


The image features a complex, abstract composition of overlapping, translucent, organic shapes. The shapes are primarily pointed and resemble stylized leaves or petals. The color palette is diverse, including various shades of blue (from light to deep), purple, pink, and yellow. The shapes overlap in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement. The text 'Marschallin+Sachs' is positioned in the middle-right area of the composition, overlaid on a dark purple shape.

Marschallin+Sachs

A large, multi-pointed starburst graphic in shades of yellow and light green, positioned in the upper left quadrant of the page.

What's coming at you, may be coming from you

Meatball Fulton, *The Incredible Adventures of Jack Flanders*

A large, multi-pointed starburst graphic in shades of pink and magenta, positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

Here we are now, entertain us

Kurt Cobain
Smells Like Teen Spirit

The new 800 lb gorilla

White Paper

Consumer Generated Media (CGM): the new 800 lb gorilla

In different ways, both Fulton and Cobain captured the essence of the CGM torrent better than any media theorist.

Traditional media still plays a role in brand building, setting a foundation, making announcements and reinforcing key brand messages. But if you are relying only on advertising, direct mail and your corporate Web site, you aren't taking advantage of one of the most potent marketing opportunities available: consumer generated media.

Ours is an era of a new and fast-growing form of media created by consumers: blogs, forums, discussion boards, peer-to-peer networks and opinion sites. These new media outlets are preloaded with features that give them prominence in search engine results, making them easy to find, recall and pass along.

Today, influencers are everywhere and can make personal recommendations or criticisms to friends and colleagues with a click. With 85% of consumers in the U.S. and Europe saying they believe word-of-mouth recommendations to be more trustworthy than corporate generated content,¹ this passed along advice is very powerful.

¹“Brand Management: Tried and Trusted Branding,” *Brand Strategy*, September 14, 2006, Page 36



87%
of the youth
market use the
Internet,
44% are online
every day,
65% use
instant
messaging

(BusinessWeek)

Most
18 to 34
year olds
multitask:
browsing,
comparing,
sharing

(Pew Foundation)

75% of Internet
users access with
file sharing, online
media and IM,
not the browser

(AdWeek)

94% of adult
American Internet
users use search
engines to find
information;
88% to find Web
sites, 95% to
research purchases

(Pew Foundation)

A recent study² showed that, for some of the BusinessWeek 100 Most Valuable Brands, up to 70% of the results on popular search engines lead to pages that are owned by nontraditional (and noncompany) sources. So it's possible that consumers could make a decision on whether or not to buy a brand without ever seeing company generated messages.

Why is CGM important?

CGM is the outpouring of personal preferences, opinions, endorsements and criticism on millions of blogs, social networks, game environments, communities, personal publishing sites, diaries, homemade media products and pass along units. CGM is:

- considered highly credible by consumers
 - everywhere — it can be accessed by a Web browser, e-mail inbox, newsreader, desktop applications, cell phone screens, games consoles
 - fresh, dynamic and compelling
 - self-generating with inbuilt viral/word-of-mouth hooks
 - preferred by search engines
- and
- . . . probably being used by your competitors

²The study was conducted in October 2005 by EnterpriseMediaPartners.net

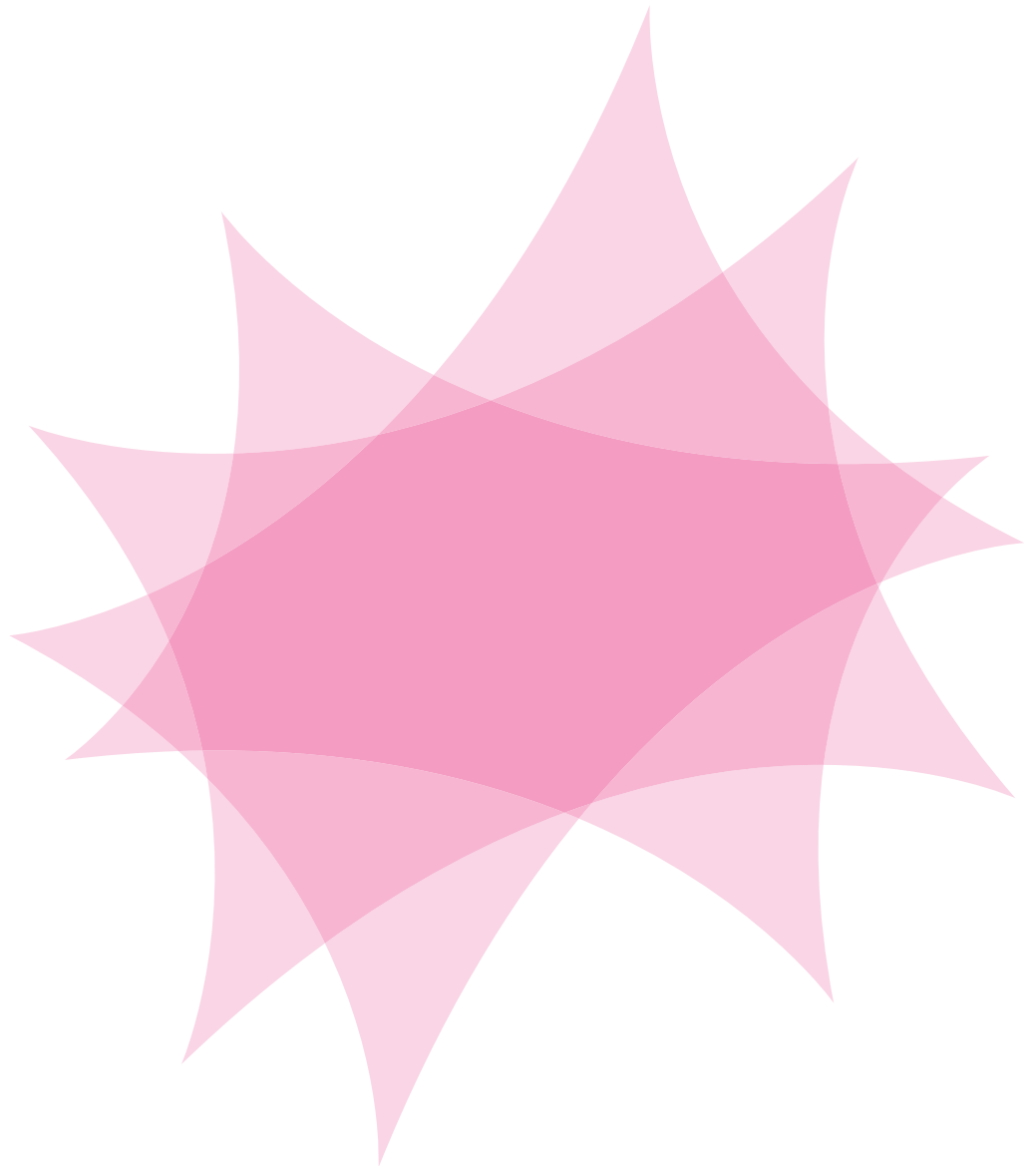
75% of search engine users never scroll beyond the first page of results; virtually none scroll past the top 30 search listings
(Jupiter Research)

