

VOMO - The Value Of Missing Out

You know the feeling as you watch your friends doing something online or at an event which you're witnessing from afar. You get that terrible feeling where you really wish you were there to experience it first hand. We call this FOMO which stands for Fear Of Missing Out. The problem with FOMO (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear_of_missing_out) is...well there are actually a lot of problems with FOMO including:

- **FOMO is manufactured and self-fulfilling** - the more you get among a large crowd and see the events and learning opportunities then the more you may find yourself enjoying the addiction of being close to it which means taking time and attention from other things
- **FOMO creates an unhealthy sense of a lack of belonging** - there is an actual psychological impact when people are missing the crowd which includes increased stress, feeling of a lack of belonging and importance, and that can trigger other negative behaviours and feelings
- **FOMO consumes your time, attention, and reduces focus on what you are in front of** - you may be right in the crowd of people while searching out your social media feed to see what's next and missing out on key personal interactions which were the original reason you attended these events
- **Being there is not going to fix FOMO...because it comes back** - FOMO is a permanent condition until you learn to break the habit and realize how to balance being at events and places with being effective at not being at them
- **You can't be everywhere at once** - while you're trying to be everywhere you find yourself not even successfully being where you are at the moment and this can trigger an almost paralyzing effect where you lose attention, increase stress, and the list goes on with the potential negative psychological effects

What's the solution? It's actually very easy once you make the choice to embrace not just being outside of the event but to actually detach from the feeling of loss from not being there.

There was discussion about VOMO on the podcast in Episode 71 with Ethan Banks here: <https://discoposse.com/2019/03/22/podcast-episode-71-productivity-hacks-and-deep-work-with-ethan-banks-ecbanks-of-the-packet-pushers/>

Enter VOMO - The Value Of Missing Out

In the early part of my foray into the tech community I watched the adventures being chronicled on Twitter and wanted so eagerly to be a part of the activity. Having a chance to be there live was finally a chance to experience it first hand. It was exhilarating. There was always little micro-gatherings at the event and party opportunities for after-hours catch up with people from all around the world who I had followed on Twitter for all of those years.

Then I realized what was happening. The more I was seeking the group and they sought me, the more I felt that I was missing another part of the same event. I started to notice that more people were 30 minutes into their chat and already deciding (with faces down in their phones) where to go next to do something else. But...but...we are all right here?!

They were in the midst of the event and they still had FOMO. I was talking to the top of people's heads as they put their faces downwards into their Twitter timeline and DMs looking for where

everyone else was who was at the event. There was all this weird back-channel discussion and inside joke exchange which seemed fun at first and then started to hit me that they weren't even experiencing where they were and they were on the way to the next place where they would not be in the moment either.

So, I said "I'll see you at the next" and headed back for a long quiet walk to the hotel. It was glorious. I was seeing the same thing on Twitter already and I got a chance to unwind and relax. The relaxation opened up my creativity and I wrote a blog or two for the following day's news and announcements. I had discovered the value of missing out on the real-time event for a small part of the evening.

VOMO for Entire Events

The next battle we fight is missing the event altogether. As a career technology evangelist who is paid to be in the know on technology, trends, and behaviours, I have a need to be amongst the people who use technology every day. There is seemingly no better place than in the heart of a tech event, right? I was live-blogging keynotes from the community lounges and sharing my insights and then suddenly realized that I could do a lot of that remotely as well. I really enjoy the event experience, but what happens when you have to be at 4 different one-week events in a year and be away from family and your day-to-day activities?

My personal learning was that I could be nearly as effective from afar as I could be right on the floor at the event unless I had specific meetings or locally-accessible things that needed a hands-on touch. This led me to start blogging more and more for events I was not at and these often got more readership because I was offering a truly uninterrupted view and was not caught up in the activity so I had more time and attention to put to it.

In the same way that I had detached partially and gotten work done before, I was now able to wholly miss the in-person event and be as effective or sometimes more effective at contributing to that event and to the work I did related to it. I had expanded my ability to find the Value Of Missing Out.

