



Executive Book Summaries®

www.summary.com

Trust Agents

Using the Web to Build Influence, Improve Reputation and Earn Trust

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

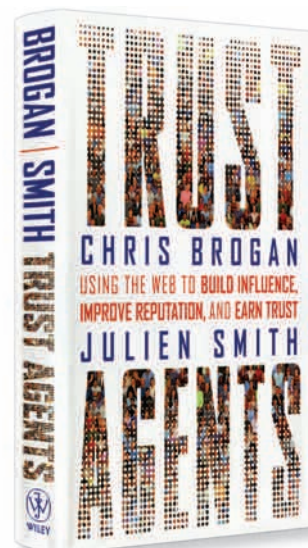
There's no question that the Internet has changed the way we do business — especially when it comes to marketing. Consumer environments are short on trust and populated by consumers who are cynical, savvy and informed. Though it's easier than ever to reach your customers, it's less likely that they'll listen. Today, the most valuable online currency isn't the dollar, but trust itself.

At the same time, social networks and personal connections have far more influence on consumers than your marketing messages ever will — unless your business knows how to harness them. In *Trust Agents*, social media veterans Chris Brogan and Julien Smith show you how to tap into the power of these networks to build your brand's influence, reputation and profits.

Trust agents aren't necessarily marketers or salespeople; they're the digitally savvy people who use the Web to humanize businesses using transparency, honesty and genuine relationships. As a result, they wield enough online influence to build up or bring down a business' reputation. This summary will show you how to build profitable relationships with trust agents or to become a trust agent yourself.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to build influence, share it and reap the benefits of it for your business.
- How your words can carry more power and more weight than any PR firm or big corporate marketing department.
- How to use the power of the Web and social networks for your business now.
- How to become a trust agent the right way — honestly, effectively and profitably.



by Chris Brogan and
Julien Smith

CONTENTS

Trust, Social Capital and Media

Page 2

Make Your Own Game

Page 3

One of Us

Page 4

Agent Zero

Page 5

Human Artist

Page 6

Build an Army

Page 7

Six Games You Could Have Made and Still Can

Page 8

THE COMPLETE SUMMARY: TRUST AGENTS

by Chris Brogan and Julien Smith

The authors: Chris Brogan is co-founder of PodCamp, a popular new conference series focused on the use of social media to build business and personal relationships. He is a widely read blogger on the subject of social media. Julien Smith is a veteran trend analyst who has run Web communities for more than 10 years. He helps companies prepare for and profit from disruptive changes in their industries.

Trust Agents: Using the Web to Build Influence, Improve Reputation and Earn Trust by Chris Brogan and Julien Smith, Copyright © 2009 by Chris Brogan and Julien Smith. Summarized by permission of the publisher John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 271 pages, \$24.95, ISBN 978-0-470-74308-9. To purchase this book, go to www.amazon.com or www.bn.com.

Summary copyright © 2010 by Soundview Executive Book Summaries, www.summary.com, 1-800-SUMMARY, 1-610-558-9495. For additional information on the authors, go to <http://www.summary.com>.

Introduction: Hey, I Know You. Have We Met?

Perhaps you've been noticing that the older approach to marketing, PR, advertising, business communication and other activities on the Web aren't pulling as well as they used to, and you're wondering what comes next. You're looking to improve yourself and, specifically, to improve how you do business over the Web.

The Web has changed to be more humanized, and the people who will succeed in understanding this and using the Web to build business are called *trust agents*.

It's not exactly the technology du jour that one should focus on, because technologies come and go. For example, though e-mail has been around for decades, people continue to use e-mail marketing as part of how they do business. Services like Facebook and Twitter and blogs and podcasts are some of the more recent resources. They enable human-scale communication, and they are part of what feeds the larger Web, tools that help you conduct business in a strategic fashion.

