

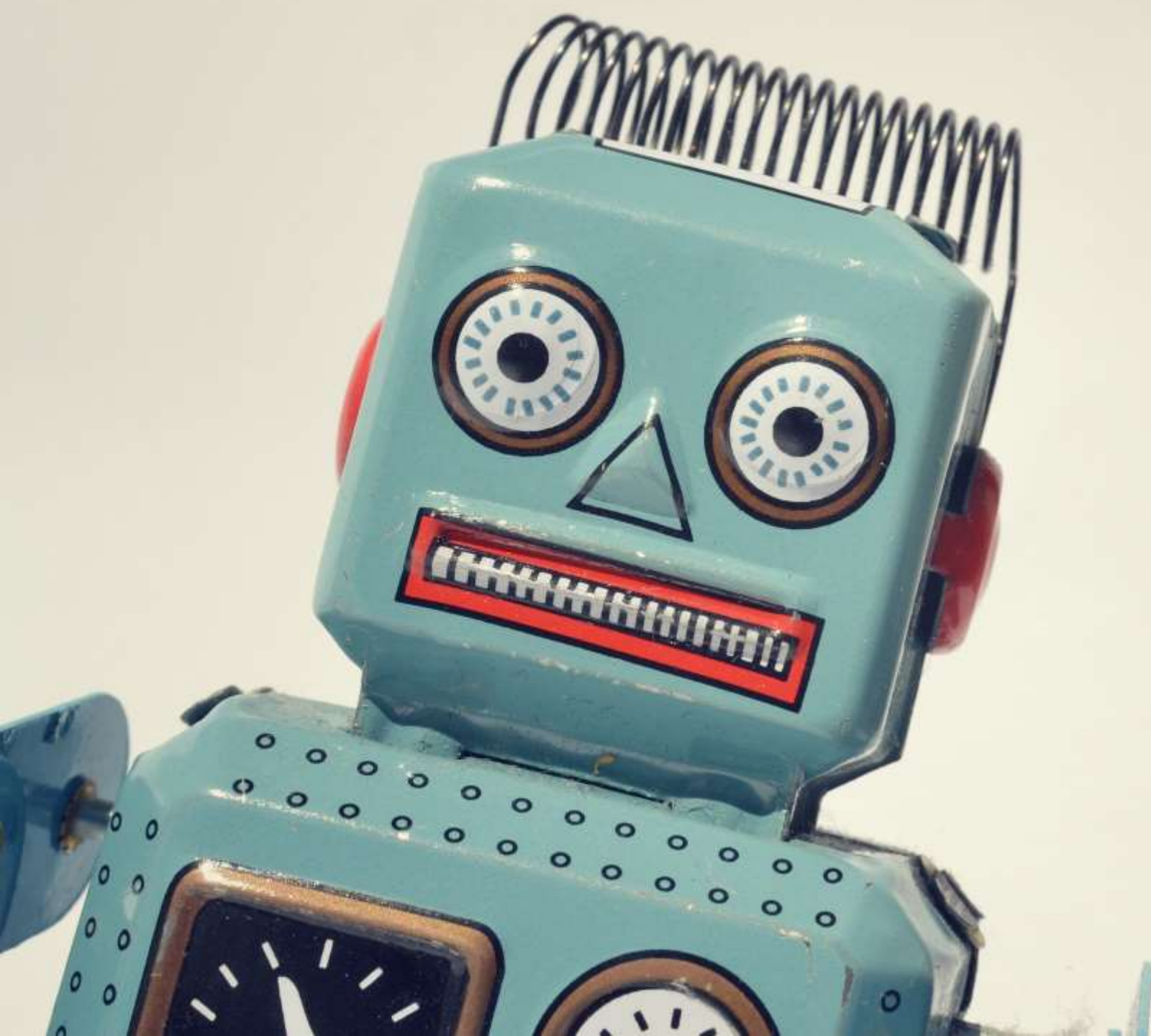
The Payoff for Paying Attention

Jennifer Davis | CMO, Leyard and Planar



As presented at the
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AMA-PDX Lunch Symposium





Once upon a time there were big problems on the internet. Businesses wanted to put forms on their websites to gather leads or information and evil bots were finding these forms and wreaking havoc. Bad leads, over-run servers, and worse.

What were businesses to do? It seems that all text was readable by machines.

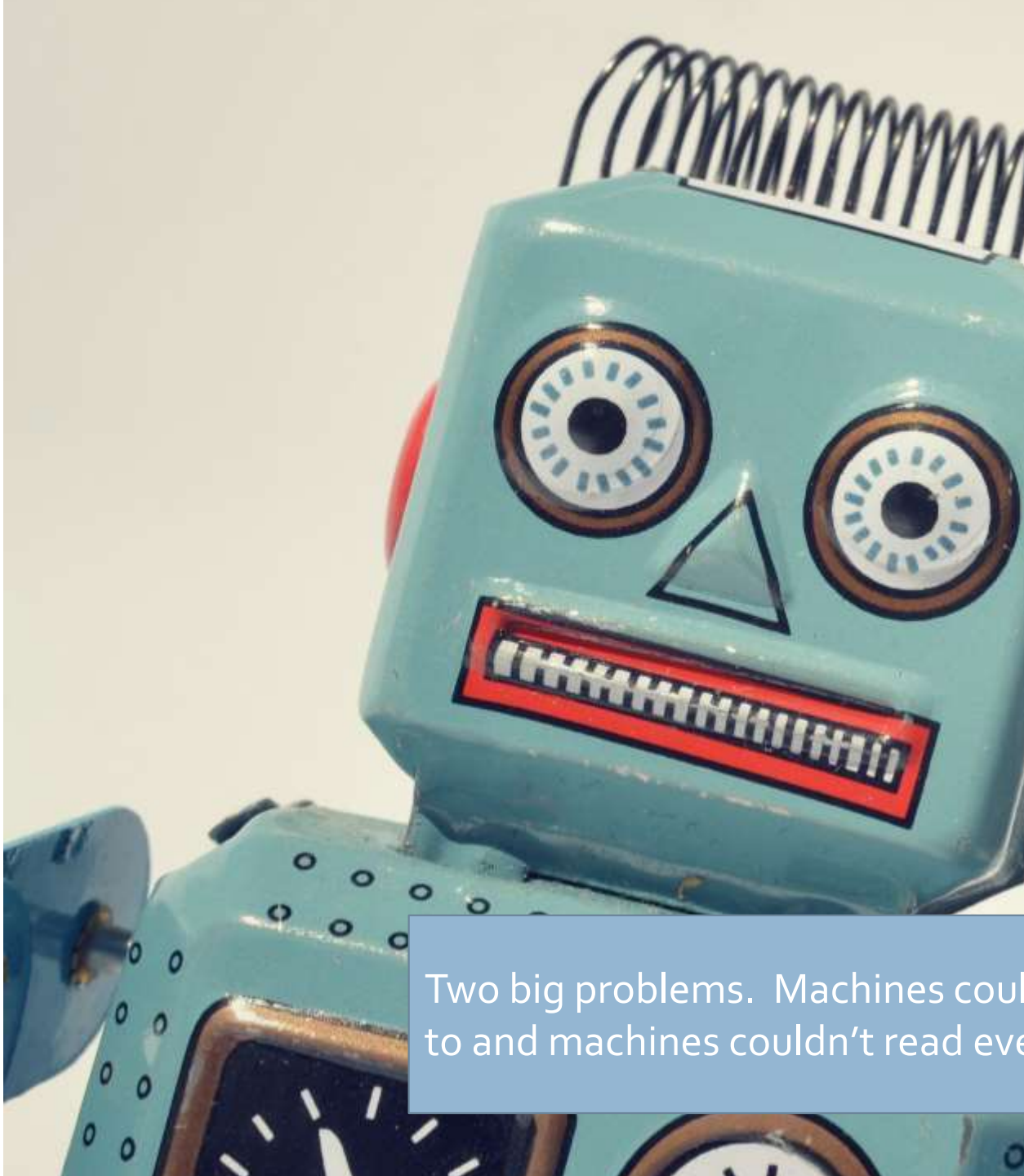
It was bad.



