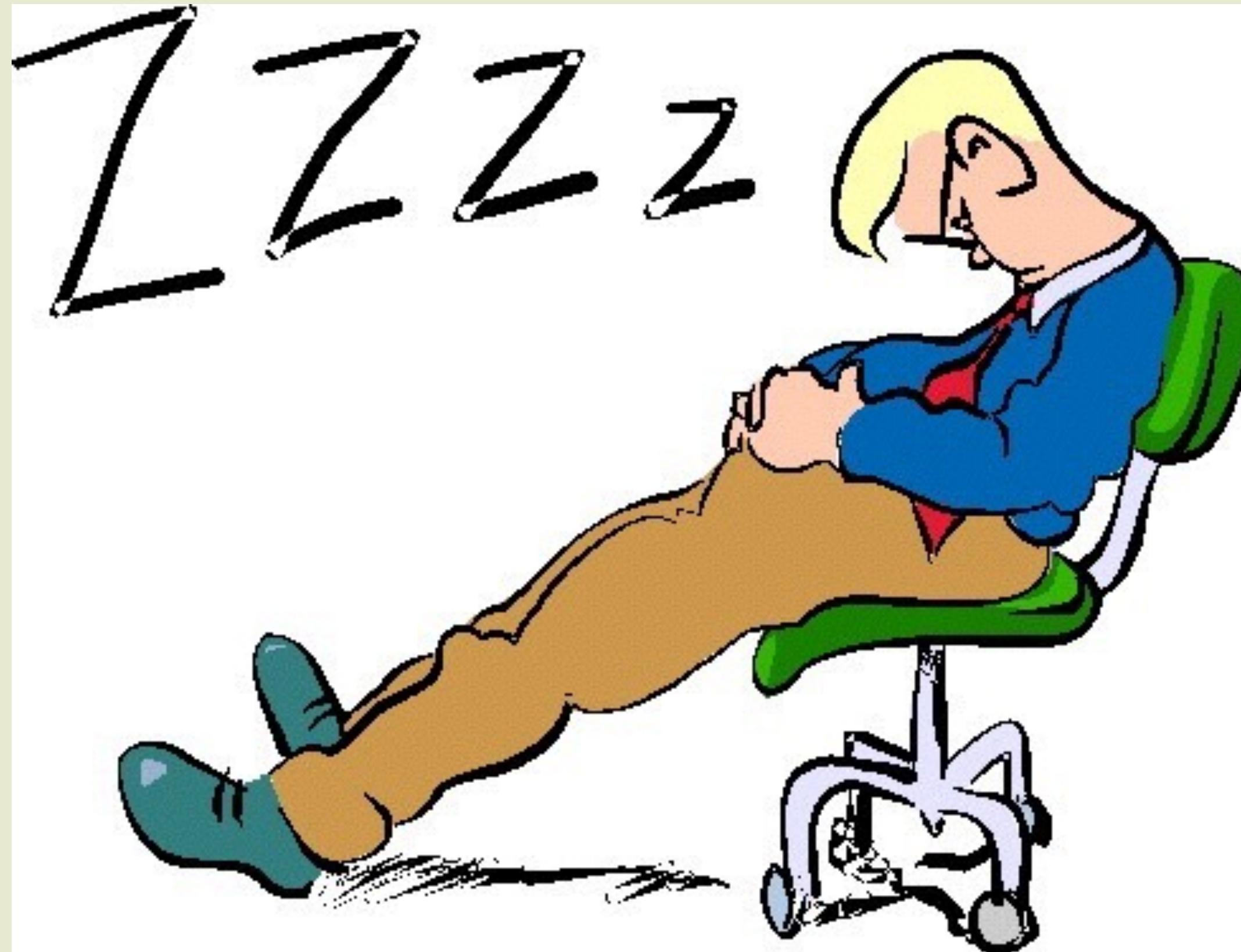
@Jonahstein

<http://bit.ly/2oCXOxH>

Jonahstein@ItsTheROI.com

# TL;DR

- Make great content and Google will find your site and send you traffic.



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# 90 Second Version

- Google is a measurement & data mining company
- Most trusted ranking signals come from user behavior on Google.
- Set KPIs for brand engagement & repeat visits
- Move higher in the conversation funnel
- Think like a publisher

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# RankBrain

- *If RankBrain sees a word or phrase it isn't familiar with, the machine can make a guess as to what words or phrases might have a similar meaning and filter the result accordingly, making it more effective at handling never-before-seen search queries.*
- Google has trouble with queries it has never seen before— So Relevance is driven by USER BEHAVIOR ON QUERIES

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# Capturing User Behavior

- Search Box
- SERP
- Google+ buttons
- Adsense
- Display
- Network Peering
- Conversion Trackers
- Analytics



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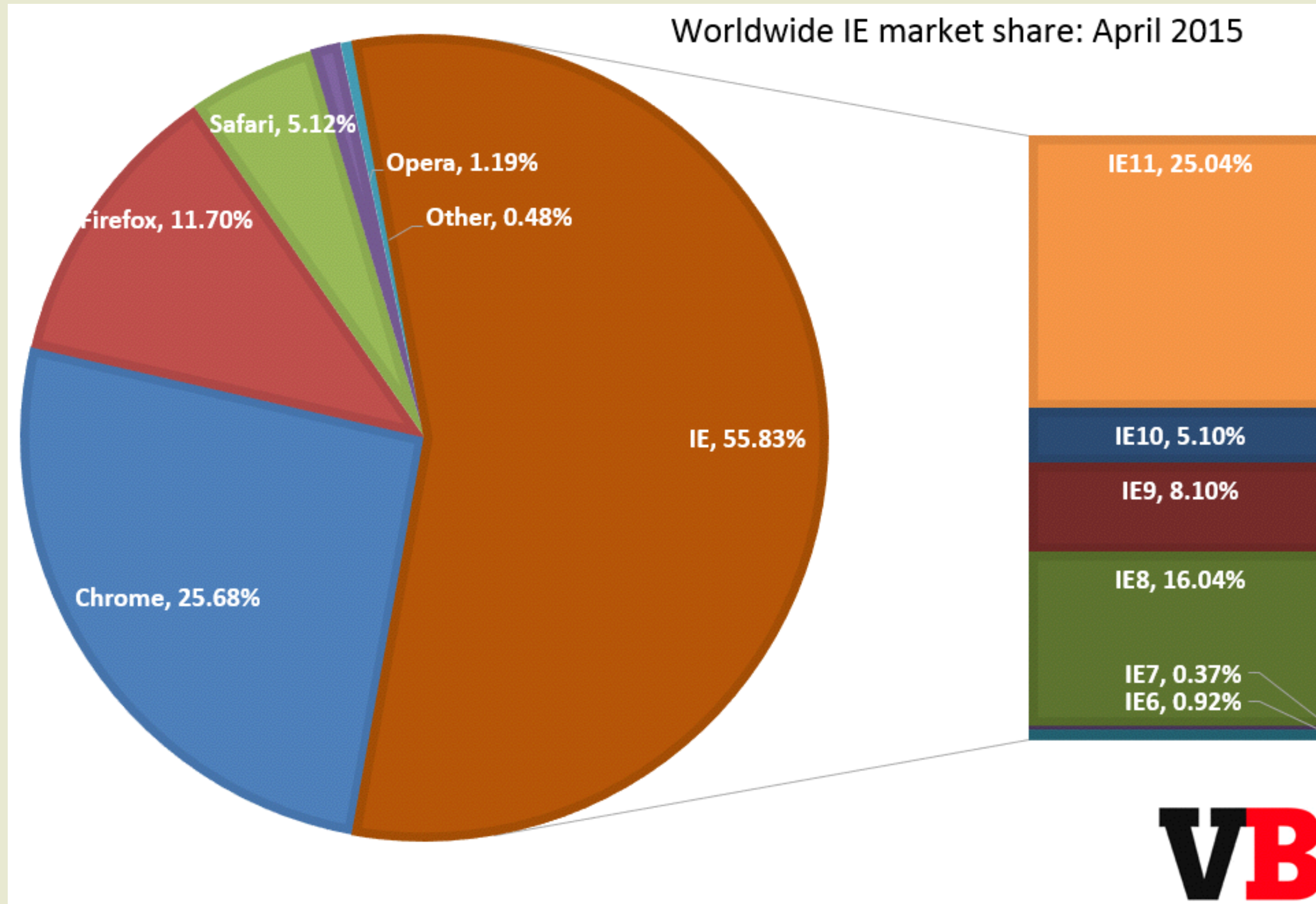
# Google Toolbar

Help us improve Toolbar with usage statistics

You can choose to send your usage statistics to Google to help us improve Toolbar.