VOMO is Freedom to Detach and Still be Connected in Your Chosen Way

The reason that I needed to experience VOMO was that there were literally multiple events at the same time in different parts of the country where each was as important as the other. Learning to experience them without needing to be there was a necessity. Doing so also unlocked time, creativity, and reduced the stress levels of feeling like something was being missed.

VOMO is about freedom to experience things in your way and to be guilt-free and attention-rich. The more I travel to events the more I find myself doing some partial VOMO to get really productive work done. It's not that we don't enjoy meeting lots of friends and our peers in the community. The trick is finding the balance of getting what you want out of the event without it taking something out of you. Freedom is a wonderful thing.

I hope that you experience some VOMO soon and enjoy it as much as I do. Remember our list at the top and how this affects us. Time to take back your freedom and enjoy the Value Of Missing Out.

[Annual Top vBlog Results Show - On-Demand recording available!](#)

With another great year of working with Eric Siebert and the community team including John Troyer and Angelo Luciani, we have the final results of the top 25 vBlogs online!

The show was recorded and broadcast live and can be viewed on-demand here for you anytime. Congratulations to all of the participants in the program, all of the great content creators, and many exiting moves up the ranks by people who have earned a spot among their peers and their readers as top-level bloggers.

[IBM Think 2019 - Dear Tech: We Need to Talk](#)

DISCLOSURE: IBM provided me with a complimentary conference pass as part of a social media influencer program. My travel to the event was covered by my team at Turbonomic. All opinions within this blog are mine and do not derive from any specific partner relationship or insider information. Thank you to the IBM Canada team for inviting me to the event. These are my notes from the Chairman's Keynote on Tuesday February 12th.

IBM Think 2019 Keynote - Day 1 Opener with Ginni Rometty

It's worth mentioning from the start that Ginni is a compelling speaker, and one of the most widely-respected leaders in the technology industry. She led with providing the keynote room with an idea of themes that will be prevalent throughout the event which is happening in San Francisco from February 11th-15th. There is a definite keynote feel to the discussion and the content is centered around customer stories and business outcomes.

There were some product mentions due to the announcements that launched this week including these as a sampler:

- **Watson Anywhere** - On-Premises, any cloud, private, public - the most open and scalable AI for business - <https://www.ibm.com/blogs/think/2019/02/enabling-watson-anywhere/>
- **IBM Business Automation with Watson** - business process and workflow with "moments of intelligence" or also described as digital and AI with guardrails of policy - <https://www.ibm.com/automation/business>
- **IBM Hyper Protect** - Consistent security and management across hybrid platforms. <https://www.ibm.com/cloud/hyper-protect-services>

Digital Reinvention versus Digital Transformation

I'm a fan of the change from "transformation" to "reinvention" in describing the changes. This may

seem small and just a single word, but it's important to the way things are actually playing out in the industry. Ginni described the state of digital reinvention as happening in 2 chapters:

- **Chapter 1** - Discovery and first attempts with some missteps and learnings
- **Chapter 2** - Enterprise-driven digital reinvention - It's cloud, it's hybrid

Many have deployed in new ways. new apps.. Often described as "random acts of digital". This did not get to the result we, as an industry, may have hoped. What it did do as part of Chapter 1 in the digital reinvention was to let us know how we can do things so that when the planning and execution are designed for this next chapter that we have a better result and clear understanding of the outcome.

Five Lessons Learned scaling Digital and AI

Another interesting series of points that Ginni described was the 5 lessons learned by organizations scaling digital projects and the addition of AI. These 5 stages play out to a final result that achieves the desired business outcome and moves the organization through a natural evolution to get there.

1. **Outside-In** - change all the customer experience apps
2. **Inside-Out** - workflow, data, and driving change. Modernizing core apps
3. **Business platform to connect these two** - AI-infused workflows to empower people using these apps
4. **AI platform is the new lifecycle manager** - AI powering and building AI
5. **No AI with out IA** - Information Architecture is a must-have

Research in AI is being done by IBM in three distinct coverage areas.