So, try not to focus on the tools. Instead, put your energy into learning how these tools encourage certain interactions, how they might be leveraged to build different types of experiences with potential customers, with competitors, with the very fabric of how the Web's information is wired. Focus on connecting with the people, and the tools will all make sense. ●

Trust, Social Capital and Media

Trust agents are the power users of the new tools of the Web, educated more by way of their own experi-

ences and experiments than from the core of their professional experiences. They speak online technology fluently. They learn by trying, so they are bold in their efforts to try new applications and devices. They recommend more, and more often, on social bookmarking applications (Delicious.com and the like) than anyone else. They connect with more people than anyone else, and they know how to leave a good impression. As they do so, they build healthy, honest relationships.

Trust agents use today's Web tools to spread their influence faster, wider and deeper than a typical company's PR or marketing department might be capable of achieving and with more genuine interest in people.

We need to become them — and to harness them.

Six Behaviors of Trust Agents

1. *Make Your Own Game:* Trust agents recognize the fact that there's the established way to do things — and then there's some game-changing way to do things. This new method, which usually involves skill, experimentation and a comfort level with trial, error and early failures, is how most trust agents break out of the mold and appear on our collective radar. In popular entertainment, Oprah Winfrey went from being the local TV weather reporter to a multimillion-dollar media enterprise. Making your own game is about standing out.
2. *One of Us:* One thing that distinguishes certain people as trust agents is the simple defining question of whether a specific community sees them as "one of us." In his early career at Microsoft, Robert Scoble blogged about his take on why Internet Explorer wasn't as good as Firefox. We (his audience of read-



1-800-SUMMARY
service@summary.com

Published by Soundview Executive Book Summaries (ISSN 0747-2196), P.O. Box 1053, Concordville, PA 19331 USA, a division of Concentrated Knowledge Corp. Published monthly. Subscriptions: \$209 per year in the United States, Canada and Mexico, and \$295 to all other countries. Periodicals postage paid at Concordville, Pa., and additional offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Soundview, P.O. Box 1053, Concordville, PA 19331. Copyright © 2010 by Soundview Executive Book Summaries.

Available formats: Summaries are available in print, audio and electronic formats. To subscribe, call us at 1-800-SUMMARY (610-558-9495 outside the United States and Canada), or order on the Internet at www.summary.com. Multiple-subscription discounts and corporate site licenses are also available.

Rebecca S. Clement, Publisher; Sarah T. Dayton, Editor in Chief; Andrew Clancy, Senior Editor; Edward O'Neill, Graphic Designer; Chris Lauer, Contributing Editor

ers) felt that Scoble represented one of us. We could believe what he said because he was a member of our community, he talked like us, he spent time where we spent time, and he seemed to be genuine and honest with us. This characteristic extends to every trust agent. In other words, being one of us is about belonging.

3. *The Archimedes Effect*: You can do any and all of these six things well, but when you use your unique abilities to enhance them (using knowledge, people, technology or time), then what you do becomes immensely powerful. The Web is one of the best tools for increasing the power of what you do. The Archimedes Effect is about leverage.
4. *Agent Zero*: Trust agents are at the center of wide, powerful networks. They make building relationships a priority because it's a human thing to do — long before any actual business requires transacting. They are people who jump at the chance to meet others online, at events or in mixed social settings and who often connect these new acquaintances with other people in their personal networks. Because having a wide network is very powerful and opens doors, Agent Zero is about developing access.
5. *Human Artist*: Learning how to work well with people, empower people, recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and know when to improve relationships and when to step away are all part of what a trust agent does. In business terms, these are often called *soft skills*. Being a human artist, in a way, is about developing understanding.
6. *Build an Army*: No matter how great you think you are, you can't do it all alone. When you can get a large group to collaborate, you can achieve monumental tasks that may have been previously impossible. As more people gather on social networks and elsewhere, asking each to push a little can help it become an avalanche in a way no set of tools was ever able to do before. Because the Web is so vast, and we are so small, building an army is about developing mass. ●

Make Your Own Game

Sam Walton was running a Ben Franklin store, but the corporate entity kept getting in the way of his profits, so he started Wal-Mart. Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak did not think everyone wanted mainframes, so they created their own type of computer. Richard Branson makes his own game all the time, most recently by deciding that he

should make commercial space travel part of his game.

