Fast Research

Suggestions from

Dr. Tom Lifvendahl

Problem

- How do you gather research information in a “compressed” class?
  1. You use your time effectively by going to the Stritch Library with a topic.
  2. You pre-search your subject on the Internet. (http://scholar.google.com/) or with http://library.stritch.edu
  3. Review of the physical arrangement of the Library.

The Process

1. Define where in the Library the information you seek is (www.stritch.edu).
2. Do a subject search on Topcat.
3. Find a specific book/periodical that you wish to read.
4. Define the Library of Congress (LC) number.
5. Go to the shelf area where this number is located.

Process cont'd

6. Pull the book, if the book is not present pull other books.
7. The other books could be just as useful…they have bibliographies.
8. Take all the marked books (chapters) or periodical articles to the copy machine.
9. Use your ID card (you have 400 copies each semester. You can also put copy money on it) to access the copier.
10. Copy the cover sheet and index with the article/chapter.

Process cont'd

11. Leave the book/article at the Library (do not reshelf).
12. Three hole punch the materials, put in a large binder by subject.

Advantage:

You end up with a collection of articles/chapters that you can use throughout your program.

Quality of Periodicals

- Scholarly & Research Journals
  - In depth analysis of issues in a discipline
  - Refereed and peer reviewed
  - Qualified authors
  - Full footnoting and bibliographic indexing
  - Academically rigorous, university published

Periodicals cont'd

- Professional, Trade and Industry Journals
  - High currency and relevancy to a given industry
  - Practitioner authors, jargon based
  - Some indexing
  - Commercial and non-profit publishers

Periodicals cont'd

- Journals of Commentary & Opinion
  - Commentaries on social and political issues
  - Written for an educated audience
  - Authored by a wide range of people
  - Some citation and bibliographic referencing
  - Commercial and non-profit publishers

Periodicals cont'd

- Newspapers
  - Current and local information of interest
  - Primary source of information on historic events
  - Written for a general audience
  - Journalists
  - Rare citations
  - Commercial publishers

Periodicals cont'd

- Popular Magazines
  - Current events and short subject articles
  - Non-technical language
  - Journalists and free-lance writers
  - Rare citation
  - Commercial publishers

Elements of an Academic Research Article

- Title and Author
- Abstract - brief summary of article contents
- Introduction - states reason for research and can include literature search
- Methodology - description of research methods and analysis of data
- Results - summarization of findings
- Discussion - analysis of findings and recommendation for further research
- References

Quality of Research

Book Reference

Time Article

CHANGE AGENT

Long Tail's Tribe

HOLLYWOOD IS BUZZING WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY IDEA THAT REAL OPPORTUNITY—AND PROFIT—LIES WELL BEYOND BLOCKBUSTERS

BY JEFFREY RESSNER
LOS ANGELES

In the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles last February, some of the biggest hotshots in Hollywood sat in rapt ...ntion. Legendary music producer Quincy Jones was there at the ...ertainment Gathering, L.A.'s version of Davos, along with Peter ...r, producer of the original *Batman* movie; former Disney ...gineer Danny Hillis; and scores of other media minds. Who had them spellbound? Chris Anderson, an unassuming magazine editor, who was explaining a giant curve on an *x-y* chart, a theory that he calls "the long tail."

Coined in a 2004 article in *Wired*, his magazine, *long tail* is poised to become the next big catchphrase to change the world of business, with a book expanding the idea to be published next month. "I'm a disciple," says Guber.

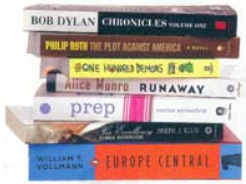
Anderson's theory is that the Internet, because it so easily offers an unlimited choice of goods to billions of people, is transforming a consumer culture based on big hits and best sellers into one that supports more idiosyncratic, specialized niche products. "Hit-driven economics is a creation of an age without enough room to carry everything for everybody," Anderson wrote. "With online distribution and retail, we are entering a world of abundance. And the differences are profound."

His curve plots popularity against inventory. At one end are the singular hits (say, *Batman*); at the other end lies the vast, untapped backlist (say, every less popular comic-book-based movie ever made). The biggest companies in all industries usually aim for blockbusters, but slide down the curve, and there are huge opportunities in everything else—the long tail. If Anderson's thesis is correct, most media and technology companies will have to do no less than rethink the core of their business.

