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Web 2.0 Expo Notes - NY November 16-19, 2009

arvinder 11:49pm Today

Tagged: *conference* *notes* *web2.0* *webexpo*

Machine learning customers

Tony Jebara (Associate Professor of Computer Science at Columbia University and director of the Columbia Machine Learning Laboratory.)

http://www.web2expo.com/webexny2009/public/schedule/detail/9460

- As data becomes more abundant and ubiquitous thanks to an entire planet of data-generating users, machine learning is becoming a common tool for services. Tony Jebara is the Chief Scientist of Sense Networks, a company whose business model depends on making "sense" of a constant stream of cellphone data to predict consumer activity. This talk surveyed the uses of machine learning and how to get started.
- www - A network of online places. facebook - a network of online people
- Online data is easy to get, what about real world?
- Jebara described two types of data he was experimenting with : Conversation data and location data.
- Two sources of his data were phone movements and taxi traces.
- Ways to use data to group data points- supervised and unsupervised.
- Google runs b-matching algorithm for ad auction
- Jabara demonstrated comparison between PCA, SDE and his MVE models of machine learning (59%, 95.3 % and 99.2% accurate respectively in 2- dimensions)
- More Reading *http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/11/02/data.viz/index.html*

Scalable CSS for Developers

Nicole Sullivan

http://www.web2expo.com/webexny2009/public/schedule/detail/10540

- CSS is a frustration point for developers and engineers and a stumbling block for startups. Less is more in CSS, but less is hard to achieve. Learn how to write CSS that scales to thousands of pages or millions of users and results in leaner code, which is easier to both write and maintain.
- A research showed 100 millisecond(1/10 of a second) decrease in response time of web page, amazon.com lost 1% of customers.

- 400 ms increase in wait translated to 5.9% drip in yahoo traffic.
- 5 sec increase in delay equals 40% fewer yahoo searches
- Users do care about performance
- Performance depends on two factors - Lower file size, and fewer http requests
- If a company does not have beginner, middle and architecture level developer, it is not a serious web company.
- Understanding cascade - Order of class on HTML element is not determinable
- Browsers ignore bits it does not understand
- Order of stylesheet matters
- In ID and class clash, ID will win
- Inline styles override every style other than important(!)
- Then Nicole went on to explain Object Oriented CSS and her own framework around it.

Building Across the Social Web: The Implications of Facebook Connect, Google OpenSocial and Other Social Web Technologies on Social Media Content Strategy

Michael Lazerow (Buddy Media)

Slides at *http://bit.ly/3aQVPU*

- Arguably one of the best presentation of Web Expo
- World has moved from widget world to stream world
- You can easily put share button. If user has to do something you have lost him/her.
- Use of social connect is commendable to SELL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES
- Social connections using Twitter, facebook or Google sign-ins if connected correctly can turn your business on fire if implemented correctly.

Jennifer Pehlka leavers to start *CodeForAmerica.org*

- Code for America is a new idea that's in the process of becoming a program and a non-profit organization.
- Cities are under greater pressure than ever, struggling with budget cuts and outdated technology. What if, instead of cutting services or raising taxes, cities could leverage the power of the web to become more efficient and effective? What if interacting with your local government was more like using Facebook or Yelp? What if, instead of reinventing the wheel every time, cities shared technology resources? We believe there is a wealth of talent in the web industry eager to contribute to the rebuilding of America.

There's a #Hashtag for That

Baratunde Thurston (The Onion)

Video available at *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xkyqKPcfx64*

- @Baratunde was the funny, amusing and great story teller. No wonder Onion pays him high even in recession:) *http://twitter.com/askang/status/5847535723*
- Demonstrated the power of twitter and how it can be used to build flash-tags around any brand one can think of.

Radical Abundance: How We Get Past "Free" and Learn to Exchange Value Again

Douglas Rushkoff (Author, "Life Inc.")

Video at *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OHMvknT_uk4*

- Operating system of money is obsolete with internet
- It is a legacy system
- The killing of local currency was introduction of scarcity based currency rather than being abundance based currencies. These were to the favors of monarchs and already rich.
- The same way, unless online discovers new forms of value, bigger giants like Google will keep on eating on the works of common folks created and shared.

Making Sense of Google Wave

Gina Trapani (The Complete Guide to Google Wave)

Video at *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CuBpIyHIbb4*

- Gina Tripani is much more interesting to read than to listen to. And she looooves Google! :) *http://twitter.com/askang/status/5847642642*

Listening to the Experts

Anil Dash (Expert Labs)

Video at *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOlKfbE97ok*

- Expert Labs is a new independent initiative to help policy makers in our government take advantage of

the expertise of their fellow citizens.

