

DATAWATCH

THE AVERAGE SALARY FOR A JOB ADVERTISED IN THE UK IS £31,290 A YEAR
Source: AllTheTopBananas.com,

BIZWORDS

Touching times

Tony Thorne on 'superpoking' and other coinages

Bizword of the year for 2007 (if we set aside the all-too-familiar **sub-prime**, **turbulence** and **turmoil**) has got to be **superpoking**. Or perhaps **hikkuping** or **microblogging**. Or could a case be made for a bland, nondescript, familiar word such as **friend**?

All these come from the new jargon of **social media channels**: **microblogging** makes use of SMS, while Facebook, MySpace and StumbleUpon allow contacts (aka **friends**) to network, display themselves, flirt and tease online. **Wiki**-based **apps**, video-sharing and bookmarking sites such as YouTube and del.icio.us are part of the same **Web 2.0** trend. In the trademarked jargon, to **superpoke** is to grab a friend's attention, a **hikkup** is an anonymous personal question or comment.

What can seem disturbing and novel to outsiders is the disregard for privacy and exhibitionism on **social networking sites**. Already they have been used by educational institutions to punish students for misdemeanours revealed online, by the press to dig dirt on celebrities' children, and by entertainment and retail agents for covert PR, **data-mining** and **message harvesting**.



More and more of the developers whom Facebook etc allow on to their platforms are wanting to **monetise** their innovative **apps**, and commercialising these **non-traditional environments** is a priority for service providers and marketers of emergent technologies in particular.

While cultural commentators and marketing strategists

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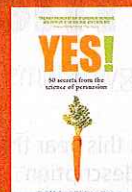
pontificate, it's interesting to see what the users of social media themselves are saying. The most radical have no problem with total disclosure, even embrace it as an ideal: their buzzwords are **personal visibility**, **hyperconnectivity** and the **transparent society**. But many more **profilers** point

out that they do in fact invoke the privacy settings, adding that their electronic networking is just an extension of **IRL** (in real life) socialising. They also opine that what they get up to online today doesn't necessarily dictate their future consumer behaviour.

The buzzword that is lurking in the background is **yooof**, and the **yooof market** (as it is seriously designated these days) is the holy grail that **lifecasting**, **me-media**, etc seem to offer access to. A cynic might point out three things: that 39 per cent of users are over 35, that it's not a **demographic** but myriad **microniches**, and that the under-25 sector doesn't even punch its weight economically. In a **mature economy** it's the **boomers** who wield 80 per cent of the spending power.

Tony Thorne is author of *Shoot the Puppy* (Penguin, £7.99)

BOOK REVIEW



YES! 50 Secrets from the Science of Persuasion
Noah Goldstein,
Steve Martin and
Robert Cialdini
(Profile, £8.99)

THE SCIENCE OF PERSUASION? WHAT'S THAT EXACTLY?
It's psychology, in a word. The book looks at the different ways we subconsciously make decisions and demonstrates how even very simple changes in strategy can reap huge rewards.

AND WHO ARE THE PEOPLE TELLING US ABOUT IT?
Robert Cialdini is a professor of psychology and marketing in the US and is apparently the world's most quoted expert in the field of influence and persuasion. He's also advised 10 Downing Street. Noah Goldstein is an academic in Chicago, and Steve Martin is a UK-based business author.

AND WHAT CAN WE LEARN?
Loads. The book is a treasure trove of information. Unlike a lot of business books, this one is based on real scientific research and much of it is intriguing. Did you know, for instance, that our own names can influence the type of career we choose to pursue or where we decide to live? For instance, a man called Dennis is statistically more likely to become a dentist than someone with a name that doesn't sound like 'dentist'. And people called Florence are disproportionately likely to move to Florida. Amazing.

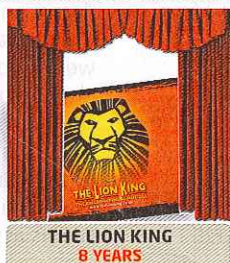
WHAT'S THE VERDICT?
Yes! is a fascinating read and offers countless insights into the way consumers behave. The perfect Christmas present for any businessman or businesswoman.

BUSINESS LIFE RATING: ★★★★★

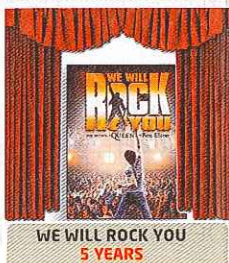
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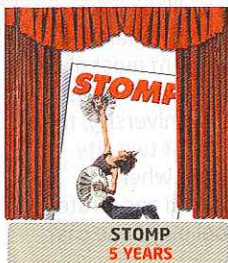
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STOMP
5 YEARS