

The other 'i' word

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Look at them over there. They're leaders in innovation. It's written on their wall in bold typography, on their website in luxurious .gif while their LinkedIn profiles deem them thus as well. They are captains of industry, masters of the future, legends of the letter 'i'.



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But they're not, because they're trapped on the wrong side of the ravine. A hope of prospectors with all the right tools staring across at the opposing verge where the promise of gold awaits. Yet there's nowhere to cross over. No bridge in sight. Now they set up camp and study the unreachable cliff through lenses and maps and documents. New arrivals add to this find of fossickers and the established teach, tell and sell the unqualified on how to mine what's there and what to do with it once it's out. When they eventually get there, of course.

Their thoughts are innovative. Their understanding of the future is innovative. Their tools, designed to extract the gold, are innovative.

But there's no bridge.

(Pssst, there is a bridge but it's further along the cliff edge. This way, come with me.)

The bridge

Ah here we are. At the bridge. Do you see the word that's been unromantically etched into its pole over there? Yes, it's also an 'i' word. It's 'implementation'.

How many board room meetings have you sat in where ideas flow like wine in ancient Babylon? The orators orate, the strategists strategise and the whiteboard diagrams make inky promises of interfaces, models and monetisation. Then

everyone leaves as if the thinking was the work and the grand designs of innovation are left to suffer a fate not dissimilar to that of a coal that has fallen out of the fire: a slow, pulsing cool off until utterly redundant. Dead.

The challenge is that the ideation is Burning Man while the implementation is Bulwer.

Polarisation makes perfection

Innovation and implementation. The diversity is paramount. Their polarisation makes perfection. Both are needed but one is in short supply. There's only one really fat kid on this seesaw.

I don't have the time to unpack it all but, in the end, implementation is a very human oriented experience. I find in my own experience that clear communication is key and in that, the tools we use to communicate with become vitally important. One of those tools is email and so here's a horribly disguised attempt at an SEO friendly list. Keyword: email

Five tips to on using email for better implementation when prospecting for innovation gold:

1. If you've sent an email your job is not done. Pick up the phone. Momentum is everything.
2. Conversation often works better than email in driving and explaining one on one - your words and tone can often be misconstrued on screen.
3. People don't read your emails like you want them to. The devil of implementation is in the details.
4. Don't use email as much.
5. Stop trying to do everything over email. It's lazy. If it's possible, talk to people face to face, then on the phone or Skype and then email them.

ABOUT TRAVIS BUSSIAHN

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