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# Chrome DESKTOP Data

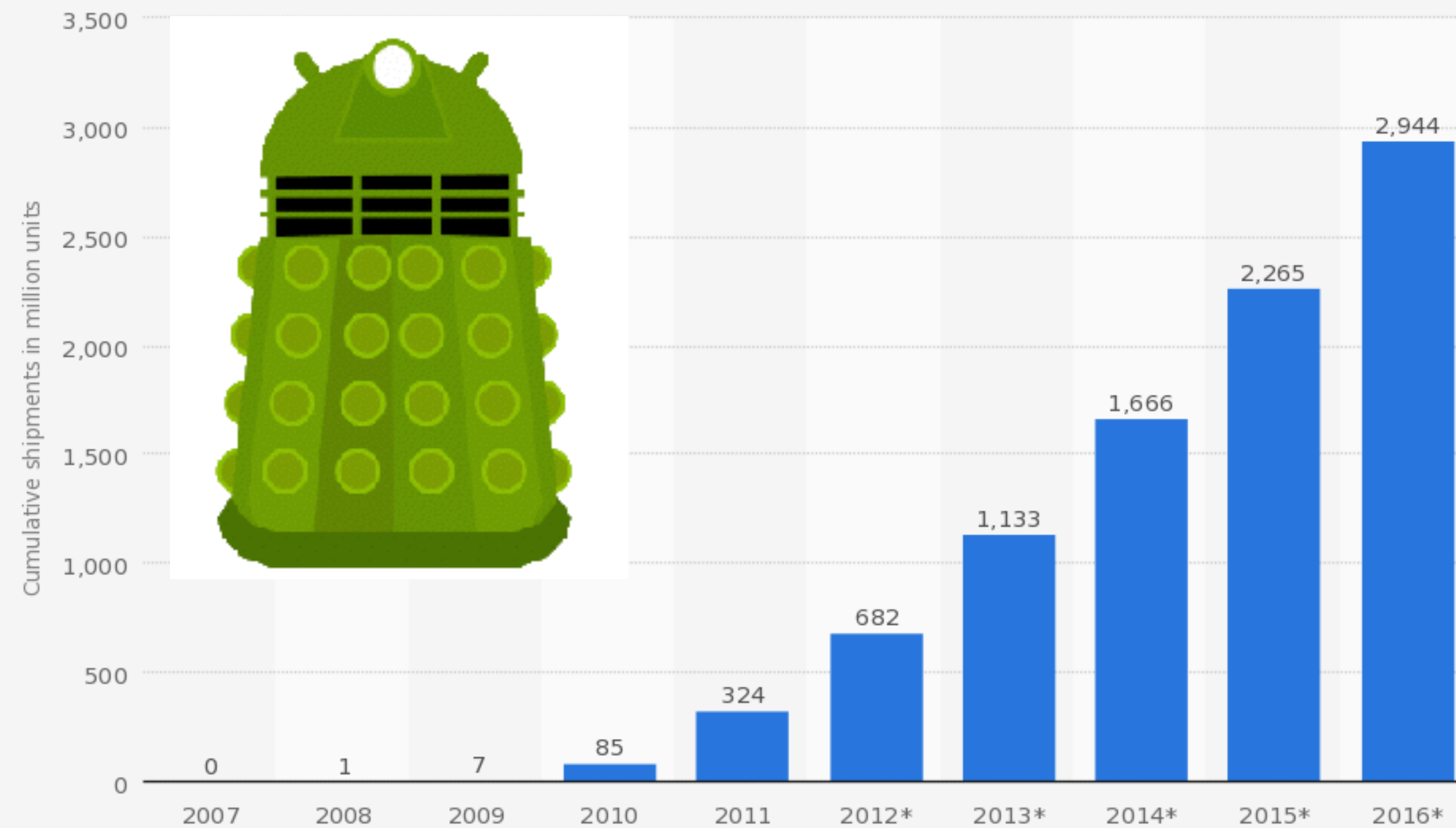


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# Android Army

**Global cumulative shipments of smartphones using the Android operating system from 2007 to 2016 (in million units)**



Source:  
iSuppli  
© Statista 2015

Additional Information  
Worldwide; iSuppli; 2007 to 2011

statista

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# 2001 -2008 Ranking Factors

- Relevancy
  - Backlink anchor text + content
- Trust
  - Backlinks
- Authority
  - Citations Backlinks
- SEOs successfully gamed signals

# Algorithmic Relevancy FAILS

In 2008, Google's Eric Schmidt told us that the internet is fast becoming a “cesspool” where false information thrives. Brands are how you sort out the cesspool”

# Big Brand Bailout Feb. 2009



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# 8 Months Of Wonder(ing)

Matthew Trehwella at Meet The Search Engines Q&A, A4UExpo  
(reported by Patrick Altoft, Branded3 (Formerly [blogstorm.co.uk](http://blogstorm.co.uk)))

*The brand update is about Google minimising the number of times people have to search to find the products or information they are looking for. **Every time a user has to perform a second search Google regards it as their failure for not bring up the right result the first time.***

*So what Google is doing is testing which results are going to **give the least number of secondary searches and displaying those.** In the past somebody might have searched for “travel insurance” and found a few good sites before remembering that the Post Office does travel insurance too and searched for them to get a comparison. **For Google this is regarded as a bit of a failure because they didn’t bring up the Post Office in the first place.***

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# Vince: Query Refinement

- Query Refinement = Failure
- Query Refinement shows user intent
  - @SEOBook Graph, Microsoft Search Funnel Tool



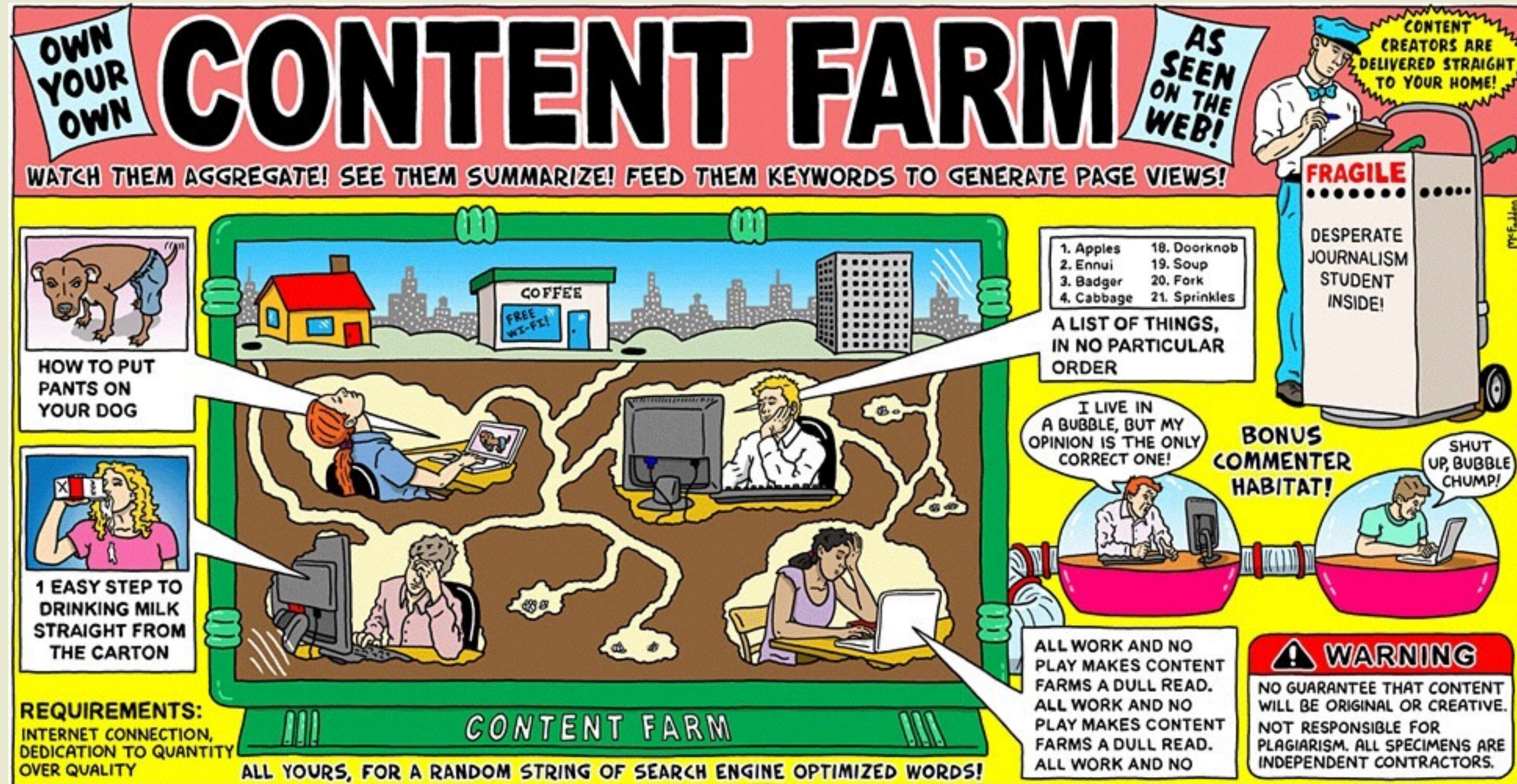
If you look at some of the above branded keywords associated with *credit cards* you will see those brands ranking in Google's search results for *credit cards*.