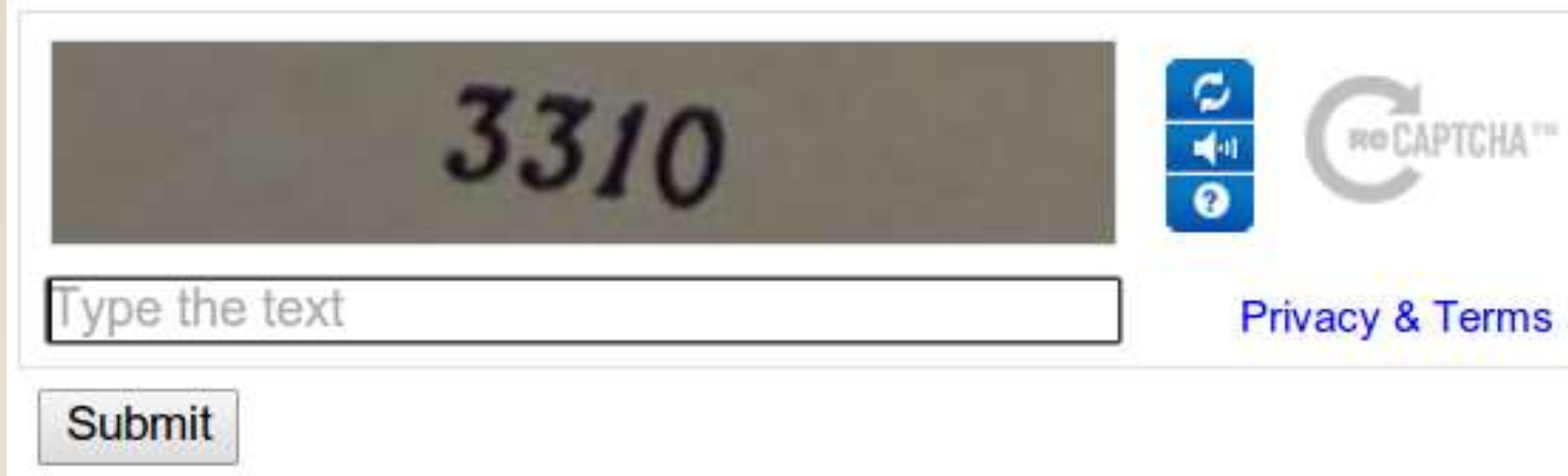
In parallel, there was another problem. Google had set out on an ambitious task of making available the world's knowledge.

One step to that effort was to digitize every book, newspaper, and magazine that only had previously existed in printed form. With great advancement in Optical Character Recognition technology, they were making great progress, but they ran into a problem. Sometimes the text was unreadable by machine. The same went with text found in Google street view images.

It was bad.



Two big problems. Machines could read things we didn't want them to and machines couldn't read everything we needed them to.



3310

Type the text

Submit

Privacy & Terms

So, the reCaptcha was born to solve both problems.

Users on websites are presented with an image which is in fact a house number from Google Street View or an excerpt from a text that had been scanned. And the human being filling out the form follows the instructions types the text. Both identifying themselves as a human to the website and helping fill in where robots had failed. A human character recognition.

CAPTCHA has been given the backronym: "Completely Automated Public Test to tell Computers and Humans Apart". So what does this tell us about the payoff of paying attention?