92% of journalists use search engines to research stories, 50% to track blogs
(Pew Foundation)

75% of surfers type site name into search bar not URL bar
(EnterpriseMediaPartners.net)

Badly architected content on online retail sites undersells by up to 50%
(Forrester)

Employees spend 35% of their time looking for information online
(CIO Working Council)



Key online brand touchpoints

CGM is tailor-made to be indexed by search engines, making it easy to find and pass along. Your search engine results have become your shelf space and media space. Bottom line: they affect your sales and, ultimately, have a large role in defining and building your brand.

Beyond search, it is important that your company and products be positioned in an environment conducive to their lifestyle profiles and messages. This new editorial environment serves as a highly influential endorsement platform precisely because it is consumer-generated, with its own venues, experts, protocols and practices.

In this era of consumer choice, it is becoming essential to:

- maximize search engine visibility
- subtly align your brand with topical discussion and events
- create content and context
- attract a self-selecting target audience

Is your brand optimized for CMG?

- Is your brand a player in the new consumer dynamics driven by social networks, RSS feeds, blogs, gaming, cell phone video, instant messaging...
- Every brand has different needs and resources. Given your available resources, have you taken full advantage of the online communications possibilities for your brand?

xanga.com
THE VIDEO COMMUNITY

V C A M
GET ACCESS.
GET CREATIVE.
GET ON TV.
GET PAID.

skype

match.com



del.icio.us
social bookmarking

DEMOCRACY
THE WAY WE WATCH THE TV NEWS

classmates.com

YAHOO! 360°



Steve Garfield's
Video Blog

flickr™

Blogger™

current

HOME TV NETWORK WATCH & VOTE MAKE VIDEO & ADS COMMUNITY BLOG

Google

JOI ITO

myspace®
a place for friends

YouTube
Broadcast Yourself™

MoBaILA
MOBILE MEDIA



A brand that is absent from or poorly perceived in the new channels — where customers socialize, get information and look for entertainment — is making a profound statement.

- Are your awareness programs positioning your brand for consumer word-of-mouth success?
- Are you building lifestyle brands with online media that are integral to the information and entertainment preferences of today's consumers?
- Do you know what consumers are talking about online, what their needs are, what they feel is important, what they are hearing and from whom? Does your brand strategy take into consideration the CGM conversation?
- Are your search engine efforts working for brand awareness, reputation management, and customer acquisition and retention?

Lack of presence in CGM is a profound brand statement

A brand that is absent from or poorly perceived in the new channels — where customers socialize, get information and look for entertainment — is making a profound statement.

Will a potential customer know about your product or become interested in it if they don't hear it enthusiastically discussed by others in their interest groups? How will a customer buy the product if they can't find it? Will your brand seem relevant to today's customers, media, potential employees and partners if it doesn't have a powerful presence in this new media universe?

To find out how "fit" your brand is for CGM and word-of-mouth, take the quick test at our Web site: www.marsachs.com/cgm



How Marschallin+Sachs can help

Online and traditional marketing media are converging. Marschallin+Sachs has partnered with an experienced Web enterprise media consulting firm to help you navigate this exciting but uncertain terrain. We'll work with you to devise:

- A brand strategy for the CGM arena, one that brings people to you. In a world of consumer choice, customer-pull beats sales-push.
- A brand experience that delivers on customer expectations, one they'll want to join (not just "buy") and tell their friends and colleagues about.
- An affinity marketing program that situates related products and services alongside your brand.
- Branded technology that delivers on your brand proposition and recognizes your audiences' content and communications preferences.

Marschallin+Sachs helps brands capitalize on opportunities presented by rapidly growing, constantly morphing consumer generate media.

Marschallin+Sachs CGM Services

- benchmarking the penetration of your **brand presence** by consumer generated media
- advising on corporate and **brand initiatives** to ensure you're heard in the CGM world and the right messages are delivered
- selecting online applications and pass along content units that are right for your **brand values**
- creating and optimizing content and community properties that give your **brand visibility**
- establishing **brand pathways** from contact and relationship through sale and care
- monitoring your **brand inclusion** in CGM channels and venues

Marschallin+Sachs is a full-service brand communications agency. Our services include: full corporate branding programs from research through implementation, traditional marketing materials, and electronic communications from Web sites to online advertising and pass along campaigns.

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