# Big Brand Bailout Take Aways

- Initially targeted money terms
- Limited to “a few dozen keywords”
- Validated by Multivariate Testing with the conversion goal of minimizing query refinement.
- Search was “fixed” until 2010....



# How Do I Game Google?



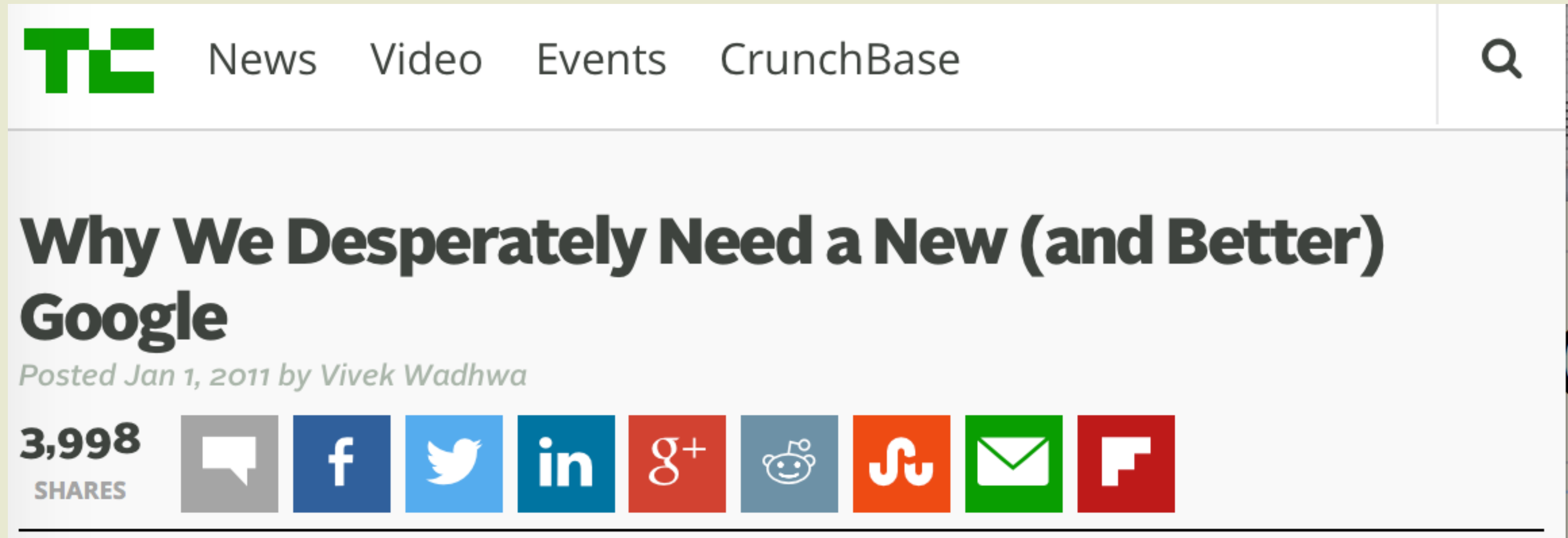
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Brian McFadden, NY Times, 7/16/2011

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# Content Farms Break Search



- “Google has become a jungle: a tropical paradise for spammers and marketers. Almost every search takes you to websites that want you to click on links that make them money, or to sponsored sites that make Google money.”
- <http://techcrunch.com/2011/01/01/why-we-desperately-need-a-new-and-better-google-2/>

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# Google Search Is Broken

## Google Search is broken

By Gary Marshall February 15, 2011 Internet

Will blocking content farms fix it?

<http://www.techradar.com/us/news/internet/google-search-is-broken-928718>

<https://moz.com/blog/how-organized-crime-is-taking-control-of-googles-search-results>

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# Panda Unleashed



February 2011



# What Is Panda

- Panda is named after Navneet Panda, a Google Search Quality Engineer.
- Panda is a quality score with its own patent
- Panda is the big brand bailout...
  - On Balco steroids
  - On a mission to punish sites that have “benefited unfairly by cheating”
  - With the nuance and compassion of a religious fanatic.





# Guidance On Building High Quality Sites

- Advice is all very good
- Advice is mostly about “articles” and PUBLISHER focused.
- Advice never mentions anything important to the Panda update.
- <http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/2011/05/more-guidance-on-building-high-quality.html>



# Navneet Panda Patent

From 2012 Patent: *The score is determined from quantities **indicating user actions of seeking out and preferring particular sites** and the resources found in particular sites. A site quality score for a particular site can be determined by computing a ratio of a numerator that represents user interest in the site as reflected in user queries directed to the site and a denominator that represents user interest in the resources found in the site as responses to queries of all kinds*

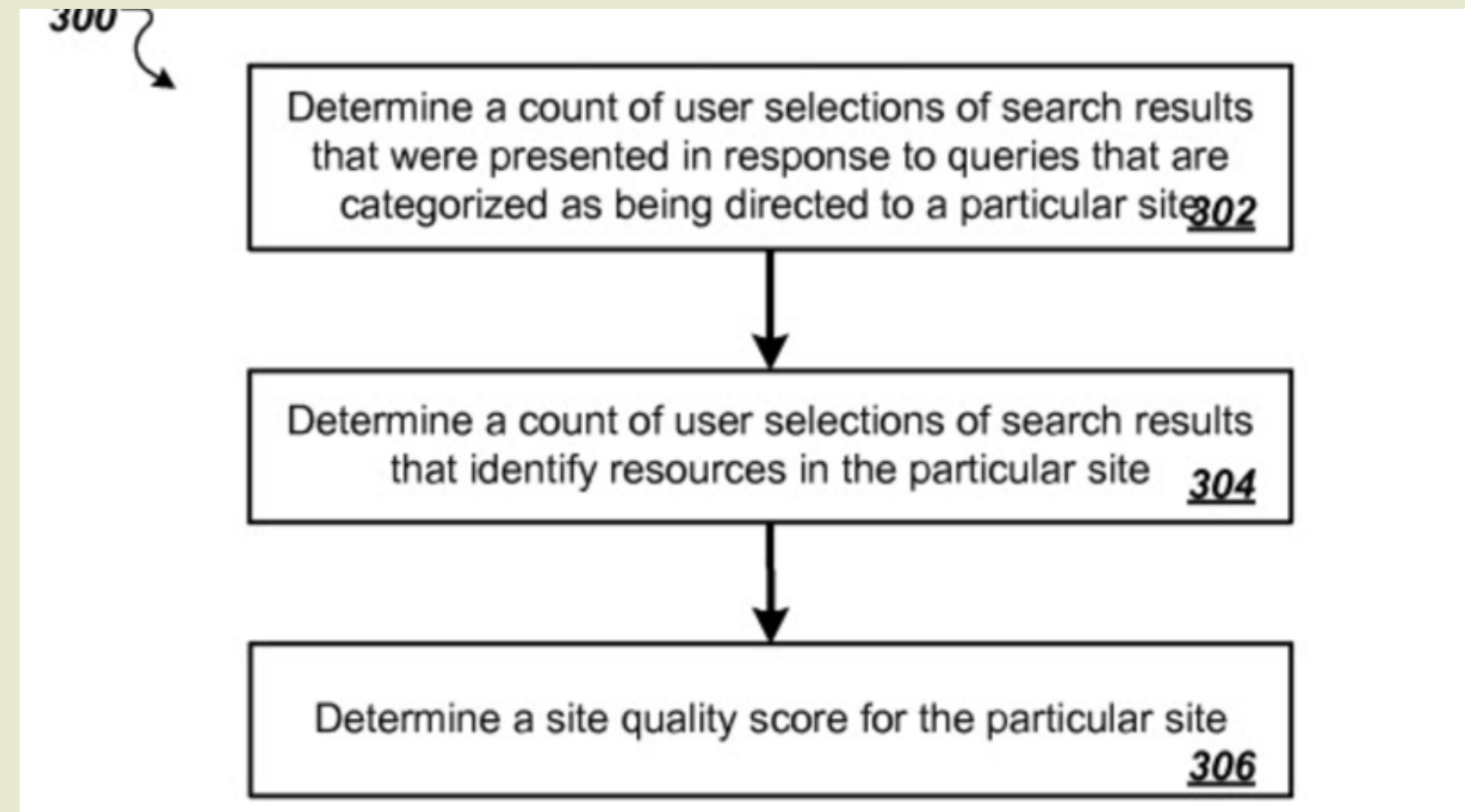
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# Direct + Branded + Navigational

