

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO CHANGE

FAST COMPANY

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON? | NOVEMBER 2000

SPECIAL
ISSUE

WHO'S FAST

**NEW GAME,
NEW STARS**

16 COMPANY BUILDERS,
E-VANGELISTS,
TEACHERS & MAVERICKS
SHOW YOU HOW TO WIN

2001

PLUS

Creative Tension—Carnig
Invents the Future

The Most Downloaded
Dude in the World

Boing! Can Nike
Bounce Back?

The Real [Internet] Deal

Will Web Customers
Ever Pay?

Are Brands Out of Hand?





FC:LIVE

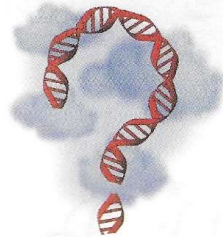
Forum Follow-Up

KOA ORA, KEVIN! THAT MEANS "WELL DONE, KEVIN!"

There is an old Maori proverb that says, "The most important thing is people, people, people." That's what "trustmarking" is all about. What Kevin Roberts calls "lovemarking" is found in all religions; it's found in all ethnic affiliations; it's even found at PTA meetings. Why are people willing to die for a religion, or for some other cause? Or, on a more basic level, why do people invest time and money in building a sandbox for preschoolers, even when their own child will use it for just two short years? Simply put, they do these things because of lovemarking.

Thanks for bringing us back to the true spirit of life: love.

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YOUR INTERVIEW WITH GENETICIST CRAIG VENTER WAS insightful, but there are still many questions that need to be answered about human genes ("The Secret of Life," September 2000). Even if we knew how all of our genes function (which we don't), and even if we discovered the inner secrets of every protein (which we haven't), we still wouldn't understand every disease. As Venter himself noted at a recent media conference, who we are and which diseases we develop derive from a complex interaction between our genes and our surroundings.

EVERY CONFERENCE PROVIDES ITS attendees with at least a few inspiring ideas or useful tips. Yet even the best conference experience is all too quickly forgotten—its impact all too easily erased by the whirlwind of everyday work.

To combat that kind of postevent amnesia, Tony Loyd follows what he calls the "one-thing rule": "When I go to an event, I feel it's worthwhile if I can walk away with one thing that I didn't know before," explains Loyd, 41, a manager of learning technology at Deere & Co. He put that rule into practice when he attended a Future Forum held in Chicago last May. The forum, called "Learning and Speed in the New Economy," was cosponsored by FAST COMPANY and Saba Software Inc., a provider of e-learning infrastructure.

Before the event, Loyd was having a hard time gaining support for a major technology initiative. "I was beginning to doubt my own idea," he says. "When I shared the idea, people would listen intently, but when I said, 'We'll roll out a total solution by July 2001'—more than a year later—their eyes would glaze over."

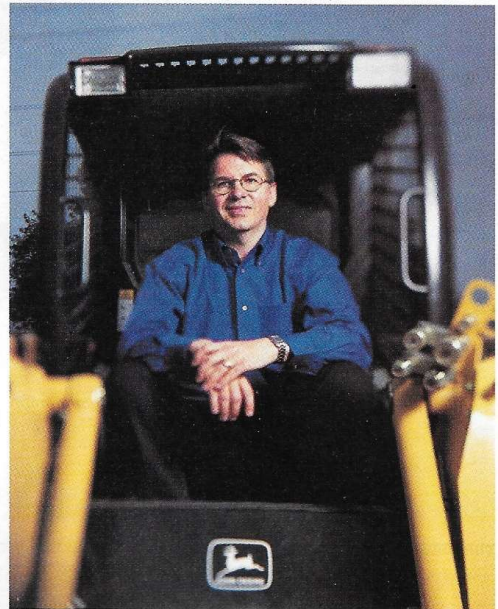
Then he heard J. Neil Weintraut speak at the Future Forum. Weintraut, a general partner at 21st Century Internet Venture Partners, outlined what he looks for in a business plan. "He said that he focuses on three things," recalls Loyd. "First, the scream factor: How loud is the marketplace screaming for this product or service? Second, the time-to-market factor: Will this product take more than four months to

reach its market? That number is changing all the time; a month from now, it could be even smaller. And third, the team."

The next morning, the significance of Weintraut's insight really hit home. Says Loyd: "I asked myself, 'What are the four basic features that our customers are truly screaming for? And can we deliver this project in four months?'" After filling in the blanks on the first question, he concluded that the answer to the second question was a resounding "Yes." [He had no doubts about point three—his team.]

By focusing on what was needed most and what could be done fastest, Loyd not only gained budgetary approval but also energized his team and even added new people to his department. "We kicked up dust and raised holy hell. And we loved it!" says Loyd.

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DARRELL EAGER