Missed Opportunities: a Failure of Vision

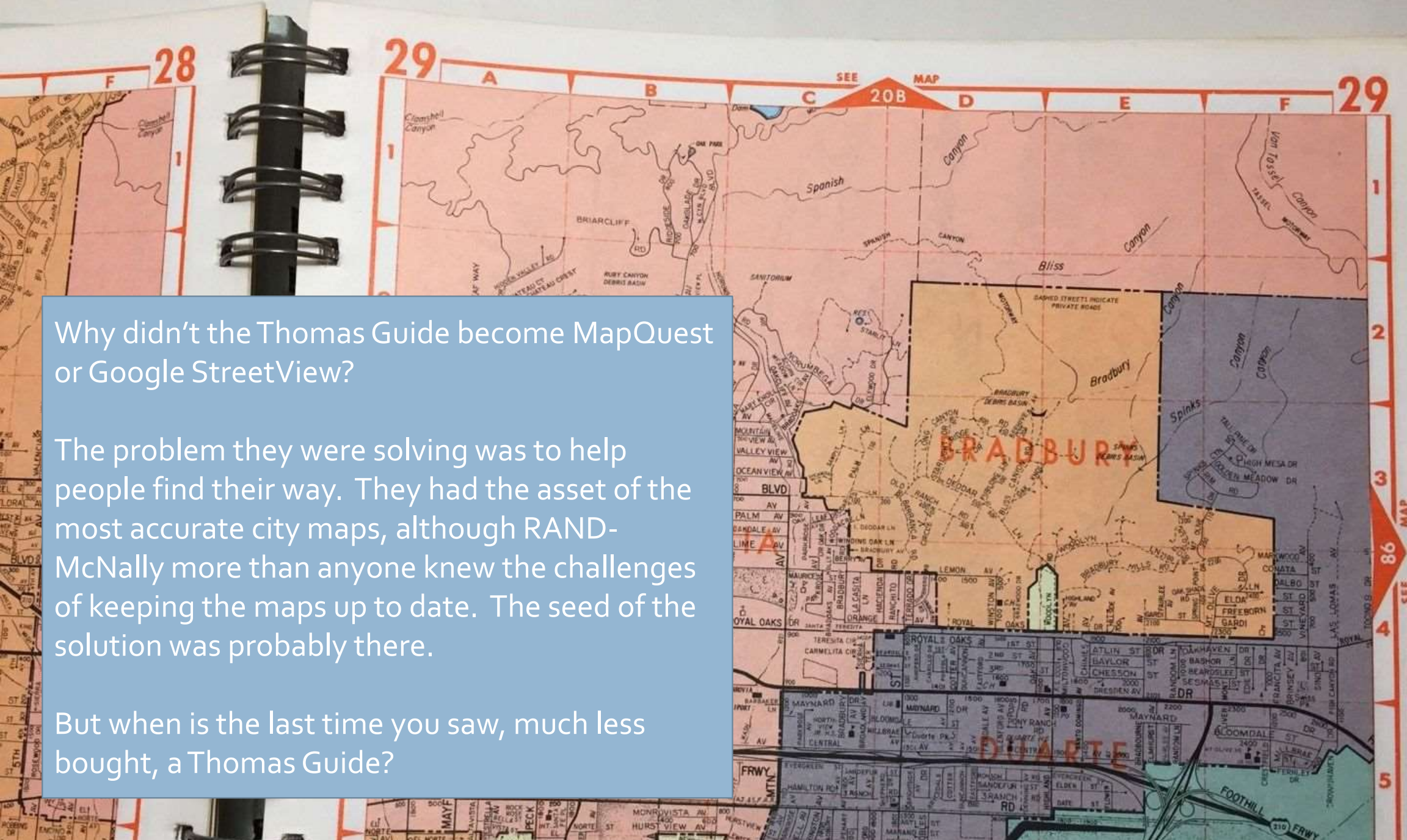
To have a point of view, as a business or a brand, you must first pay attention to:

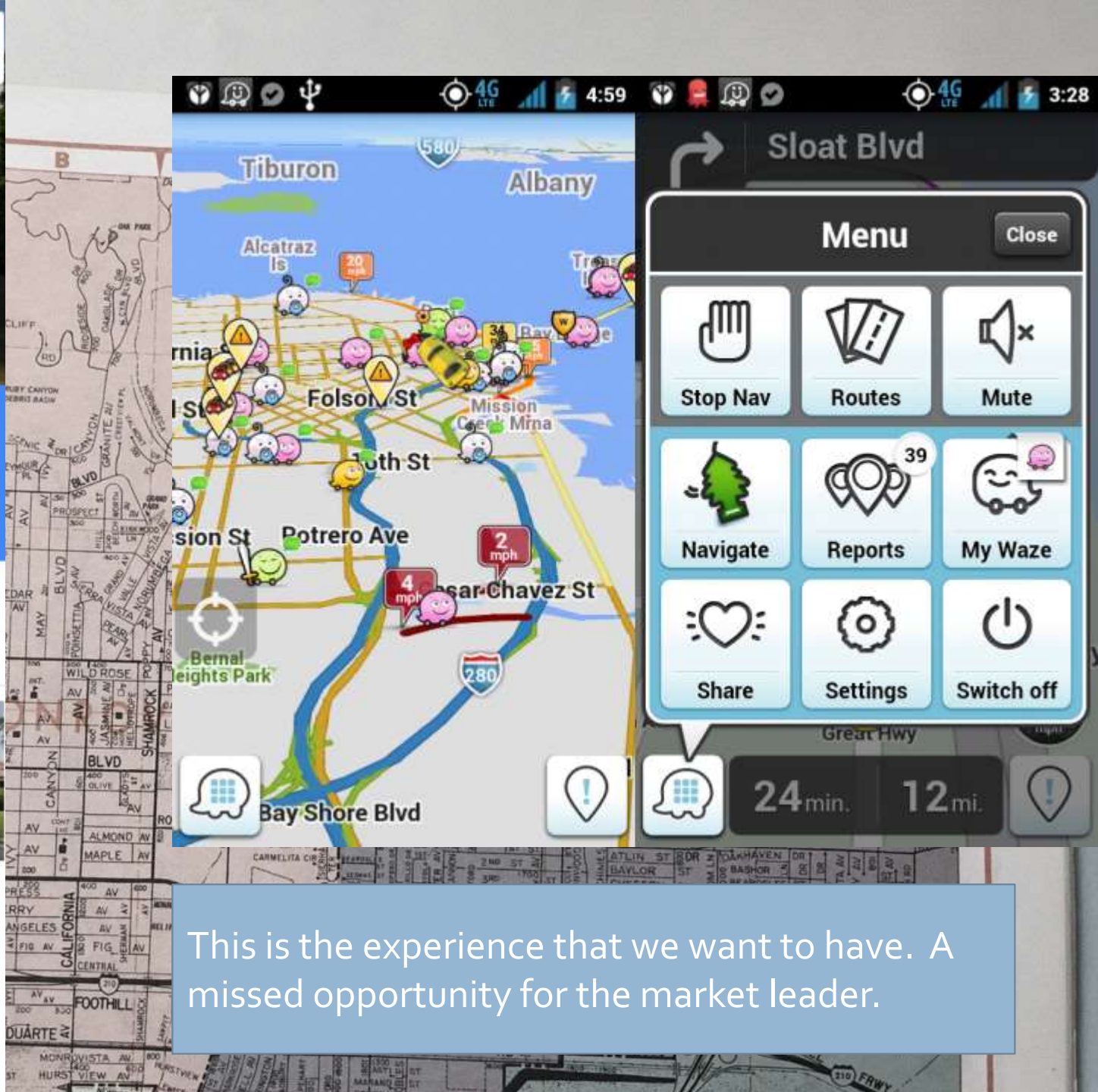
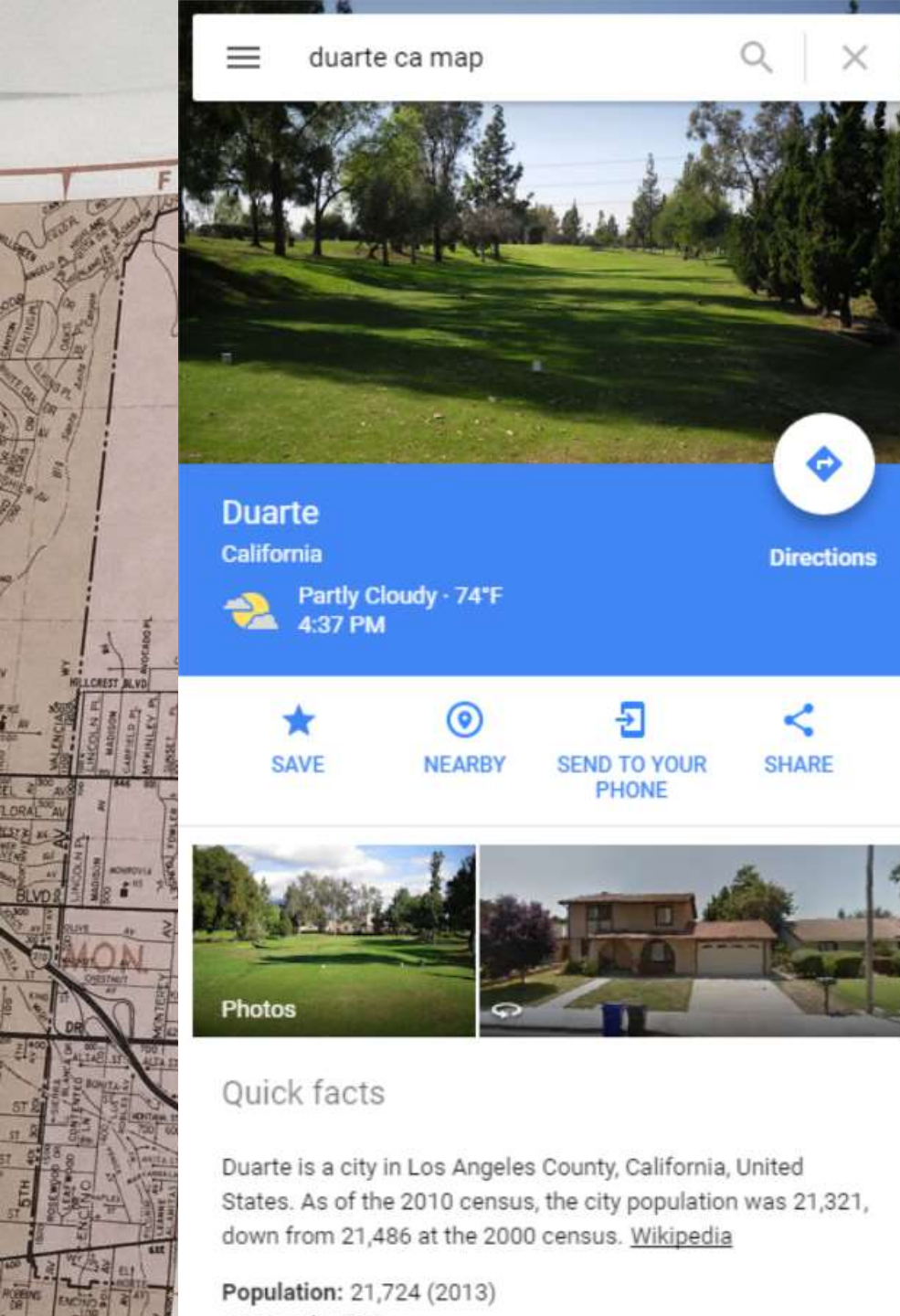
- customer needs,
- relevant technologies,
- available resources, and
- the energy and passion to bring the vision to life