- **Direct** = Type-in, Book Mark & Auto Complete Traffic
- **Branded Search** = Queries for your company, products or content
- **Navigational Search** = queries directed to a specific site

*For example, if the search system has **data indicating** that the terms “example sf” and “esf” are commonly used by users to refer to a site “sf.example.com,” queries that contain the terms “example sf” or “esf”, e.g., the queries “example sf news” and “esf restaurant reviews,” can be counted as queries that refer to the site “sf.example.com.”*

- DBN is Numerator  
SEO Traffic is Denominator
- Panda Site Score is the quotient of  $D+B+N$ /Search Traffic (Impressions?)
  - Traffic you “Earned”/“Given”



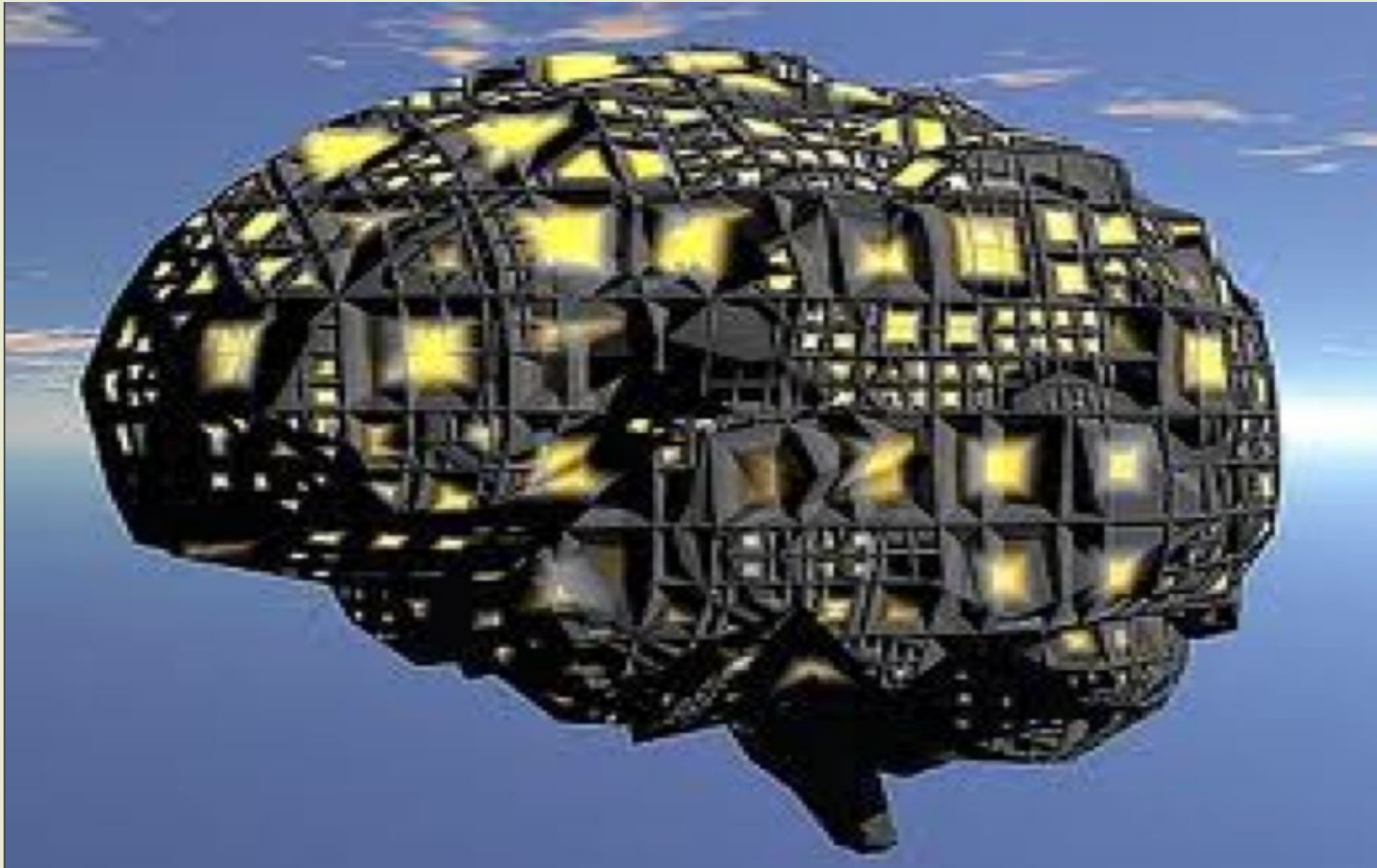


# #WWGBD





# Think Like Google





# Don't Worry About This Guy



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Pay Attention to @theamitsinghal



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# What Google Says

- Knowledge team doesn't think about revenue
- Websites are “publishers”
- SMX 2014 Keynote
- Said “users” 23 times; “users” > 0 in almost every answer
  - We test constantly
  - Decisions are driven by “what users want”

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# What Does The Hive Think

- They are building a great PRODUCT
- The mission is “knowledge”, not search
- The world is changing very fast
  - Mobile is the most disruptive thing in Google history, driving most of the change.
  - Threats are from game changers
- They don't feel our pain!

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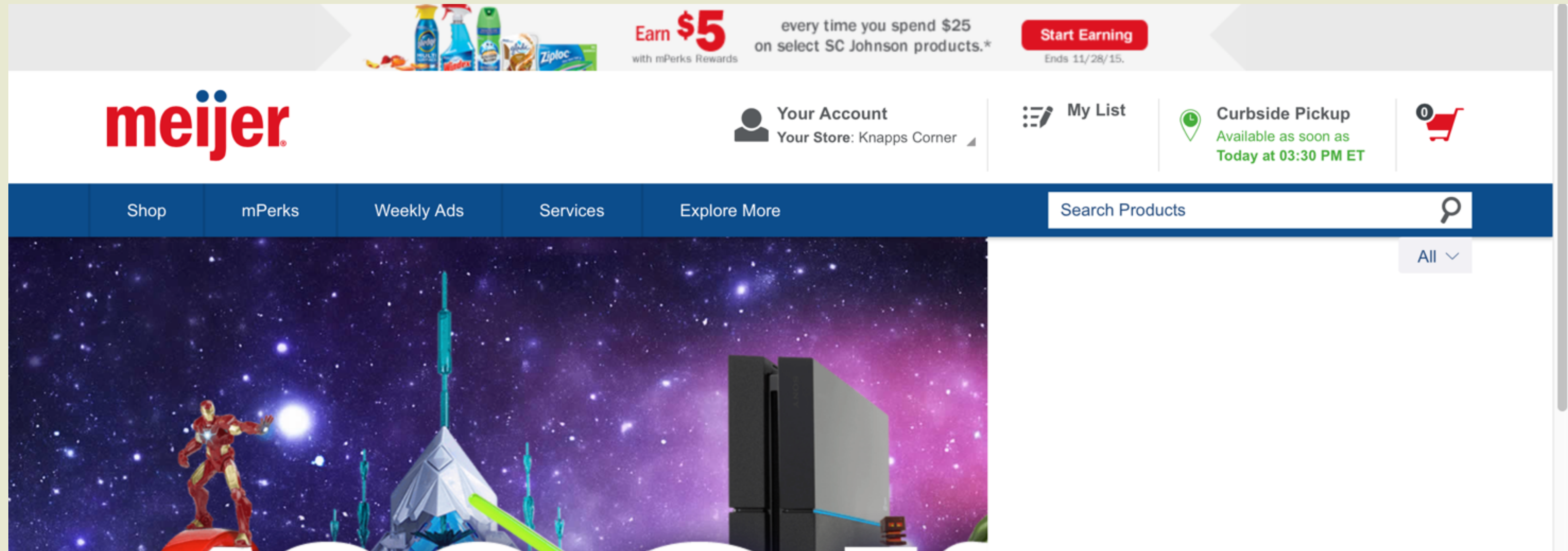


# “A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats”





# User Data At Work



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# Data Driven Site Links

**Meijer | Top Brands at Low Prices | Shop Today and Save | ...**

[www.meijer.com/](http://www.meijer.com/) ▼ Meijer ▼

Meijer is your one-stop destination for name brands, great value, and low prices on everything from groceries to clothing, electronics, home goods and more.