But making your own game is not just about trying to find innovative ways to improve your brand or business: It's about understanding that the tools to let you do this are at your disposal and most of them are free.

Set Your Own Rules

No matter what industry you are in, there are very specific protocols in place. If you are an aspiring young journalist, there is a ladder you must climb to get published in a respectable newspaper or to get airtime in a decently rated TV market. If you are a rock band, you spend years shopping your demo discs around to various people, play for years in small clubs trying to catch some attention and eventually get a record deal. Maybe.

Or, by using a site like MySpace, you make your own game.

That's what the Arctic Monkeys, from Sheffield, England did. Their first album beat Oasis' record to become the fastest-selling album in the history of the United Kingdom, all by using MySpace.

Arianna Huffington broke new ground when she launched the *Huffington Post*. Today, her Web site is the most popular blog on the Web. But calling the *Huffington Post* a blog is like comparing an iPhone to a rotary phone. They have similar functions but deliver quite a different output and value. It's partially because Huffington used new and different strategies, such as giving celebrities a forum to air their political views, that few blogs are able to compete against.

The Web can be used to employ this strategy, which is referred to as "gatejumping." It's what happens when you find a better way to do things while everyone else is too busy to notice.

One way to see things differently is to understand who currently "owns" the old games in the area in which you wish to increase your presence. These people are gatekeepers. For instance, Sotheby's might own live auctions, but eBay owns them online. In this example, eBay is the gatejumper.

Because the Web is a media platform, a communications platform, a vast sea of loosely joined resources, it's a perfect place to gatejump. Trust agents know this. They live in this space. They look for the games inside the game, and they find ways to win. Why wait for permission? Just do it.

Stand Out

Reinventing the space you're in naturally helps you stand out. As people who stand out redefine the industry

Summary: TRUST AGENTS

they are working in, they have an easier time making a name for themselves. The process of creating a new space for yourself helps establish you as an expert in that field and you become trusted in the process.

Being there first helps, but it isn't enough. If you're not following the rest of the principles, you will not be a gatejumper or become the defining brand in your field, and the advantages or opportunities are lost.

Move First

Risk means reward. So move first. It isn't everything. Sometimes the first movement is expensive, but we like to do it when it's cheap but not obvious.

Further, those that move into a medium first set the stage for how it works and, in a lot of cases, those that come later need to follow the rules the first people have set. There's a benefit and reward to getting to a space first and making a new game. Sticking with the existing system means the same results will come forth. ●

One of Us

Gaining the trust of another person requires you to be competent and reliable. It also requires you to leave someone with a positive emotional impression, which is something the Web has the potential to do quickly and well. Since most of the modern Web isn't trying to complete a transaction (things like spam notwithstanding), people have a tendency to feel closer to each other there. People speak like humans on their blogs, less reserved than they would be in real life. They may end a sentence with a preposition or make spelling mistakes, but what is lost in old-form professionalism (not to be confused with lack of professionalism) is gained in bonding with the readers. Though it's a part of trust many don't take into consideration, intimacy is one of trust's most powerful elements.

The Importance of Being Human

The Impossibility Question works with a person who's somewhere between resisting and listening, but not ready to move to considering. If you're lucky, there might be a flicker of interest in there somewhere. But without a shove, your idea is going nowhere. That powerful shove is the Impossibility Question. Here's how it works:

In the Web's new reporting and editorials, there is an emerging mass of people who are expressing their true opinions. There's real quality out there, with feeling, and it's grabbing the attention of the world. No wonder YouTube has more than 5 billion videos, one for almost

every human on the planet.