Why didn't the Thomas Guide become MapQuest or Google StreetView?

The problem they were solving was to help people find their way. They had the asset of the most accurate city maps, although RAND-McNally more than anyone knew the challenges of keeping the maps up to date. The seed of the solution was probably there.

But when is the last time you saw, much less bought, a Thomas Guide?





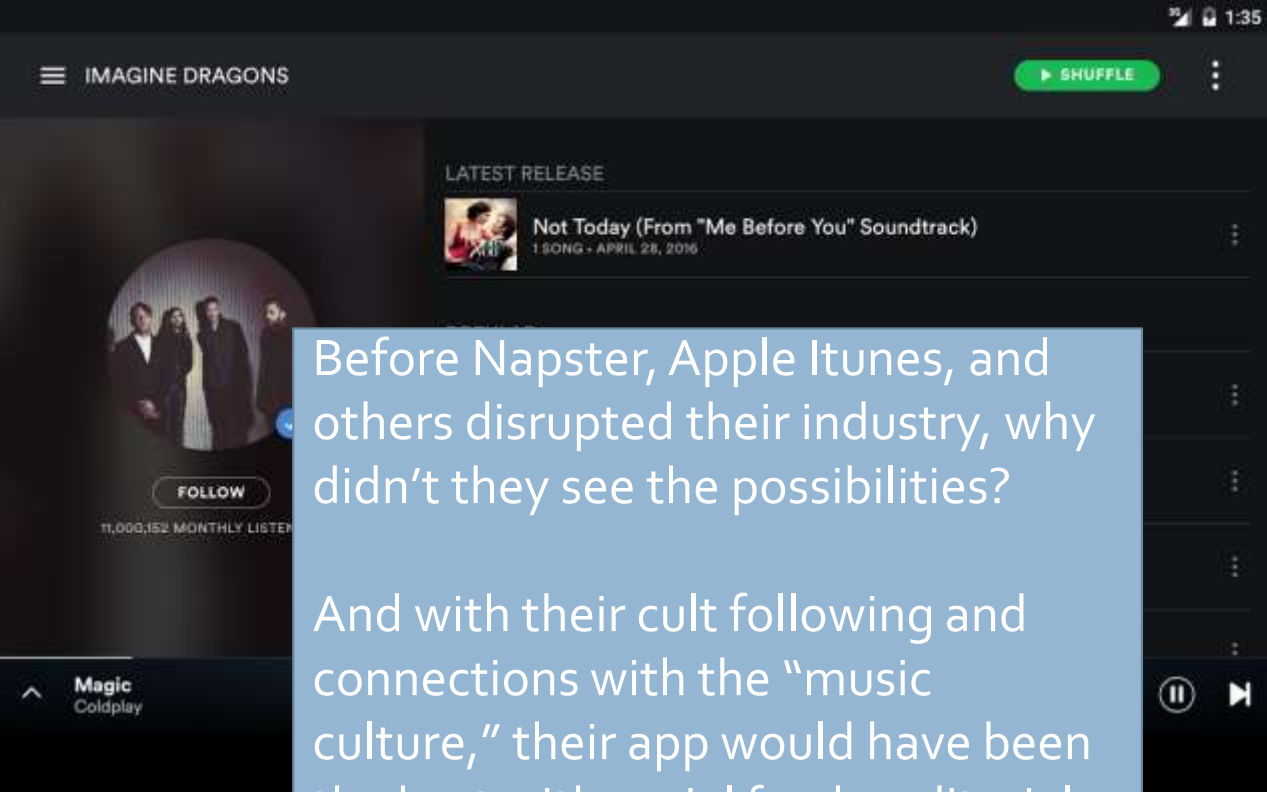
This is the experience that we want to have. A missed opportunity for the market leader.