The long tail as a theory is most persuasive in explaining how companies selling more products with lower demand can easily compete with (or even surpass) those solely dependent on hits. Amazon.com founder Jeff Bezos was the first retailer to deploy that new business model online. Amazon's virtual inventory of 3.7 million books dwarfs the typical Barnes & Noble retail store, which carries about 100,000 titles. The vast majority of Amazon's books may sell only a few thousand copies, but the 3.6 million less popular books not carried by its rival account for 25% of Amazon's total book revenues—and that percentage is rising each year.

The leverage of the long tail can give even tiny companies a chance to compete against the biggest of behemoths. A healthy 40% of sales for the online music site Rhapsody, for example, comes from esoteric tunes not found in Wal-Mart's CD bins. In some cases, the long tail turns underdogs into giant killers. Anderson's case in point: the online video retailer Netflix, which overtook the neighborhood video-rental company Blockbuster. He found that 21% of Netflix's sales came from obscure or older movies, not the blockbusters that gave the once mighty chain its name. Blockbuster, meanwhile, is struggling to come up with an online rental concept of its own.

Anderson's premise, once you accept it, is like a song you can't get out of your head: you start seeing long tails everywhere. Microbrews become the long tail



CHANGE AGENT

A LONG-TAIL PRIMER

The theory says the Web makes selling a huge variety of less popular items as lucrative as chasing the big hits

◀ **BOOKS** You won't find textbooks, print-on-demand titles or slower-selling, midlist books at most superstores. But online inventories make millions of obscure volumes available, totaling about 25% of Amazon's book revenues

▶ **MOVIES** Netflix stocks 20 times as many titles as a local Blockbuster store, and as a result, it's far less hit-centric. At Blockbuster, the top 100 movies account for 70% of sales; at Netflix, they're about 40%. That leaves room for more indies

▶ **MUSIC** Looking for a rare Björk track? Wal-Mart stores stock only about 750 of the estimated 30,000 new albums released each year. But online music sites such as iTunes, Rhapsody and Napster can sell individual songs from all of them

of beers, for example. Blogs are the long tail of journalism. Even porn has its version—the increasingly bizarre porn fetish sites that could be profitable only on the Web.

The long tail has its intellectual roots in economic ideas that date back a century. In 1906, Italian philosopher Vilfredo Pareto noted that 80% of the property in Italy is owned by 20% of the population, a formula that, much later, became known as the 80/20 rule. It has forever influenced brand management, customer service and even personnel development. Focus your attention and resources on that top 20%, which is where the best returns on investment can be found.

More recently, though, in a 2003 academic paper that Anderson says influenced his theory, three management professors looked at the 80/20 rule in reverse. They upended the belief that the Internet's main benefit to consumers would be lower prices. Instead, they suggested that greater value online came from consumers having access to a wider selection of products and services. The key for businesses hoping to capitalize on the long tail, says Carnegie Mellon's Michael D. Smith, one of the paper's authors, is to cater to "significant heterogeneity in taste." Even though a majority of us may like U2 on our MP3 players, for example, there are enough of us who enjoy string quartets or British ska to make it profitable for those who sell them all.

Most online entrepreneurs, particularly the smaller players, are living the long-tail way of life. "Savvy Web marketers already know the value and the power of the long tail," says Sharon Housley at NotePage, a Massachusetts-based firm that makes wireless-messaging software for hospitals, banks and the military. By using less popular, more focused search terms, for example, NotePage is targeting small businesses as well as FORTUNE 500 companies.

Large corporations are sliding down the tail. Television networks, for example, are having mixed success in making the long tail work in a business that revolves around discovering the next *Seinfeld*. They found a place for reruns of long-forgotten television shows, on cable channels like the Game Show Network and SoapNet. But they have not yet figured out whether they should consider YouTube, the massively popular online-video site, as their worst enemy or new best friend.