## Store Locator

Find your local Meijer store, pharmacy, or gas station in ...

## Weekly Ads

weekly ads. within 10 miles of here, within 20 miles of here, within ...

## Pharmacy

Visit your local Meijer Pharmacy or use our online pharmacy to refill ...

## Careers

Meijer Careers - join a company where the standard is excellence!

## mPerks

Save easier with Meijer mPerks. Clip digital coupons, get ...

## Team Members

Team Members. Meijer.com Home › Meijer Corporate › Team ...



# RankBrain Proof

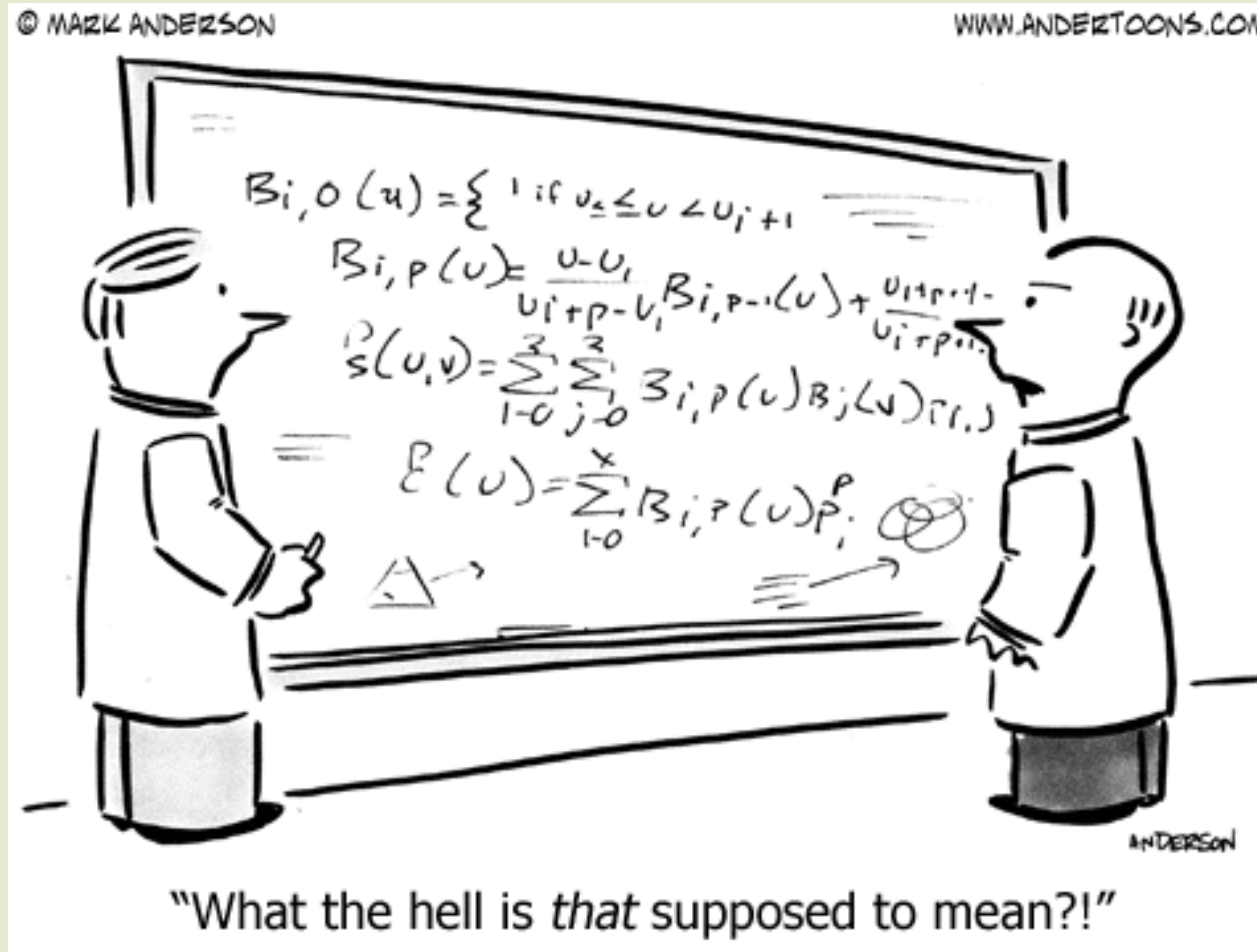
- *If RankBrain sees a word or phrase it isn't familiar with, the machine can make a guess as to what words or phrases might have a similar meaning and filter the result accordingly, making it more effective at handling never-before-seen search queries.*
- Google has trouble with queries it has never seen before— So Relevance is driven by USER BEHAVIOR ON QUERIES

# So

- If Google is a giant Measuring and Data Mining company
- If Google has Petabytes of data about user behavior
- If Google is trying to figure out what users like
- If user behavior can change search results



# If Google Using User Signals Send signals users like your brand



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# That's Easy To Say

- Brand search
- Repeat Visitors
- GPS “conversiosn”
- Clickstream evidence of buzz
- Diversify Traffic
  - Direct
  - Social
  - Email
  - Referral



# Driving Brand Queries

- Content = Assets, not landing pages
  - Market your content; owned, earned & paid
- Brand your experience & value proposition
- Create proprietary metrics
  - Rotten Tomatoes
  - Moz
- Focus on growing your audience
- Don't CRO Fuck Yourself

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# Driving Brand Queries II

- Video
  - Youtube
  - Facebook paid
- Offline Advertising with CTA
- Easter Egg Hunts
- Social Media
- Online Advertising
- Barnacle, Guest Post, & Syndication

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# Content Assets ARE The Strategy

- Engaging content pages are **assets to market**
- Each visitor is a test you can fail, pass or ace
- Every user interaction is a branding opportunity

# Repeat Visitors and Sharing

## Optimize Content for USERS

1. Optimize user behavior to reduce non-engagement.
2. Information scent is key to engagement (3-5 seconds)
3. Segmentation not selling
4. Answer questions & concerns instead of selling products



# Ads Are Headline Laboratories

- Adwords
- Twitter
- Facebook
- StumbleUpon
- Content amplification networks

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# Marketing Your Assets Owned Media

- Content Assets must be promoted across platforms
  - Links from home page and/or silos
  - Email to users
  - Facebook
  - Twitter

**JUST LIKE A PUBLISHER**



# Market Your Assets

## Earned Media

- Outreach to partners
- Twitter
- Facebook
- PR
- ~~Link Building~~ Audience Development
- Co-citation

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# Market Your Assets

## Paid Media

- Twitter
- Facebook
- PR
  - Native
  - Hybrids
- PPC
- Remarketing
- Content networks