TOWER RECORDS
IT'S A GLOBAL THING

Why didn't Tower Records, with their edgy brand and celebrity following, launch Spotify or Pandora or XM radio?

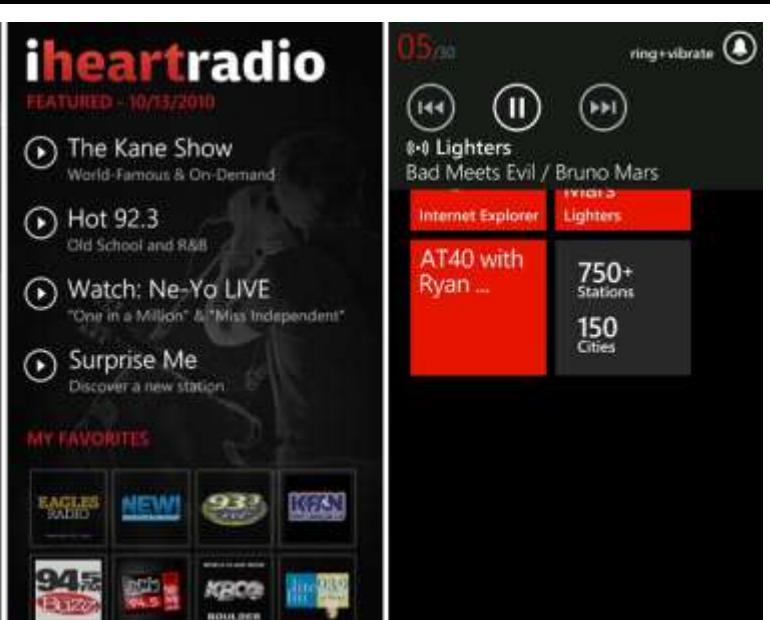
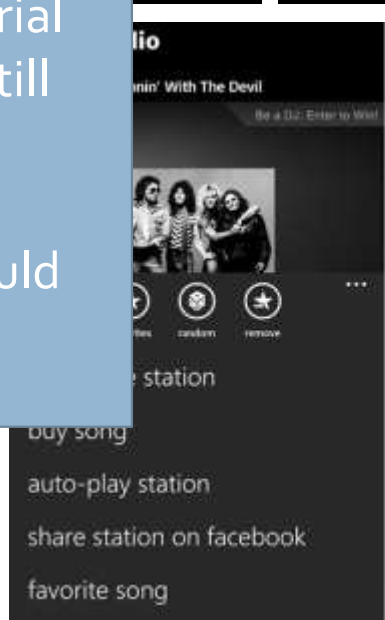
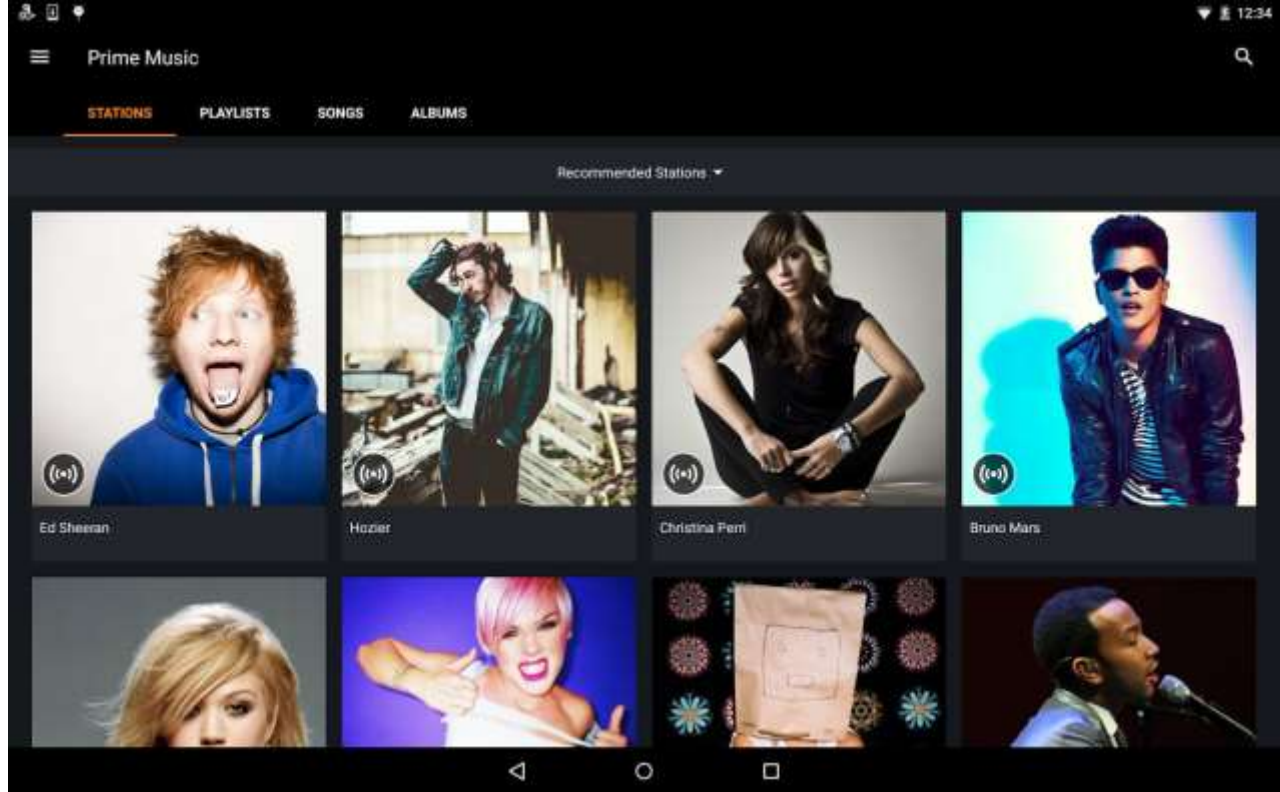
They had already branched out into non-retail projects like their *Pulse* music magazine.