"WITH ONLINE DISTRIBUTION AND RETAIL, WE ARE ENTERING A WORLD OF ABUNDANCE." —CHRIS ANDERSON

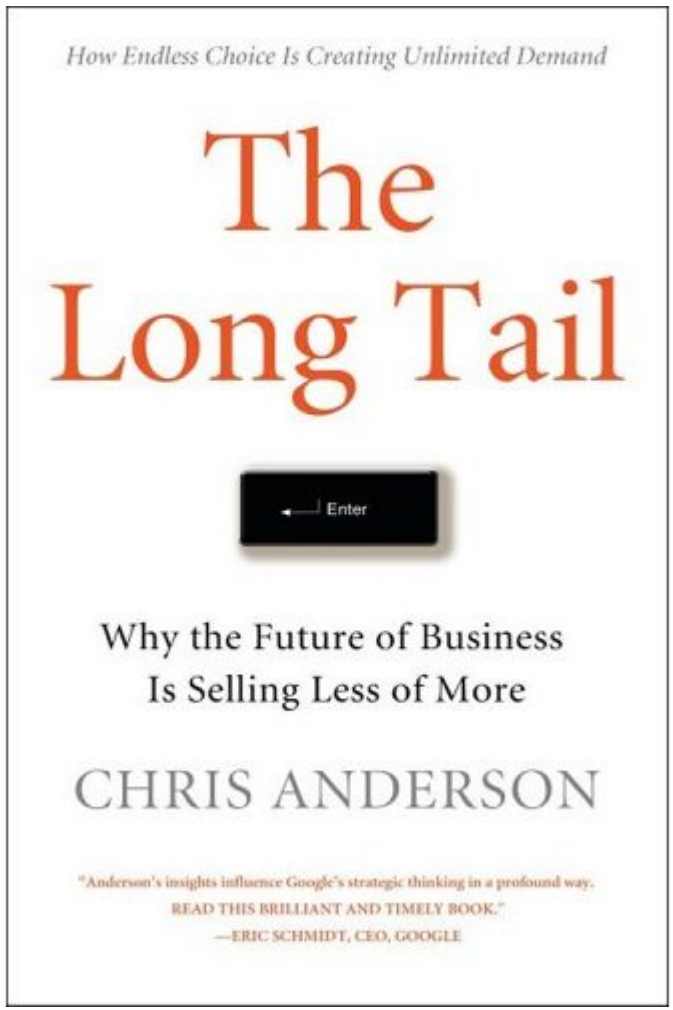
Anderson's ideas about the Web earned him disciples in Hollywood

Not every big company is convinced, however, that the long tail is relevant for business. Microsoft, which relies on monster software hits like Office, "is clearly a short-tail development house," says the company's corporate standards director, Jason Matusow. He rejects the idea that the long tail—in this case, open-source software developers—poses a threat. "People say the long tail is the perfect way to look at open-source software and understand how it's going to save the world," Matusow says. "But with 400 million users, we're enabling the long tail."