- **Core AI** - Getting AI to learn with less data (transfer learning or "one-shot" learning)
- **Trusted AI** - fairness, explainability, robustness, and the fully lifecycle
- **Scaling AI** - This is AI to automate AI being shown in portions with Watson Studio today

There was also clear segmentation in what Ginni describes as the four pillars of digital reinvention that are prevalent in the keynote:

- **Digital & AI** - this combination is proving to be the key to the reinvention
- **Hybrid is the baseline** - The proof is playing out in the market
- **Mission-Critical Apps** - This is the largest second and third order effect on outcomes
- **Trust and Responsible Stewardship** - Trust is going to be a pre-condition for all the great technologies we are talking about (blockchain, 5G, services, networking)

As far as the hybrid numbers, there was mention of the average distribution of public/private infrastructure as 40/60 private versus public with the reverse for regulated industries at 40/60. It is also typical to find 5 clouds involved including private and public in most environments at reasonable scale.

Customer stories from the keynote

Geico - Greg Kalinsky

Using Watson to interact with the call center. The story was very cool, but one that you can probably read elsewhere. The real value I drew from the discussion was the proof on how hybrid is the reality, data is a key first layer in movement. The theme that was called out here strongly was the fact that these are mission-critical

Leadership lesson in adopting AI and taking on digital: "The opportunity may appear to you to be obvious, but folks don't like to change and you really have to work together to demonstrate the differentiation and how your enterprise will use technology to change the customer experience. "

Hyundai Finance - Ted Chung

Ted's story is not unlike that of The Phoenix Project. Brought into a losing business that was destined for failure and now turned that into a rebrand and transformation of products and the core business, including the technology. Ted's story took an obvious move towards blockchain and AI which is more than just a buzzword festival in this case as he and the team actually has proven experience of an active use-case. Very cool.

Through digital reinvention and process and business reinvention, they've achieved less than 10% turnover rate of customers. The focus again is on customer experience. The Hyundai choice was to use an AI-driven customer interaction system with Watson.

Leadership tip: "It's coming. You cannot take 2 years testing or pioneering something new."

Jim Whitehurst - CEO Red Hat

Jim's story of building up Red Hat to what would become a 33 Billion dollar acquisition by IBM and one of the most powerful open source companies in the industry (if not the most powerful by most measures). I'm a fan of Jim's management style, his company's approach, and the drive of open source as a commercially-viable model without sacrificing the value of both the open community or the enterprise value.

It was a great discussion between Jim and Ginni that touched on how the future of open at IBM and Red Hat together is also now becoming deeply involved in the full IBM portfolio. It will be exciting to see how it plays out in the next couple of years.

Kaiser Permanente - Bernard Tyson

If you spend a little time online, you can find Bernard Tyson sharing lots of very helpful guidance and lessons on disrupting health care with the use of technology. If you choose any story that shows the difficulty of change yet the profound capability to affect a positive outcome, healthcare highlights both the challenges and the benefit.

Moving healthcare from "you come to us" to "bringing healthcare to you" has been driven by incredible shifts in technology and the advent of networks, AI, and ML. There are so many great stories that Bernard has shared over the years so I recommend you searching out his content.

Bernard and his team were early adopters of cloud which he himself recalled on stage as having no idea of when first exploring it. He's also a great speaker and story teller as well as a proven leader. Leadership lesson: "It's a journey. We have to embrace this new reality."... "We are enabled in ways we could never imagine by technology"

AT&T - John Donovan

"Let's move everything to the cloud" was the first tactic that was used with a lot of the AT&T systems. They took legacy systems and transformed them to new deployment methodologies which trained the teams for dealing with massive process and application transformation plus the availability of new services. This triggered a move to step back and re-architect away from efficiency to effectiveness.

John brought up content that really should be baseline for any application architect, enterprise architect, and CIO together. The core of changing the way they do technology as a business while first evaluation "why" they need to do it. Like Simon Sinek says,,: start with why.