Before Napster, Apple Itunes, and others disrupted their industry, why didn't they see the possibilities?

And with their cult following and connections with the "music culture," their app would have been the best with social feeds, editorial content, and artist access that still isn't rivaled in today's apps.

I could imagine that the app would be more colorful.





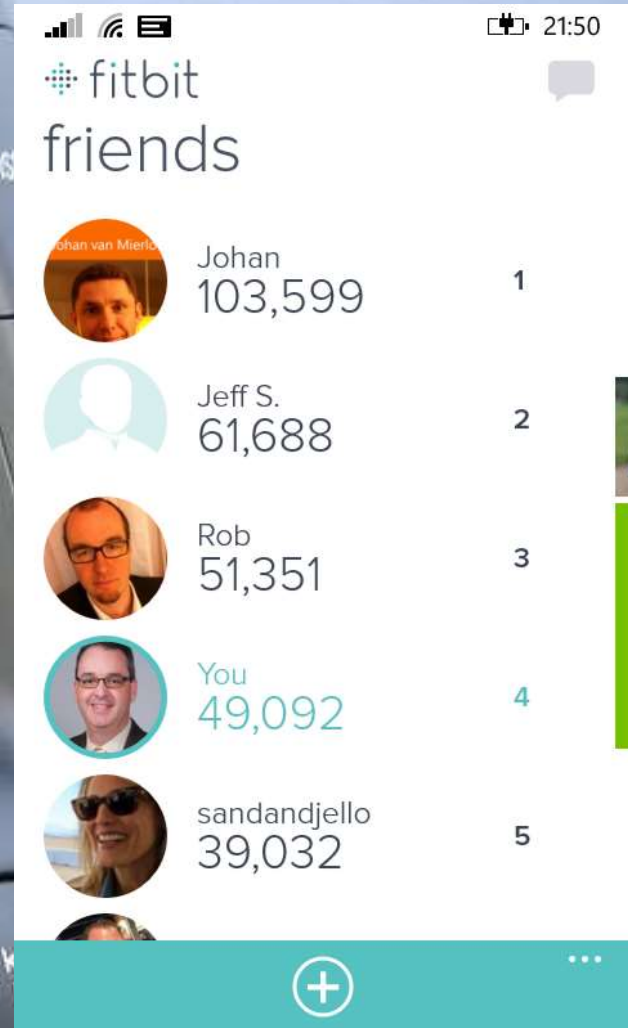
Why doesn't Taco Bell, with their expansive supply chain and access to Pepsico's resources, create an upscale Mexican food chain? Like Honda has Acura and Toyota has Lexus. They could start the first non-GMO, vegan friendly, gluten-free Mexican food chain in the country – which would be very on-trend and popular in Portland.


Energy Monitor

OUTSIDE TEMP 82 °F



Why don't the makers of hybrid vehicles take a playbook from the wearables and fitness apps space and gamify their cars so that you can compare your mileage to others and compete with your friends to be the most green driver? Would that create a network effect that might drive more brand loyalty in the space, as the options for hybrids and electric cars continue to grow.





How do we find the
insights that can change
our businesses and
marketing?

Paying Attention



1



Observing Non-Traditional Customers

Watching people not in the core of the customer group delivers new insights. An extreme example is this 1 year old trying to use a magazine like a touch tablet.

This is Charming Charlie. It is an accessories store that a friend of mine dubbed the “IDEA of accessories” because of the color-coded displays and the breadth of inventory, and low prices. My daughter loves this store, but this is a non-traditional customer. Most things in the store are too big for her. But when she was seven she had a crazy idea. She wanted to hold her birthday party at Charming Charlie. I tried to explain that it was a store, not an amusement park, but she was unconvinced. I talked to the store manager and she was willing to give it a try. We limited the guest list, I recruited some girlfriends for crowd control, and we created some dress-up and scavenger hunt style games to play.





We met right when the store opened and the girls took turns dressing up as fashion models or their moms. They twirled, they discovered, they spent their gift cards, and they had a great time.

From this experience I gained several insights about shopping and the future of retail. It has influenced my thoughts about how our display technologies fit in the future of retailing. Insights I never would have gotten if this non-traditional buyer hadn't wanted to experience the product in a new way.

And I certainly believe there is a business opportunity for stores like Charming Charlie to expand their businesses, and build brand loyalty, by including parties and private events in their offering.

To read the article from CMO.com on this topic, see the [atjenniferdavis blog](#).



2

Find others with the same problems

Another approach is to find others that are struggling with the same issues and see how they solved them.

Planar and Leyard do a lot of event marketing. Trade shows, open houses, and even recently a “Wallapalooza” road show event across the country in different cities each week.

One of the challenges of event marketing is making the investment last after the show has concluded.

PLANAR
A LEYARD Company

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VER
Create extraordinary



I heard the commissioner of the NBA speak recently and he shared the exact same problem. Their main product is an event. They are also very much in the event marketing business. That business has a clock time and an expiration date. And in the age of the internet, the half-life of a recorded basketball game is very short as the score is immediately known around the world and the luster of a “live event”/previously-recorded wears off quickly.

So, they have repackaged the coverage of their live events into highlights. They have wrapped existing content with new, often localized commentary, for the local markets into which these are shared, which might be seeing the game days after it was played. Taking a play from this book, we started recording our events in a video series. Wrapping each with new commentary from the product manager explaining what is being demonstrated.



To read the full article published by the American Business Journal network, see the [atjenniferdavis.com blog](https://atjenniferdavis.com/blog).

Take a 3D tour of our Video Wallapalooza Showroom

VideoWallapalooza 2016 Showroom

And most recently, we had a roadshow event captured in 360 degree video for a virtual reality experience online and in a VR headset. Making the event last longer with new innovative technology and fresh packaging. Although the NBA and our business are very different, we found a very common problem around event marketing and approached the solution similarly.