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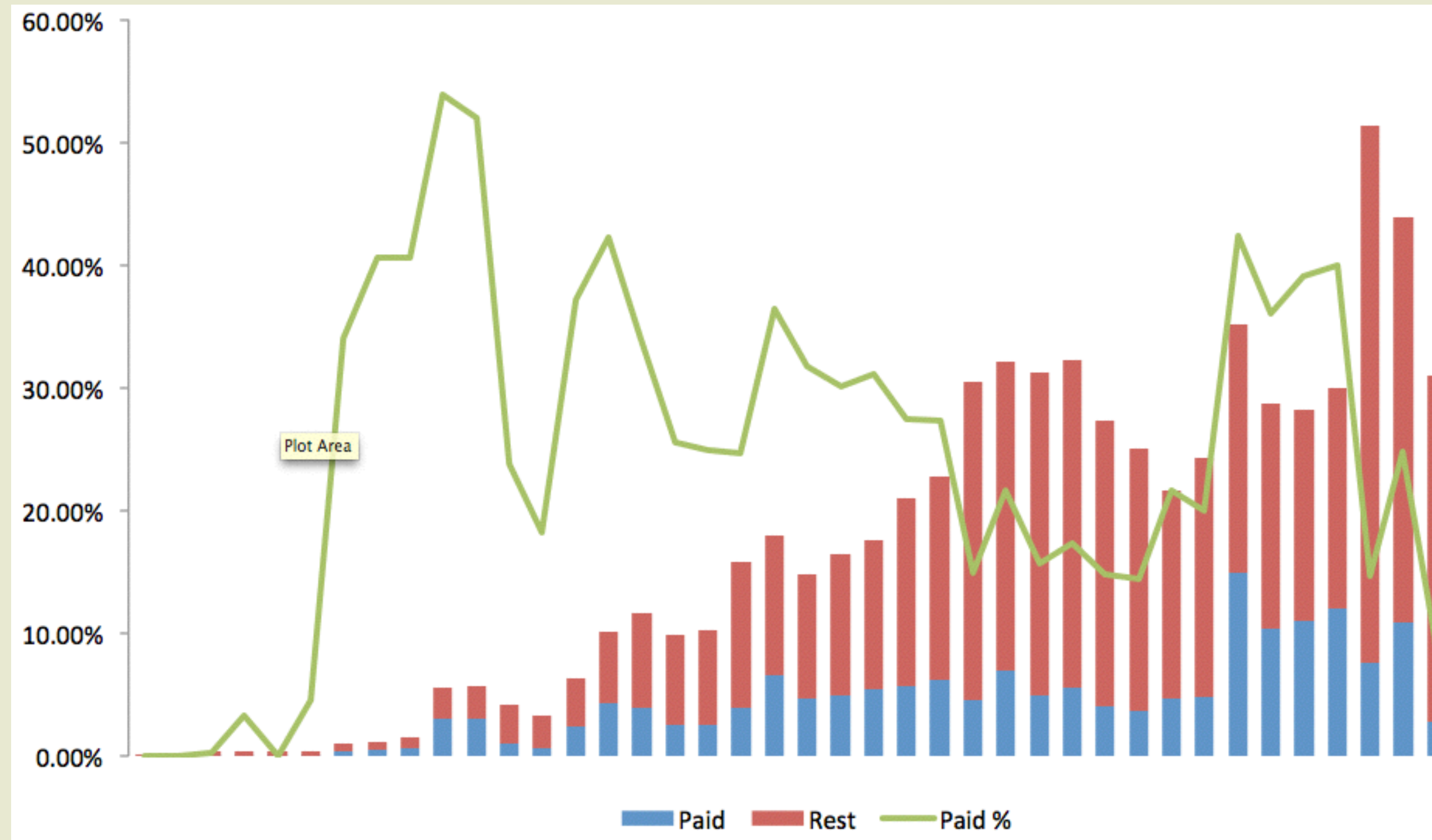


# Offline Marketing Signals = Direct + Brand + Navigational

- Direct Mail
- Billboards
- Conferences/Street Teams/Guerilla
  - Exclusivity/Scarcity make more desirable
  - Search for Vapor Cade e-cig, e-cigar
- Radio
- Television

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# Mini Case Study: Paid Content Promotion Builds Brand

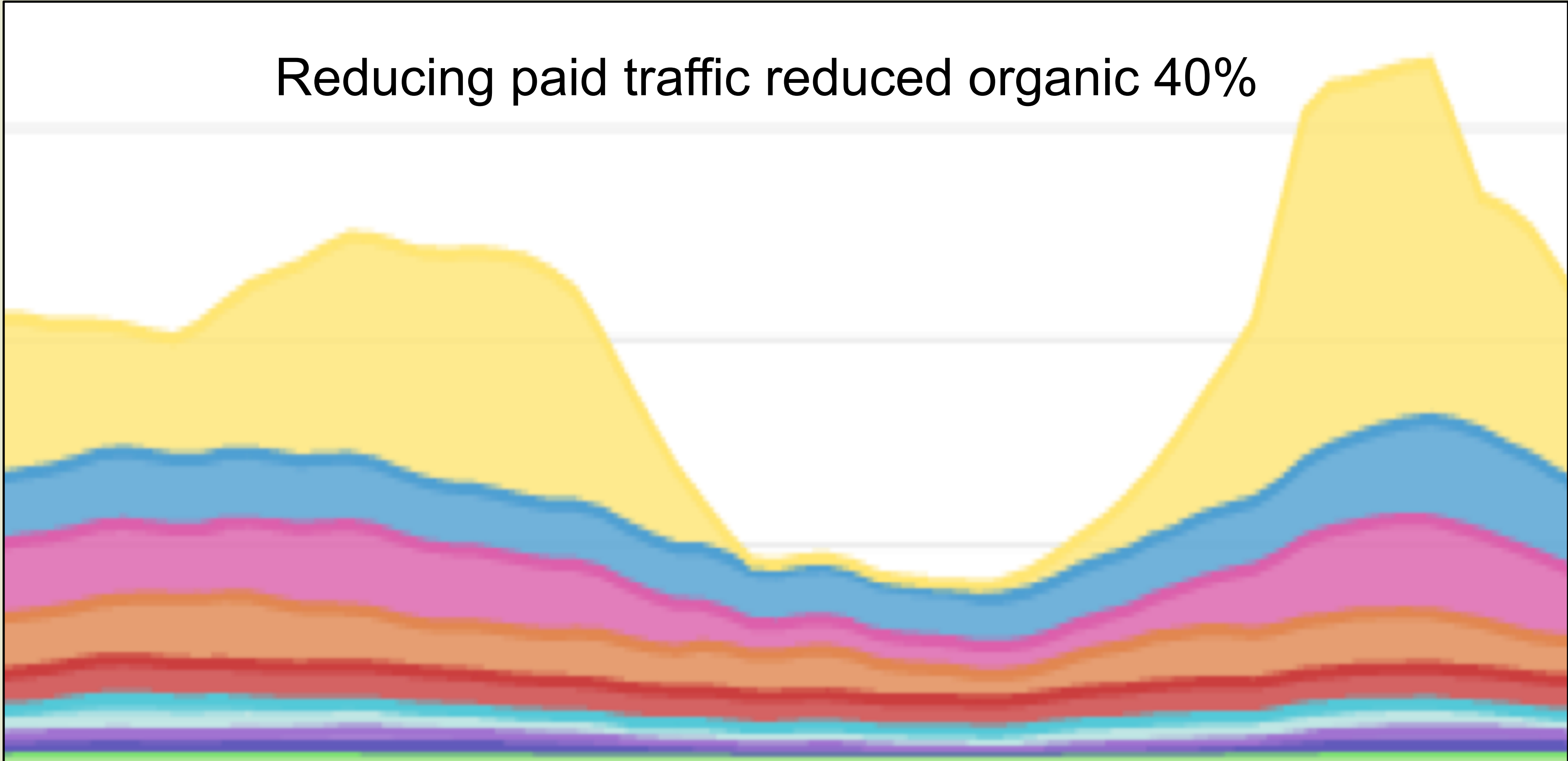


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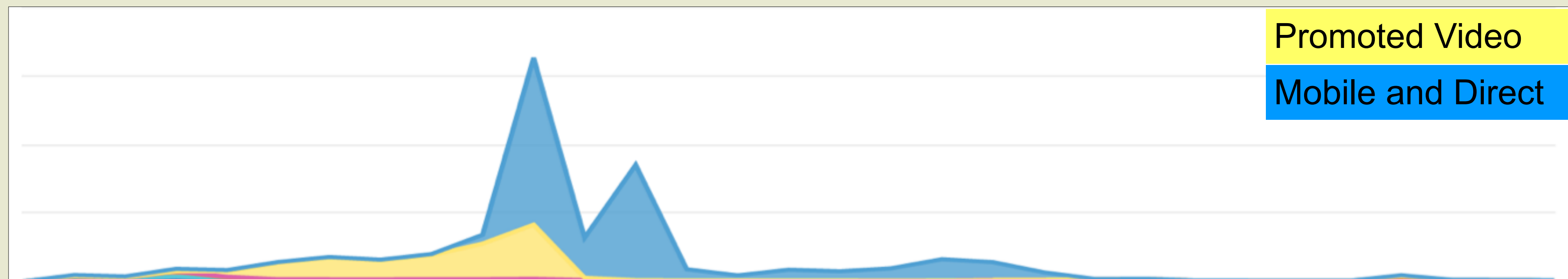
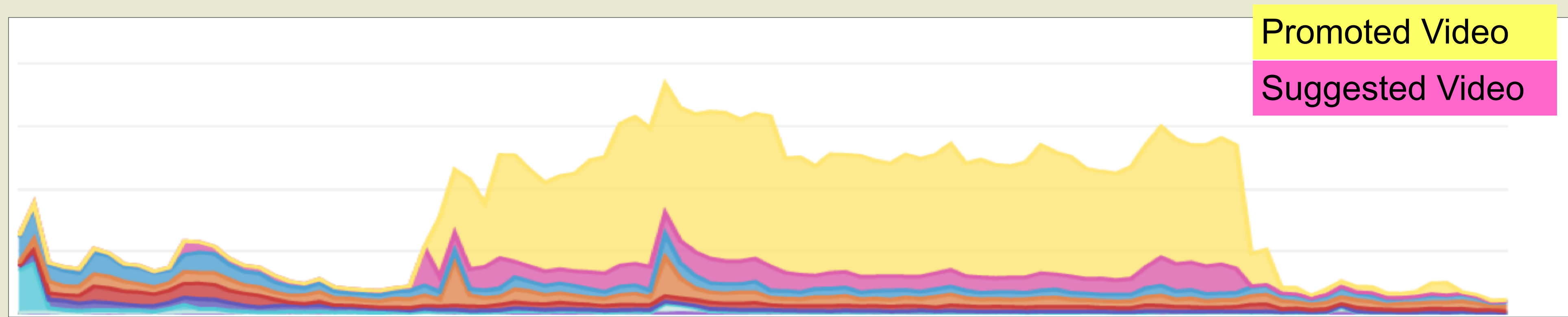