Within this, there is a very important lesson: Be human. You're allowed to now, by varying degrees, on the different platforms the Web makes available: Twitter for short comments you want to share, a blog for longer statements. If you need to, make whole new Web sites for each new initiative. But in each, have a voice, because people are sick of brochures and sales letters. They want the real thing.

How Public Discourse Magnifies Social Capital

Getting coffee for someone is doing something nice. But get your mother-in-law some chicken soup while she's sick and she'll tell the whole family how great you are. This is what the Web does all the time but without any one individual doing the work.

This is because all encounters in which you participate (i.e., all conversations you choose to take part in) are recorded in public (blogs, Facebook and elsewhere) for others to see, should they be looking. You're leaving evidence of participation and good deeds to be seen by others who pass by, like markers on a trail in the forest.

Another way of looking at this is that there is a benefit to leaving a paper trail. Imagine your company is being audited, and you claim \$100,000 as expenses for the year. If you have records, the IRS will believe you, but if you don't you're in trouble, especially if you have a lot to gain. It's the same with blogs: Leave a paper trail of thoughtful comments and you're showing that you know what you're talking about. When this is seen, it can help you develop important credibility and relationships.

Interact Frequently and Regularly

The main lesson here is that you need to interact — frequently and regularly. Show up at events, get your name out there, but be honest about what your goal is in initiating communication. Then, if you want to pitch someone, do it cleanly and consider the reputation you've been building. This will be easy and natural, because it's something humans do naturally with people whose opinions they care about.

Trust agents don't just evangelize; in fact, they plant seeds so that there can instead be a kind of mass evangelism whereby word spreads on its own. We don't mind companies in our space, and we need good people working with us, but we can't stand another one of those people trying to sell us stuff. We're sick of it and so is everyone else. ●

Archimedes Effect

Archimedes of Syracuse was a famous inventor from the third century BC. He said, “With a lever large enough, I can move the world.” The Archimedes Effect is about leverage: putting in a certain amount of effort and getting a greater result than our normal human effort would give.

The simplest way to understand leveraging the Web is this: You can use the advantage you have in one place to help you in another.

Apple used its market dominance with the iPod as a springboard to the creation of the iPhone. Can you remember another phone device launch that had so much press coverage? Leverage means taking what works and moving the value into something else that’s different (yet connected) to the previous idea.

Leveraging Relationships

In a way, personal networking is a bit like leveraging relationships. We tend to do business with people who are like us. Beyond that, it’s more likely that we do business with people we feel emotionally positive about. Regardless of what’s fair or what systems are in place, there’s a positive bias toward the person who helped you.

One way to build up a reputation that you can leverage is by being the boldest or best in what you do.

Here’s a rule of thumb that works really well when it comes to leveraging your relationship with your audience: Don’t ever sell to your audience. Instead, be their gatekeeper.

Think of Oprah Winfrey. She gives and gives, constantly, and leverages that goodwill into bigger and bigger guests and giveaways. But does she ever try to sell her audience directly? No. Winfrey leverages her audience to provide visibility: to stars, to movies, to car companies. She protects her audience by guarding them from the bad stuff, and she lets the good stuff pass through, making her audience even happier as a result.

How a Trust Agent Leverages Social Media

Social media includes blogging, podcasting and using social networks like Facebook and Twitter. The newer platforms provide opportunities for trust agents to leverage communication mediums to the benefit of their organizations. First and foremost, reaching out to people via blogging is a one-to-many opportunity. Instead of sending a single e-mail or placing a phone call, having someone like Lionel Menchaca from Dell writing about service issues on the Direct2Dell blog is

a way to stretch the value of that message so that it resonates with more people.

Being Frank Eliason and using Twitter to respond to people as “@comcastcares” means leveraging the medium to achieve many positive outcomes: It lowers repeat calls to customer service; it reduces escalation issues within the care department; and it provides outward signs that the company is doing something with the customer’s complaints. The reason Eliason is able to achieve all this is because he leverages massive social networks that let him know when people are talking about his company.