Explore 3D Space

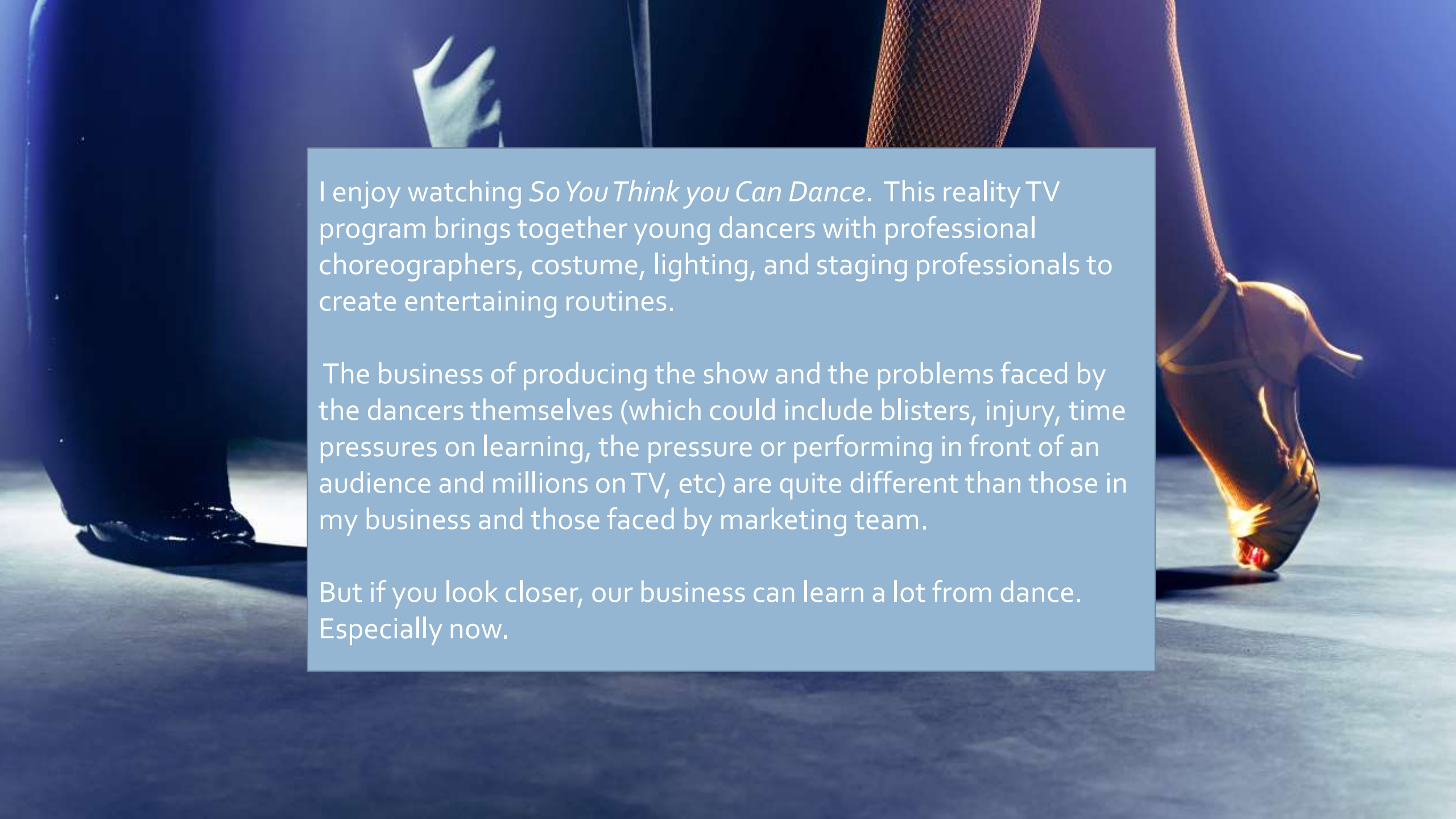
To see the experience, visit Leyard.com.



3

Find similar problems in other industries

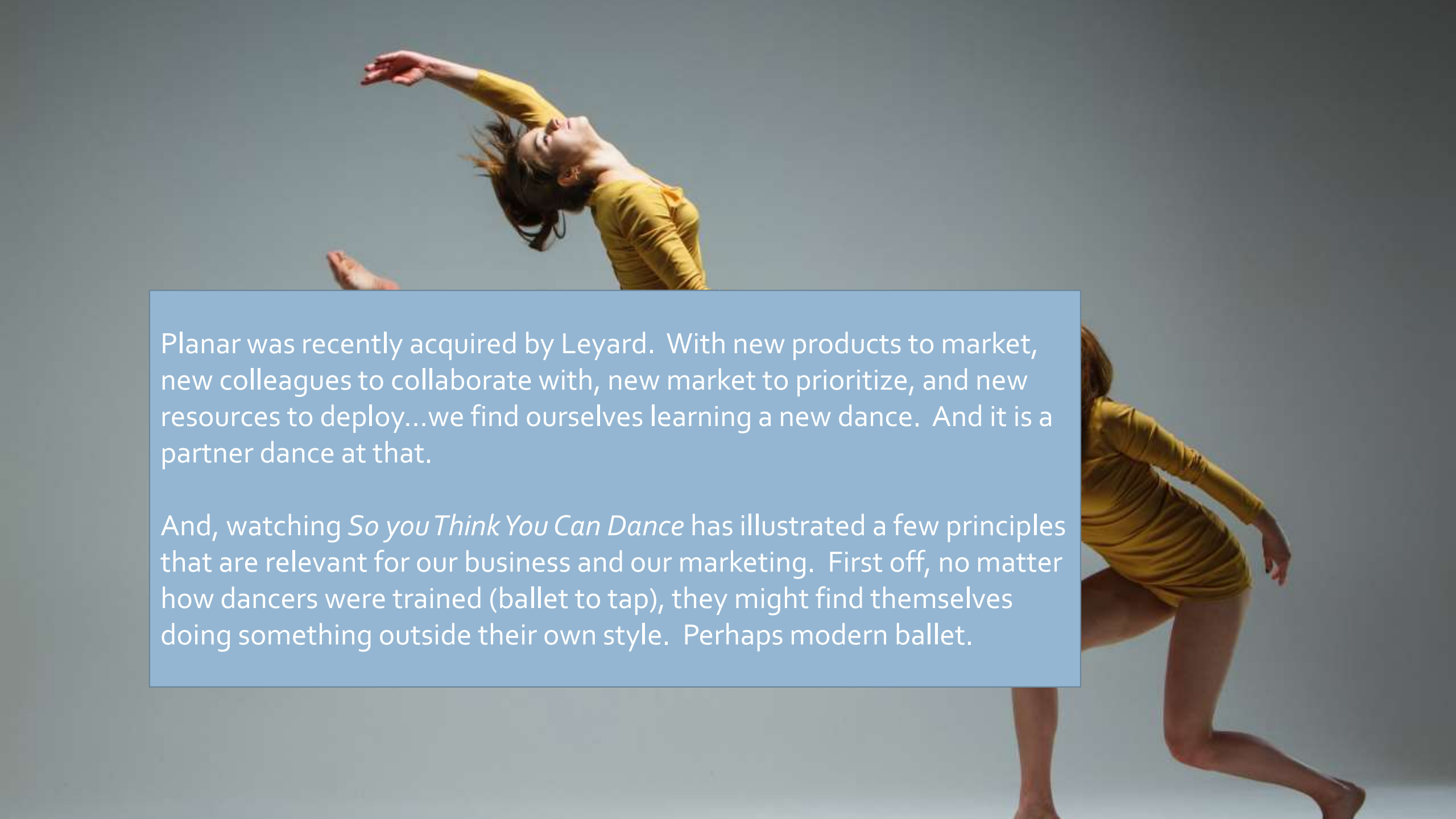
Sometimes the insights that lead to solutions to your problems come far afield from your industry or market. Sometimes others aren't even solving your exact problems, but rather problems with a similar scope, feeling, or impact. Finding these solutions requires some pattern recognition skills.



