

One of the big issues I see in gamification and many young industries is the issue of building a solution for problems that don't really exist!

"We are using a gamified solution to increase [engagement](#)".

"Awesome, why?"

"Um, because it will increase engagement..."

"Cool, but why, what problem have you identified that can only be solved by investing in gamification?"

"Um.... go away I hate you..."

This happened a lot with social media. Everyone needed to be on Twitter but had no idea why, or how to use it.

I've said it hundreds of times, gamification is **a** solution, but not always **the** solution! The point is that there has to be a need (normally, but I'll come on to that) for the solution. I always quote Big Weld from the film Robots. "See a need, fill a need".

Now, there are some exceptions. iPads for instance. No one had proven a desire or a need for tablet PC's at the time the iPad was announced. I remember many articles talking about "why would anyone need a huge phone anyway?" Some examples of articles that were around in 2010 after the initial announcement.

- <http://boingboing.net/2010/04/02/why-i-wont-buy-an-ipad-and-think-yo.html>
- <http://betanews.com/2010/01/28/12-reasons-why-i-won-t-buy-an-apple-ipad/>
- <http://betanews.com/2010/01/27/betanews-readers-say-no-to-apple-ipad/>

The iPad exemplified the notion of creating a solution that was not solving a problem anyone actually had! However, good marketing, good functionality and a little bit of the old "Steve Jobs Reality Distortion Field" and suddenly it was a hot property and arguably started the entire landslide of tablet computing. I am almost certain all those who said no in 2010 now own one - I know I do!

However, this was an exception to the rule!

Most normal humans need to identify the need and design the solution that will fill it. Just using something like gamification because other people are is a sure fire way to bump up the failure rate stats that Gartner are so keen on quoting!

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