Doing more with what is available to you in this case means sending out responses and having steady community interaction by using the open-faced interactions of the Web to build two-way relationships and conversations instead of using the old, one-at-a-time methods from other means of communication.

If you’re not taking advantage of the way the Web connects everyone, including your potential customers, you’re missing the easy opportunities. ●

Agent Zero

Trust agents have a natural tendency toward being the connector in all of their different groups. In their place of business, they work in positions that connect internal teams, external colleagues and more. Online, they are the ones being asked for, and sending, frequent introductions via e-mail and through social networks. No matter where they go, trust agents have a desire to connect good people. This is referred to as being Agent Zero; being in the center of a network and being able to spread ideas.

How do trust agents do this? First, trust agents are naturals at finding other connector types in other groups. They are able to recognize the individuals who like building networks of value and who know how to reach out. Second, trust agents who are connecting do this across almost all of their groups, constantly seeking ways to make their groups connect with each other. Thus, trust agents are also individuals who often blend their work group with their outside-of-work social group and more.

A natural benefit of these tendencies is that trust agents often get the opportunity to meet influential people. As connectors like to network and reach others, so it seems that if they have a famous, strong, powerful and/or useful connection, they are quick to share it.

Agent Zero Connects the Web

Trust agents build networks almost reflexively by

Summary: TRUST AGENTS

being helpful, by promoting the good work that others do, by sharing even their best stuff without hesitation and by finding ways to deliver even more value on top of all that without asking for anything in return. Instead of sucking up to the big guys (which isn't the right strategy), trust agents reach out to the up-and-comers. They make friends with the people starting out, those who might not be the big voices or the movers or the shakers, but who are interesting, driven, talented and have potential.

How is this accomplished? First, efforts are made through several small touches online, such as commenting on people's blog posts, responding to their Twitter messages or helping get the word out about their causes or efforts. Second, it's helpful to be able to meet some of the people with whom you've built online relationships.

The process of becoming Agent Zero can be divided into a few steps, some of which you do online and others in person. First, you must build awareness of who you are, making people aware that you exist. Next, you try to grab their attention and have them see that you are a good person to know, because you are entertaining, informative and/or useful. Then you take that recognition and develop it across several groups, to a level where you are considered an authority in as many of these groups as possible. ●

Human Artist

It has been said that the Web is different from all other media developed over the past 50 years, and that's because it wasn't created for advertisers and commercialism. Newspapers, radio, TV and even movies were fashioned around that. The Internet was conceived to enable scientists to communicate more fluidly with each other — and now we all can. The new Web still adheres to that fact: It's not built just to be a commercial endeavor. And that little truth has laid waste to many a company that has missed the mark in providing what its diverse audience needs.

Your key skill requirement is learning how to interact on your audience's terms. If you are to learn how to be a trust agent, the skill of being a "human artist" — someone who understands how to communicate with people in a real and thoughtful way — is very important to what you're doing.

The Basic Stuff

When you meet someone new, you shake hands and look each other in the eye. These are rules you learned

Face-to-Face Personal Contact

Though the Web is loaded with tools to build and sustain online relationships to levels never before considered, cementing these relationships with a face-to-face event, be that a conference or just a beer or two at a local pub, is a powerful way to strengthen them even further.

The key to developing a solid network is first to build a presence online, then meet in person and then sustain the relationship with several more online touches over time. This can include anything from e-mail to comments on each other's blog or podcast to just commenting back and forth to each other on social networks like Facebook or Friendfeed. Having had face-to-face personal contact tends to make the online relationship connection even stronger.

along the way, rules that have existed for a long time. But there are digital equivalents on the social Web. Learn to play by the rules. People will notice and respond similarly.