Sparking a Crush: Attracting and Retaining New Users

Alexa Andrzejewski (Adaptive Path)

Slides at *http://www.slideshare.net/ladylexy/sparking-a-crush-attracting-and-holding-onto-new-users*

- Best design session I've been to
- How to spark crush
  - They can't get enough
  - They can't stop talking about you
  - They'll share

- Relationship advice - How not to spark crush
  - Move too fast
  - Pester
  - Act desperate
  - Stalk users

- What to do
  - When you praise something, promote things about them
  - The early you get user personally relevant, the better lead you have

- Features
  - Question to ask - Does it add value?

- Numbers make people addictive e.g. twitter followers
- Use lightweight ways to engage user
- Let people customize
- Have unique image burned and memorized on user's mind
- Procrastination equation
- The perception of signup is bigger hinderance than signup

A Conversation with Beth Noveck (Executive Office of the President/OSTP)

Video at *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ2JEovlLTE*

- Beth discussed government plans to Gov 2.0, Open data, and ending lobbyist recommendations

Designing Web 2.0: Here Come The Anthropologists

Video at *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPbzdcZBl6M*

- Discussed how Odeo designs software
- Facebook is primitive when thinking in terms of anthropologist
- *Parody Facebook in Reality*

What Open Data Looks Like to the Rest of Us: Examples of Government Data in Use

Allan Holmes (nextgov.com), Eric Gundersen (Development Seed)

- Developed Seed primarily uses Drupal
- More government data is being opened up and made more accessible, but what does this mean? And what does it look like? This session discussed four examples of government data being used to provide valuable information to the public that previously wasn't accessible.
- Data visualization matters
- Bee keepers example
- Open Data = New Frontiers
- Geo Assessment Tools - Open Layers + mapbox + drupal
- Open Street Data - *OpenStreetMap.org*
- Automated Information mapping system *http://aims.jocogov.org/*
- Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM) by NASA *http://www2.jpl.nasa.gov/srtm/*
- GDAL - Geospatial Data Abstraction Library *http://www.gdal.org/*
- Mapnik is a Free Toolkit for developing mapping applications. Above all Mapnik is about making beautiful maps. *http://mapnik.org/*
- Open Source + Open Data = Beautiful and useful products
- Example of bad but useful data *http://www.census.gov/geo/www/tiger/*
- Development Seed has mapped Tiger data in Amazon bucket, which is available for share
- Making Government Transparent and Accountable *http://www.sunlightfoundation.com/*

- Apps for Democracy Innovation contest *http://www.istrategylabs.com/apps-for-democracy-yeilds-4000-roi-in-30-days-for-dcgov/*

- Find detailed bike routes in DC, monitor bike theft in real time, and get a bike on Craigslist in DC Area. *http://www.outsideindc.com/bikes*
- A guide to bars and aoiding crime *http://www.stumblesafely.com/*
- Fedral Education budget project *http://febp.newamerica.net/*
- *http://www.developmentseed.org/blog/2009/apr/22/thousands_of_miles_added_open_street_map*

Social Interaction Design: A Primer

Gentry Underwood (IDEO)

Slides at *http://www.slideshare.net/emalone/designing-social-interfaces-web-20-ny-workshop-version*

- Gentry Underwood explored the design challenges of creating social software. Just as early computer interfaces were complicated and non-intuitive, most web 2.0 software today is socially awkward. As the purpose of the software shifts from manipulating data to interacting with other people, the designer must create solutions that are not only intuitive from an interface perspective, but are also appropriate from a social and cultural perspective. What does good social software look like? How do teams create social tools that are simultaneously user-friendly and culturally appropriate? Drawing from IDEO's experience both with its clients and its own internal tools, Gentry shared deign principles for creating social software that works.
- Satisfy all stakeholders
- Microlevel desires (e.g. getting page hits) sometimes blinds macro-level desires (e.g purpose)
- Compliance = Bad Design
- Design for Delight
- Simplify as much as you can but no more
- *Simplicity is ultimate luxury* - Da Vinci
- Check out *Aardvark*
- Help the system help users
- **Help all frictions on path to participation**
- What worked for ODEO
    - No Wiki
    - Existing LDAP usernames
    - Automatic navigation (build index navigation)

- Help the indifferent decide
    - signed up everybody for everything and let users opt out

- Anthropology + Sociality + Software design
- **Book recommendation** *Nudge*
- Remember we are herd species *http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA8z7f7a2Pk*
- *Adoption is not something that occurs, it is a journey*
- Watch for unexpected consequences
- Empower evolution
- In Italy for example, people are buying computers just to get on facebook, even though they know nothing else about computers.
- **You are sure only when you try.**

- Web Links *http://socialsoftware.org/* and *http://blog.sxdsalon.org*