I enjoy watching *So You Think you Can Dance*. This reality TV program brings together young dancers with professional choreographers, costume, lighting, and staging professionals to create entertaining routines.

The business of producing the show and the problems faced by the dancers themselves (which could include blisters, injury, time pressures on learning, the pressure or performing in front of an audience and millions on TV, etc) are quite different than those in my business and those faced by marketing team.

But if you look closer, our business can learn a lot from dance. Especially now.

A woman in a yellow long-sleeved dress is captured in mid-air, performing a backflip. Her arms are extended upwards, and her head is tilted back. The background is a plain, light blue-grey color. The image is partially obscured by a blue text box in the center.

Planar was recently acquired by Leyard. With new products to market, new colleagues to collaborate with, new market to prioritize, and new resources to deploy...we find ourselves learning a new dance. And it is a partner dance at that.

And, watching *So you Think You Can Dance* has illustrated a few principles that are relevant for our business and our marketing. First off, no matter how dancers were trained (ballet to tap), they might find themselves doing something outside their own style. Perhaps modern ballet.

To be a good partner on the dance floor, every dancer has the same goals, hears the same music, and knows their role in the dance. Just like an integration after an acquisition, learning to dance is a process of listening, learning, and trust building.

With each episode of the show, I am reminded of a principle I can apply at work.

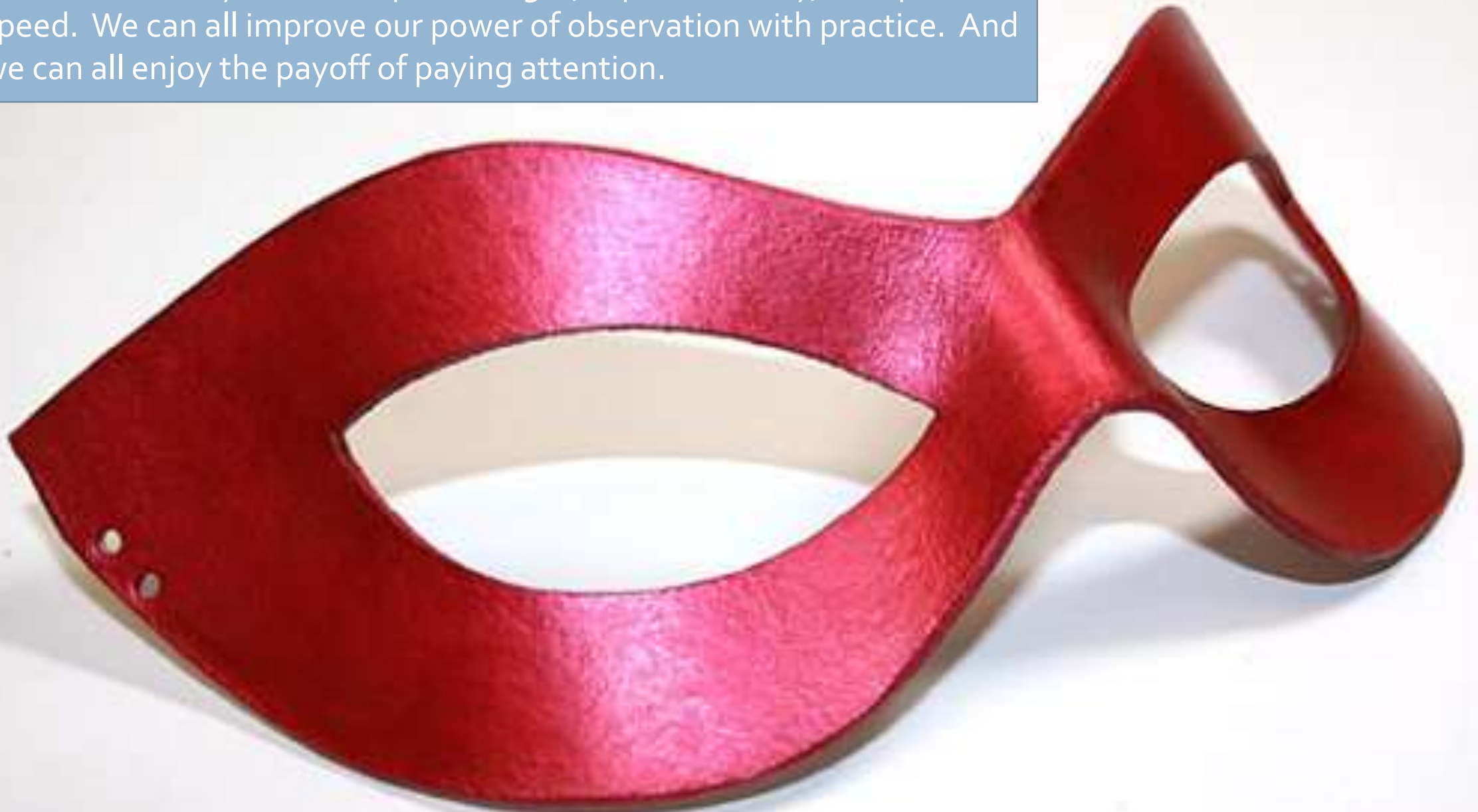


To read the article from American Business Journal's BizJournal.com on this topic, see the [atjenniferdavis blog](#)



Paying attention is the key to ongoing relevance and evolution in our businesses and in our careers. Some of you will excel at the ideation. Others will excel at refining and improving the concepts. Others will focus on implementation. Some will enable ideas to reach their potential with proper funding and leadership. And others will make their mark in measurement and analysis. All of those super powers are required.

But no matter if you have super strength, super flexibility, or super speed. We can all improve our power of observation with practice. And we can all enjoy the payoff of paying attention.



To get your own super hero mask, see the work of [WastelandArtisan on Etsy.](#)

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