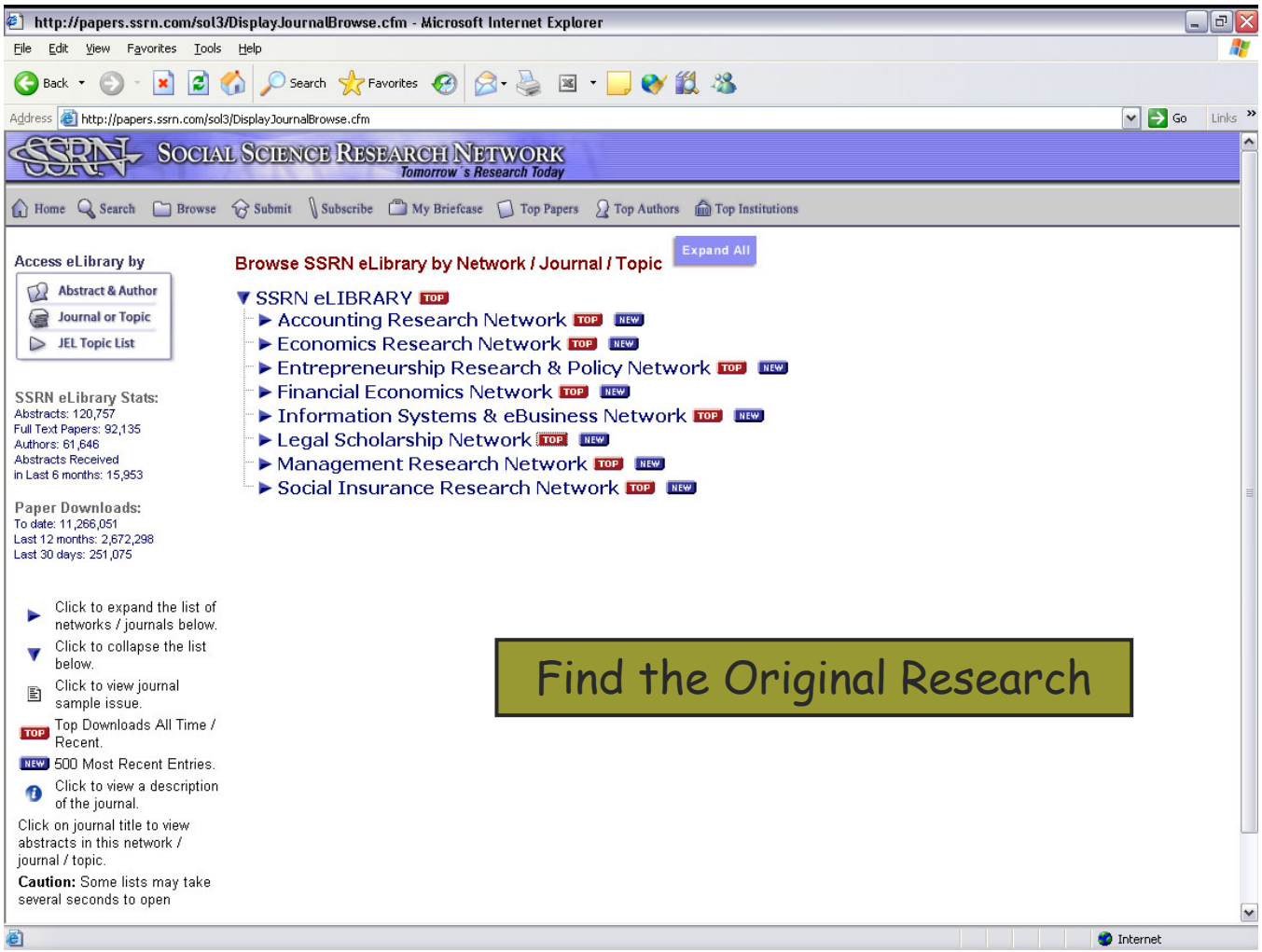
Then again, the view from the long tail depends on which end of it your product resides. Take Stephen Downes, a senior officer of Canada's National Research Council, whose arcane, overlooked blog is a classic long-tail story. "I live in the long tail," Downes said at a blogging event in Vancouver last year. And not necessarily by choice. "[Bloggers] who are in the long tail would probably rather not be part of it," he said. "They simply want to be read." As an earlier catchphrase put it, if the tail were smarter, it would wag the dog. ■

Research Quality cont'd

Read the Book



Research Quality cont'd



Research Quality cont'd

Consumer Surplus in the Digital Economy:
Estimating the Value of Increased Product Variety at Online Booksellers

Erik Brynjolfsson*, Michael D. Smith**, and Yu (Jeffrey) Hu***

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ABSTRACT

We present a framework and empirical estimates that quantify the economic impact of increased product variety made available through electronic markets. While efficiency gains from increased competition significantly enhance consumer surplus, for instance by leading to lower average selling prices, our present research shows that increased product variety made available through electronic markets can be a significantly larger source of consumer surplus gains.

One reason for increased product variety on the Internet is the ability of online retailers to catalog, recommend and provide a large number of products for sale. For example, the number of book titles available at Amazon.com is over 23 times larger than the number of books on the shelves of a typical Barnes & Noble superstore and 57 times greater than the number of books stocked in a typical large independent bookstore.

Our analysis indicates that the increased product variety of online bookstores enhanced consumer welfare by $731 million to $1.03 billion in the year 2000, which is between seven to ten times as large as the consumer welfare gain from increased competition and lower prices in this market. There may also be large welfare gains in other SKU-intensive consumer goods such as music, movies, consumer electronics, and computer software and hardware.