It's easy to understand the online equivalent to etiquette by imagining that you're at a party where you don't know anybody very well. Now, imagine that you have to be very deliberate about every gesture because, with fewer social cues in online interactions, intentions can be gleaned only by your online exchanges. Here are some actions that should help make your experience online more effective:

- **Listen.** The number one mistake newcomers make when they first begin their online experience is by diving in deep and stumbling over all kinds of social norms before they've realized any of it. If you're going to start reading blogs, pay attention to the way others comment. See how others respond to those comments. Listening (i.e., reading what others are saying) before you make your first moves helps.
- **Ask.** If you are uncertain of what's acceptable and what's not, it's perfectly fine to ask people, provided you've spent a little bit of time in an online setting. Just remember, everyone started somewhere.
- **Reciprocate.** All online conversations happen on purpose because we go to places purposefully, but we never communicate just because someone is there. When someone friends you on a social network, unless you have real reasons not to, friend them back. It's natural and it is the first step to opening a channel.
- **Comment and comment back.** When you are

Summary: TRUST AGENTS

first getting started online, you can begin by simply being a visitor to the various online hangouts; or by reading some blogs; or by setting up a Facebook account. What comes next is *contributing*. Try adding to the conversation. If *you* are running a blog, do the reverse. If someone takes time to comment, comment back on his or her response. However you can, accept that comment as a first contact, and touch back. ●

Build an Army

An individual can gain a lot of influence by acting alone, but doing so is missing half the picture. In addition to joining a group, creating one (and filling it with the smartest people you know) is the true path to influence online. If the social Web gives businesses the opportunity to re-humanize, it's at the risk of overwhelming those within a company entrusted with that role, because one person can't scale beyond certain limits. The answer is the sixth concept for trust agents: Build an army.

You Can't Do It Alone

When we think army, we think "Together we can make a difference." The main job of an army is to have a huge impact, something that can't be done by one person or even a few really powerful ones. The goal can't be uniformly yours — or theirs. Both sides must want something out of it or it can't succeed.

Once you have established yourself as a trust agent, reaching the next level means building and dispersing armies around projects and opportunities rapidly and with a very loose command and control structure. Learn how to build an army and you'll have strength in numbers and diversity.

Your Generals: The Mastermind Group

On the Web, groups of highly motivated people within every circle have already joined together, helping each other reach higher ground, where battles can more easily be won. Sometimes they announce their presence. Other times, they're tucked away and just quietly doing their thing. Yet people everywhere are working together to improve themselves — to learn more and move forward. You may already be part of such a group, but if you aren't, you'll need to be looking for like-minded people to call your own.

Web-based interactions, which encourage this in ways that old-fashioned networking groups and learning groups can't match, are fluid, flexible and connect people who aren't geographically aligned. What are the odds that the other great minds in your field live in the

same town or even within 20 minutes of you? But geographical location no longer matters when it comes to learning and building up each other's capabilities. With the new Web, mastermind groups can (and do) exist in a digital-only form; in fact, they work better. This is because we align with others on the Web based on interest instead of geography, so finding people to connect with is easier.

The Power of Asynchronous Aggregation

The Web allows us to build power in aggregate as no tool has ever allowed us before. Instead of asking one person to make all the effort, we can ask 100 people for a fraction and get even greater results. We can ask people all over the world and people can view things on their own time, allowing for a more powerful collection of capacity.

Imagine this task: Quickly build a useful encyclopedia of hyperlinked content. It shouldn't be possible without scores of project managers, tons of meetings and mountains of coordination. Except — it was. Wikipedia has been around for years now, and it crushed an entire informational product category in offline publishing as well as in the online world, and made an encyclopedia a lot lighter to carry around. Amazingly, information gathered by random and often-anonymous amateurs trumped professionally turned-out encyclopedias. This surprised even Wikipedia's founders.

Several thousand smaller ones happen every day. People collaborate all the time via blogs, Facebook, services like Yelp, Twitter and all over the Web, making large projects small and small projects incredibly easy. We're faster now. And we've learned that if we can find more people to do a little part of the whole, we can move things forward in a very effective way.

The Social Contract

Any army worth its salt understands its job. The same is true of the general who leads them.