Other Quotes worth mentioning

"Skills are going to matter as much or more than a degree" - Ginni Rometty

"Being trusted means to prepare society to live and work in this age" - Ginni Rometty

"AI, like any technology, jobs are going to come, jobs are going to go. This will change 100% of jobs." - Ginni Rometty

Quick Summary

The event is exciting, the conversations are great. I'll bring more content to the podcast and in some blogs as I dive into coding sessions and some other key areas of the event. It's a lot to take and hopefully you find these little updates helpful!

Fire versus Rage: Motivation in Rejection

What motivates you? That questions asked all the time when you read self-help guides or are in discussions about finding what your future thing to do is. What is more interesting to me is what motivates you in the hardest moments.

A Personal View of Motivation in Rejection

When I was in Grade 5 I was in an enriched learning program. The bonus learning program meant that a handful of students get to hang out in the library for 4 hours a week rather than traditional classroom learning. We did things like logic puzzles, learned the periodic table, and studied things that were outside the normal curriculum.

The challenge at one point was to learn the greek alphabet and be able to recite any letter from flash cards as practice with the goal of reciting the greek alphabet from Alpha to Omega from memory in just one week. Did I mention I'm also dyslexic? I struggled more than normal on certain tasks and was also a little on the lazy side (still am). End result is that I got three quarters through the alphabet and mixed up order of letters twice. What was the punishment? Back to regular class and pulled from the program because of "lack of commitment".

Rejection sucks, now what?

I remember the pain it created. I was torn up inside about why I let myself miss out on this opportunity. That was an important part of dealing with it. I didn't blame anyone. I was just upset that I missed an opportunity that I knew I could do. So, now what would I do about this?

The next day I came in to the teacher (Mr. Fitton...I still remember how you motivated me) and I asked "can i have a quick discussion with you?". He very kindly said yes, and I recited the alphabet from end to end without missing a beat. I then wrote it on the paper while saying it and explained that it was writing it over and over again that helped me learn, more than the flash cards.

End result: I was back in the program and we then spent the next few weeks of enriched program time studying the effect of learning for short, medium, and long-term memory and memory training techniques.

Fire versus Rage: Thank you, Jason Fried and Tim Ferriss

Listening to the Tim Ferriss podcast recently with Jason Fried brought this moment to light again for me. Jason Fried, co-founder of Basecamp, developer, and author, shared stories of his youth and how when he was rejected from a development award that it didn't create rage for him, but it created fire. The difference is important.

Rage is reactive, and spiteful. It's the same emotion that is usually associated with blame. The

world isn't out to get you. Interactions you see every day on social media proves that people are possessed with a little too much rage sometimes as they continuously seek opportunities to be offended and to initiate a blame game. Motivation by rage is unhealthy.

I remember this from many years ago in talk radio and there was a lot of ire about Howard Stern. Love him or hate him, what was interesting was this:

Researcher: The average radio listener listens for eighteen minutes a day. The average Howard Stern fan listens for - are you ready for this? - an hour and twenty minutes.

Kenny: How could this be?

Researcher: Answer most commonly given: "I want to see what he'll say next."

Kenny: : All right, fine. But what about the people who hate Stern?

Researcher: Good point. The average Stern hater listens for two and a half hours a day.

Kenny: : But... if they hate him, why do they listen?

Researcher: Most common answer: "I want to see what he'll say next."

There's some gold in there. Much of today's time for people is being spent rage-listening or rage-watching or rage-reading news and social media. Not healthy.

Fire, on the other hand, is about taking that rejection or failure and finding a truly self-initiated motivation to not let that negative experience hold you back. If anything, it should propel you forward!!

I highly encourage you to listen to the podcast which can be found here: <https://tim.blog/2018/07/23/jason-fried/>

This is a great motivator and a reminder of how everyone learns and evolves differently. What makes us able to help each other is not how things are when they go well, but how we react when things are bad. My most powerful forward-moving moments have been propelled by harsh lessons which could have easily taken me off my path. I chose to use that motivation to create my fire to drive getting past it.

Find your fire, and stop with the rage.