# PAID DRIVES ORGANIC

Reducing paid traffic reduced organic 40%















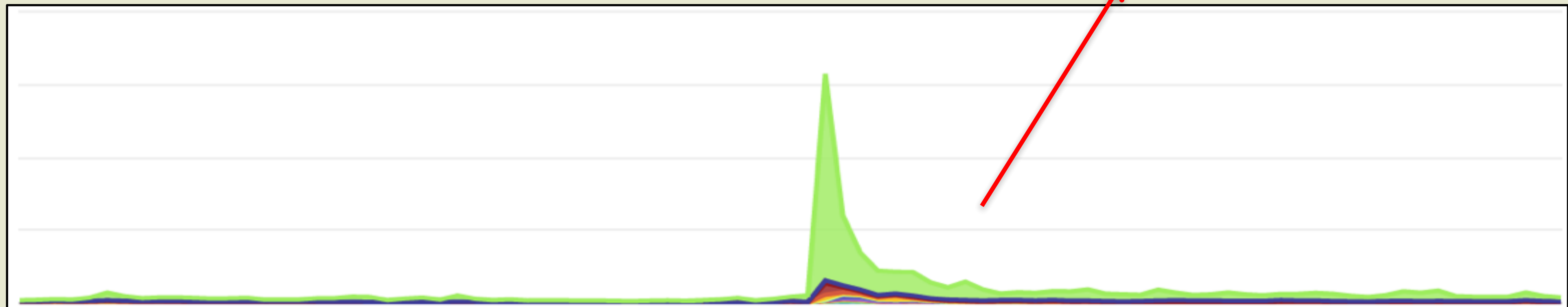
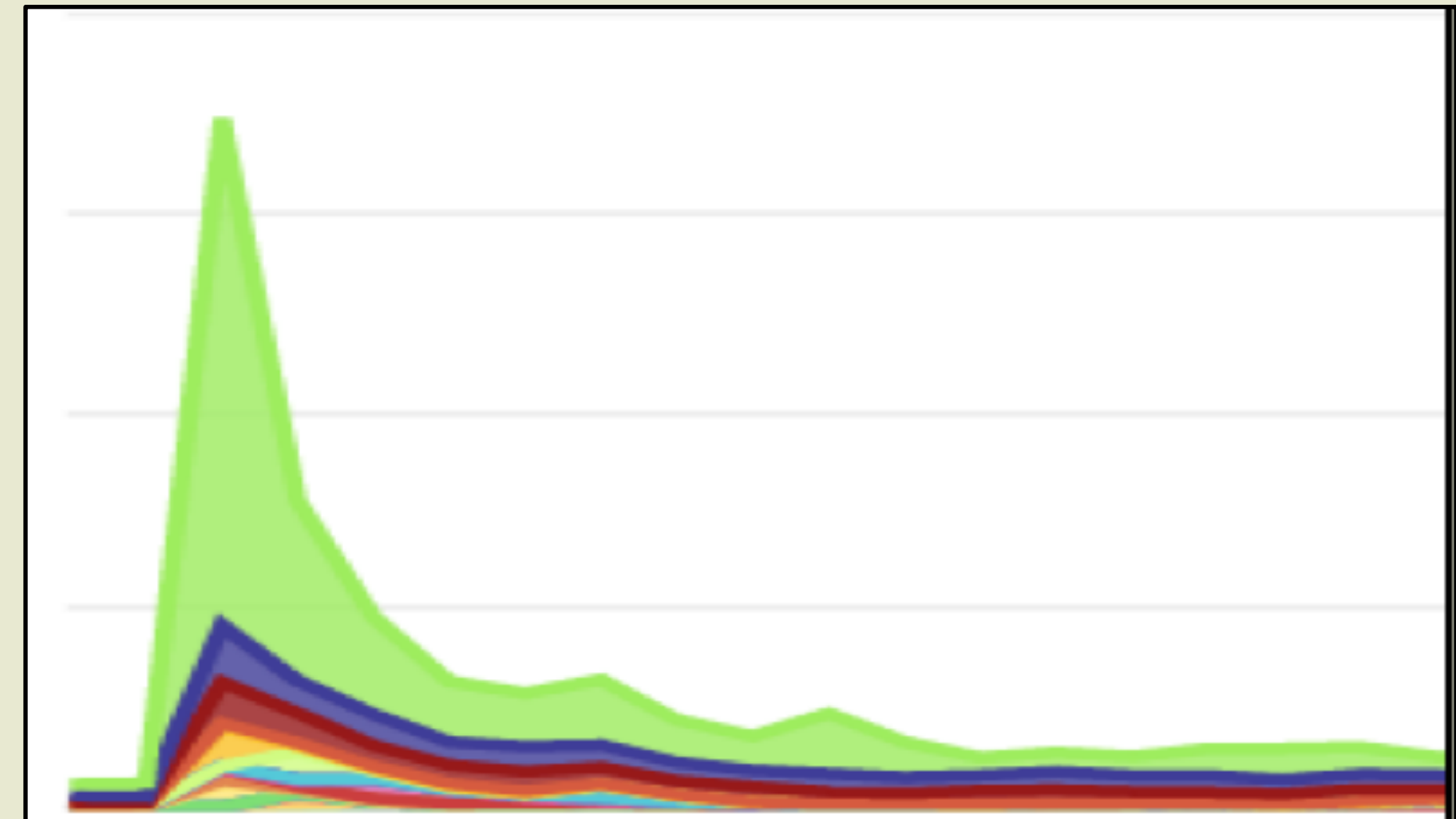
# PAID & SUGGESTED RELATIONSHIP