Of course, the armies of the Web may be more informal than their traditional counterparts. The goals are always a bit more tactical in these group efforts; the strategies usually feel mutually beneficial. It's important to know what you're getting into when you become part of a group. ●

The Trust Agent

This is an amazing and unique time. Attention is scarce. The established leaders in many business segments have toppled or are on the ropes. The Internet

has leveled the distribution playing field for media, merchandise, communication, location and many other areas. It's at once scary and ideal, ideal because this is where trust agents excel.

The Web and new media give you the opportunity to reveal the human side of your business. Consumers can carry on conversations with brands like Whole Foods, Home Depot or even Hardees foods via the Web and its social networks. Not in the last 50 years or more has the balance of business interaction and communication been so in favor of smaller, more personal interactions than it is right now.

Six Games You Could Have Made and Still Can

In the spirit of making your own game, here are just six strategies that you could use to increase your Web presence:

1. *Write a content marketing blog about a passion of yours.* Gary Vaynerchuk sold more than \$50 million in wine and spirits based on his passionate Internet video show, Wine Library TV. He crushed the category when there were plenty of wine critics and other sources of information out there. He made his own game, and now the world is chasing him.
2. *Build a small, powerful network.* Bryan Elliot assembled marketing and advertising professionals located in California. They work in and among themselves to source new projects. They stay abreast of each other's job changes. They help each other develop and grow. You can build a small, powerful network and be Agent Zero at the core of an important group related to your industry.
3. *Become the name brand of a specialty.* Christopher S. Penn created the Financial Aid Podcast because he felt it was a great way to communicate with students and parents of students looking for general financial advice and specific information about student loans, his particular line of business. By being one of us, Penn has delivered hundreds of helpful podcasts and, as a result, he has made his company millions of dollars servicing student loans.
4. *Master leverage and use it for good.* Beth Kanter helps various causes understand how to use the Web's new tools to raise money and improve the quality of their efforts. In doing so, Kanter takes advantage of the Archimedes Effect. She understands how to find opportunity and tap into it for the greater good.
5. *Sell by generating human trust.* Aaron Wall of SEObook.com is able to sell valuable information

Tips for Approaching Web Celebrities

When approaching people who are famous, never put yourself into a situation where you might be seen as either loudly or fawningly trying to get attention. Here are some pointers:

- Look to create multiple small, non-threatening encounters instead of one longer one.
- Don't ever approach someone when everyone else is around them asking for stuff.
- Ask someone else who knows them to introduce you instead of just coming up yourself.
- Don't ask for any favors.
- Just be friendly.
- Say things that are different than what people usually say to them.

online not only by offering exceptional quality, but also because he mastered being a human artist. He learned that trust came from constant exposure to his work, such that people began to accept him as the default in certain categories (search engine optimization and marketing). As people saw more and more of Aaron's work and as he was cited in more places as the SEO expert, that level of trust gained from exposure made his products the first mover in the spaces where he intended to sell.

6. *Make an army to power your change.* Frank Eliason from Comcast changed the way we think of customer service in the Web-facing world. But as he is only one man, Eliason needed an army, so he trained more people to handle the same job. Building up groups of people to work on projects for you should be a priority. Never hoard your expertise or your angle. Instead, find ways that you can work with others to be successful. ●

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

If you liked *Trust Agents*, you'll also like:

1. ***Transparency* by Warren Bennis, Daniel Goleman and James O'Toole.** Digital technology makes transparency all but inevitable. The three essays in this book offer leaders practical advice on how to be transparent.
2. ***Firms of Endearment* by Rajendra Sisodia, David B. Wolfe and Jagdish Sheth.** Today's best companies generate value that matters to customers. It's emotional, experiential, social and financial. This book gives you the steps to create these experiences.
3. ***Corporate Reputation* by Leslie Gaines-Ross.** Dr. Gaines-Ross explains why reputation matters to a company's valuation and well-being and identifies the roles corporate leaders must play in reputation recovery.