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Judy Consumer Is Finally All A-Twitter

Once It Became Clear How It Could Improve Her Life

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Judy Consumer tried to use Bing to find her three-day vacation getaway? It didn't help her much but she managed to use the internet to plan a trip to Niagara Falls. (She loved it, BTW. She met people from all over the world: Indonesia, Tunisia, Turkey and even Iran, and she was inspired as all were united in their awe of the majesty of Niagara Falls. She didn't even mind the inevitable long wait on lines because she got to communicate with so many people from different lands.)

As she was meeting all these people, Judy Consumer kept wondering how she might keep up with some of these people she was meeting. She wondered given all the media hype around Twitter if it could help her stay

in touch with her new connections. But while she had recently signed up for a Twitter account, her experience has been frustrating so far. First, it kept having glitches, leading Judy Consumer to think she was "doing it wrong." Then, she tried to follow a few people and became overwhelmed with all the updates. She finally got some friends to join her on Twitter, but they quickly lost interest. Judy Consumer tried to keep it going for a while but she didn't really get it. Worse, given the glowing media reports, she felt somehow she was must be missing something "important" and she had no idea what.

It seems Twitter had defeated her. But then, right there in Niagara Falls, Judy Consumer met up with "Tammy Typical" from Ohio and her two small boys. That changed everything.

Tammy Typical and Judy Consumer started to chat as mothers do, more as a way to distract Tammy's young children during the tedious wait. Judy told Tammy about her work and how she was trying to understand some of the new technology that's come out. Tammy was as up-to-date on the new trends as Judy Consumer and offered her opinion of why she does not like Bing: "I just want to get on the internet, get what I want and get off. Bing did not make that easier for me so what's the point?"

Then Judy Consumer brought up Twitter. Had Tammy Typical heard of it and does she use it to stay connected? "Sure, I know about Twitter," she said, quite confidently. "Honestly I don't get that either. Twitter seems only useful to people who have opinions to publish and for those who care about those opinions. I have neither opinions anyone cares about nor do I care too much about celebrity opinions. Again, what's the point?"

Judy Consumer felt better. At least she wasn't the only person not to get Twitter. After a few minutes on this subject, the conversation between the two ladies drifted to the subject of their hobbies. Tammy Typical described to Judy Consumer one of her favorite things, which is when a group of 104 women (no men invited) hire a bus and drive all night Friday to New York City for a "shop till you drop" day. The day is topped off with a group dinner before they hop back on the bus for the all-night drive

back to Ohio. Tammy Typical loves those days but noted that sometimes they have trouble coordinating where they will meet for dinner. And as soon as Judy Consumer heard that, she realized that Twitter could solve that problem very elegantly. Judy Consumer excitedly explained to Tammy Typical the idea and Tammy got it right away.

Judy Consumer now felt terrific. She finally understood how Twitter could be a helpful part of her life. It was a hard won victory.

And that's the lesson for all of us who work in digital and technology marketing. We need to remember that Judy Consumer is being introduced to new technologies at an accelerating rate. While she is willing to invest the time to learn about new technology, there needs to be a clear vision of how the technology works in her life. If you want her to change her behavior, explain it to her why in honest, simple terms.

Bing failed to do that for Judy Consumer or Tammy Typical (at least so far). And whether we are talking about Twitter or personal cloud computers or Google Voice or even 4G networks, there needs to be a real strategic goal to deliver straightforward communications about what the technology does. Too often honest, simple communications is a casualty in the drive to create "techno-sizzle" marketing hype.

Judy Consumer can see through hype in a heartbeat. It's a lesson worth remembering.

Judy Shapiro is senior VP at Paltalk and has held senior marketing positions at Comodo, Computer Associates, Lucent Technologies, AT&T and Bell Labs. Her blog, [Trench Wars](#), provides insights on how to create business value on the internet.