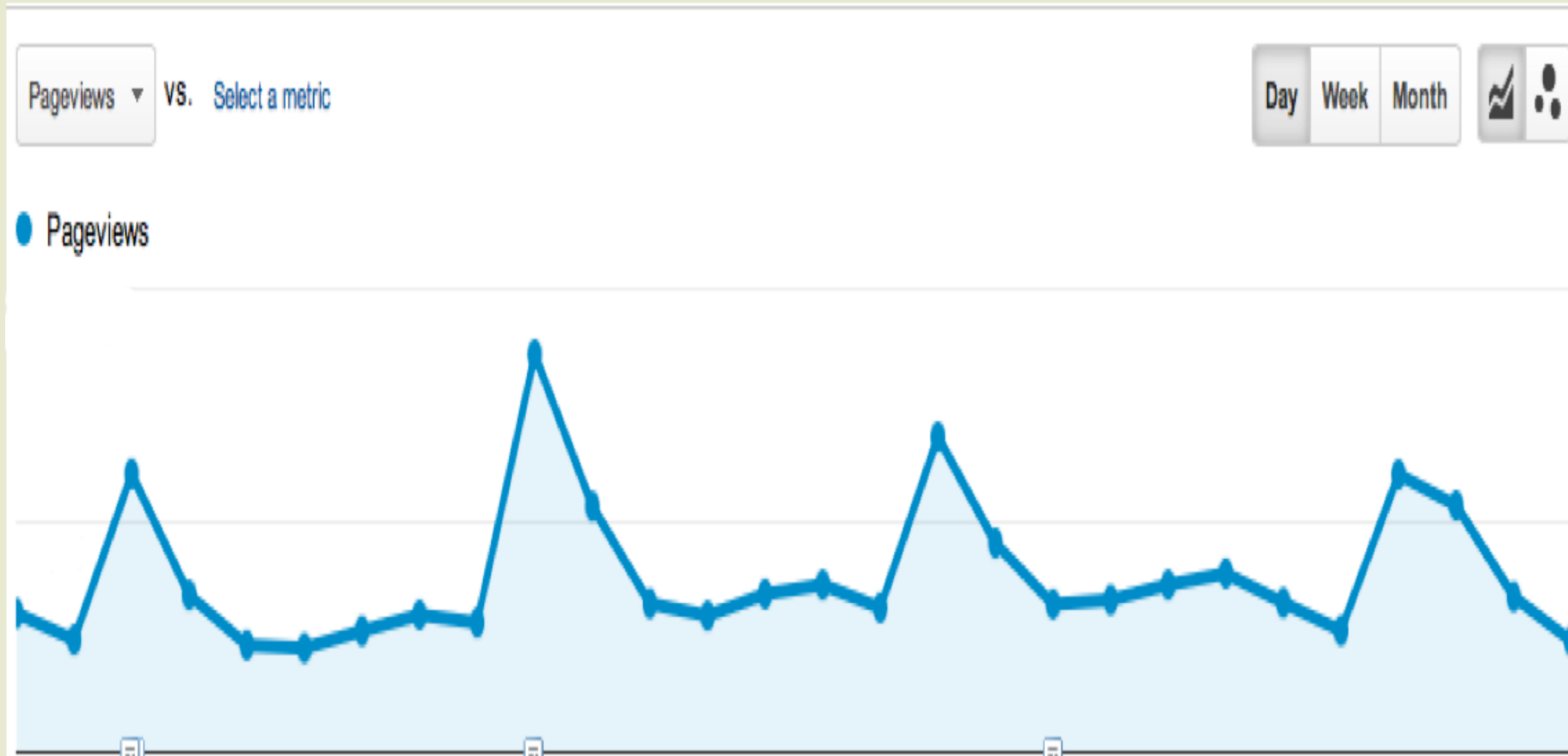


# FACEBOOK DRIVING EMBEDDED VIEWS

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic source ?	Views ↓
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  facebook.com	 (68.2%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  Google	 (5.6%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  twitter.com	 (3.7%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  reddit.com	 (1.7%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  vk.com	 (1.2%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  stumbleupon.com	 (1.1%)



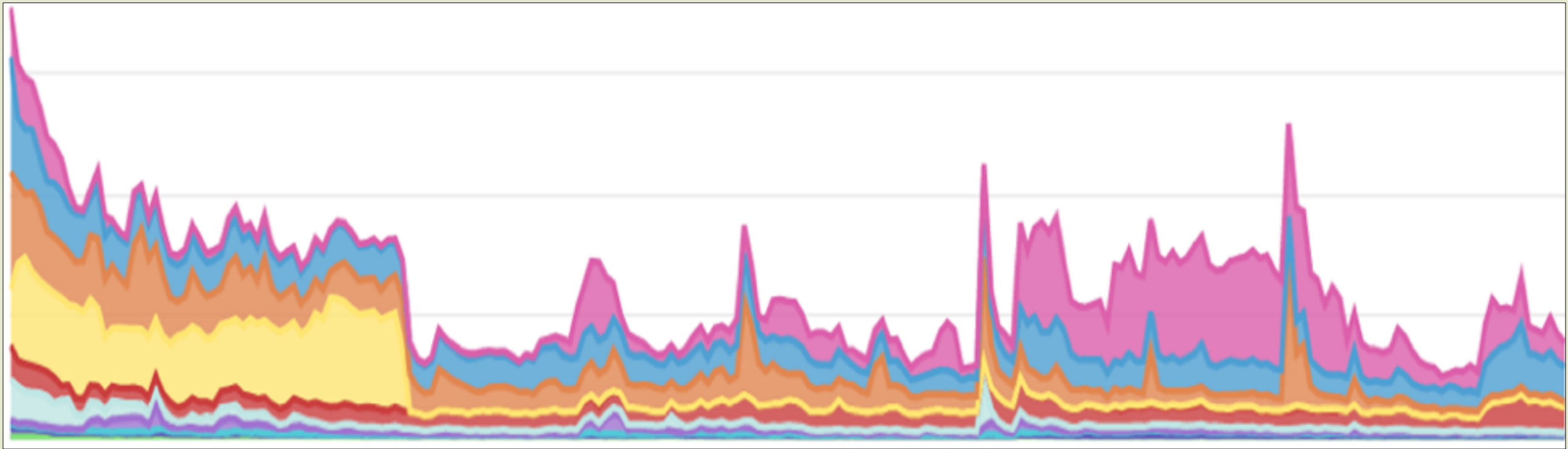
# Email Drives Video Views Embedded Player



- JUST LIKE A PUBLISHER



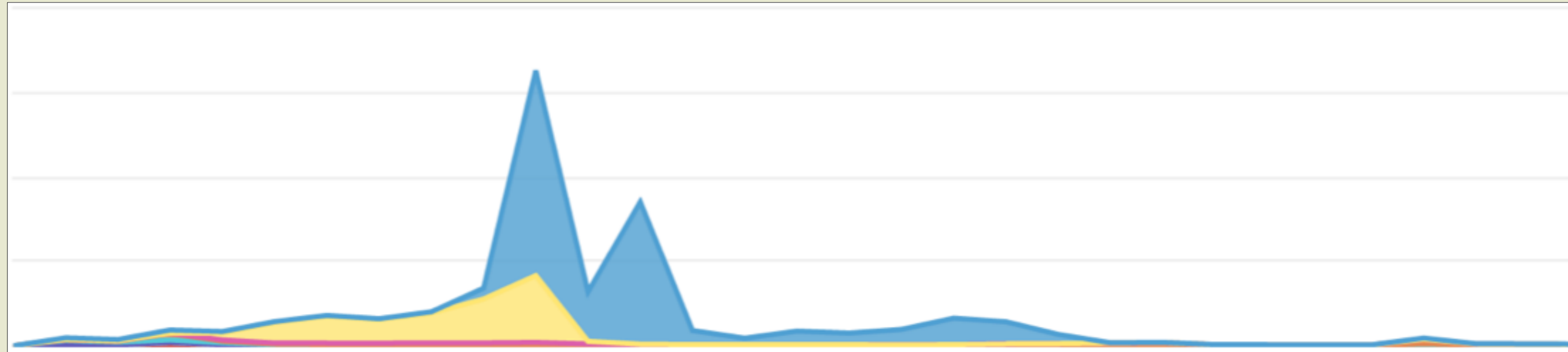
# TEXTBOOK PERFECT LAUNCH



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic source <span>?</span>	Views <span>↓</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> YouTube suggested video <span>?</span>	<span>██████████</span> (22.4%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> Mobile apps and direct traffic (unknown sources) <span>?</span>	<span>██████████</span> (22.0%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> Embedded player (unknown sources) <span>?</span>	<span>██████████</span> (19.9%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> YouTube advertising	<span>██████████</span> (13.7%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> YouTube search	<span>██████████</span> (12.5%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> External website	<span>██████████</span> (4.3%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> YouTube – other features	<span>██████████</span> (2.3%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> Homepage feeds and subscriptions <span>?</span>	<span>██████████</span> (1.4%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> YouTube channel page	<span>██████████</span> (1.0%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <span>●</span> Google search	<span>██████████</span> (0.6%)

# EARNED MEDIA

## MOBILE APPS PICK UP VIDEO



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic source ?	Views ↓
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● Mobile apps and direct traffic (unknown sources) ?	██████████ (64.1%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● YouTube advertising	██████████ (26.3%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● YouTube suggested video ?	██████████ (4.3%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● Embedded player (unknown sources) ?	██████████ (1.7%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● Homepage feeds and subscriptions ?	██████████ (1.6%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● YouTube channel page	██████████ (0.8%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● External website	██████████ (0.6%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● YouTube search	██████████ (0.4%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● YouTube – other features	██████████ (0.1%)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ● Google search	██████████ (0.0%)



# Youtube Drives Global Brand Queries



# Signals Are Harder To Fake

## Data Mining Highlights Outliers

- Search:
  - Total search visits to branded or navigational searches
  - CTR when your site ranks compared to other sites which rank at that same position for that keyword
  - Search Pogo Stick ratio for the identical query
- Traffic
  - Traffic from search vs traffic from other channels
  - Ratio of new visits to repeat visits
- Links:
  - Quality links to low quality links
  - Branded anchors to keyword rich anchors
  - Externally supported pages to unsupported pages
  - [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dBpVDwTaSdAbTSdL-NqXGrnrBdDm\\_zkl7\\_tjeWNJOnk/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dBpVDwTaSdAbTSdL-NqXGrnrBdDm_zkl7_tjeWNJOnk/edit#gid=0)

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# Conclusion

- Think like a publisher
- Make content for users
- Honor their intent
- Build Brand & Audience: Authority will follow
- Signals are harder to fake than ever before.

<http://bit.ly/20CXOxH>

Booth space: 4

Session link: [biz.bo/02023](http://biz.bo/02023)

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