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Text Messaging Can Dramatically Improve Your Marketing Efforts

By Daniel Burrus, CEO of Burrus Research

In recent years, text messaging has become a major part of how we communicate. Recent surveys find that 60% of people worldwide are active texters, with over 193,000 text messages sent every second. In fact, texting is the number one most used data service in the world. So if you're not using text messaging to market your business, now is the time to get started.

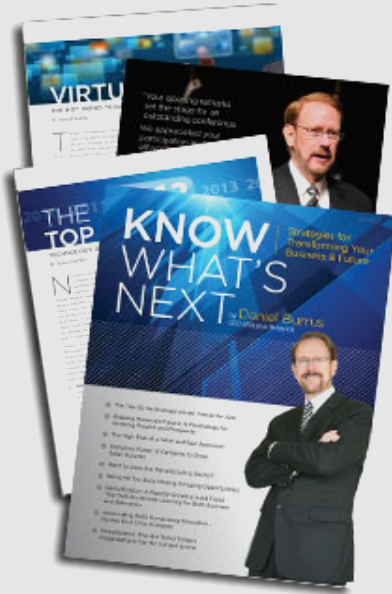
In many respects, text marketing is even better than email marketing. The latest IBM research shows that 90 percent of email marketing goes unopened and unread. Most business owners and marketing department executives have experienced this firsthand. So in order for your email campaign to work, you have to send out a lot of messages.

However, the opposite is true for text marketing in that 90 percent of text messages get read and acted on. That's a huge response rate. But before we go any further, let's make one thing perfectly clear: Successful email marketing strategies will not work for text messaging! So even though text marketing is the new marketing hotspot, you have to use the tool correctly.

THREE KEYS TO MAKING TEXT MARKETING WORK

GET PERMISSION FIRST: Text marketing isn't like other marketing techniques you've used in the past, so you can't treat it like email or print advertising. Since this is permission based marketing, the first step is to get people to agree to receive your texts. Why would anyone do that? Because you're offering them something they value, not just a blatant ad.

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For example, at the end of all my presentations, radio and television interviews, and on my print and online marketing materials, I promote the following: “Text Burrus to 99000 for a special handout and access to valuable resources on this subject.” When people do that, they immediately receive a text message from me that welcomes them and includes links to my mobile web app, handouts, and anything else of value I decide to offer that month. Since the people initiating the text are receiving something they want, they all give me permission to text them again, and they install the app I send them on their smart phone... and they use it.

TECHNOLOGY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Alternative To Lithium Batteries

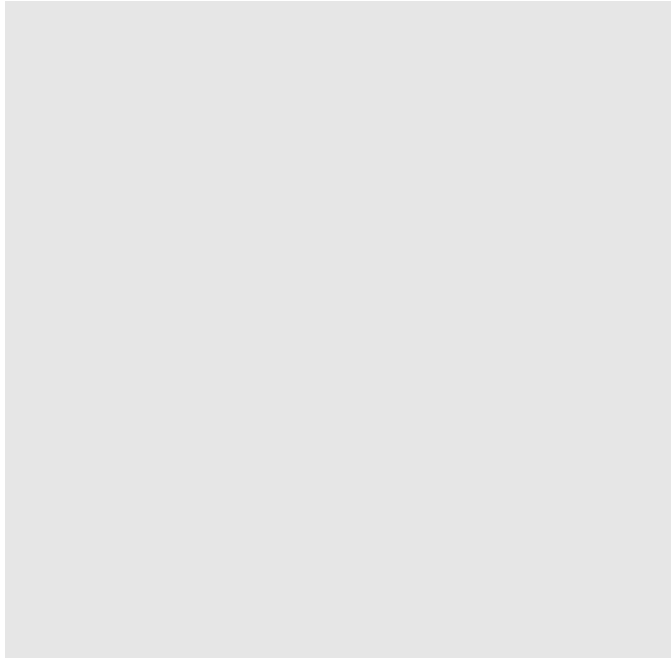
Japanese researchers recently unveiled a new battery that utilizes sodium-based electrodes, a technology that could provide a cheaper and safer alternative to lithium ion and other types of batteries for use in hybrid vehicles and other applications.

Unlike lithium, which must be imported, sodium is readily available in seawater, greatly reducing cost. And when the sulfide glass-ceramic electrolyte is incorporated into a sodium sulfur design, the battery can be operated at room temperature, making it safer than traditional rechargeable batteries.

Further research is planned to optimize the electrolyte composition and electrode design, prior to commercialization of the new technology.

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252-1161**; Web site: www.osakafu-u.ac.jp/english

Multi-Tasking Helper



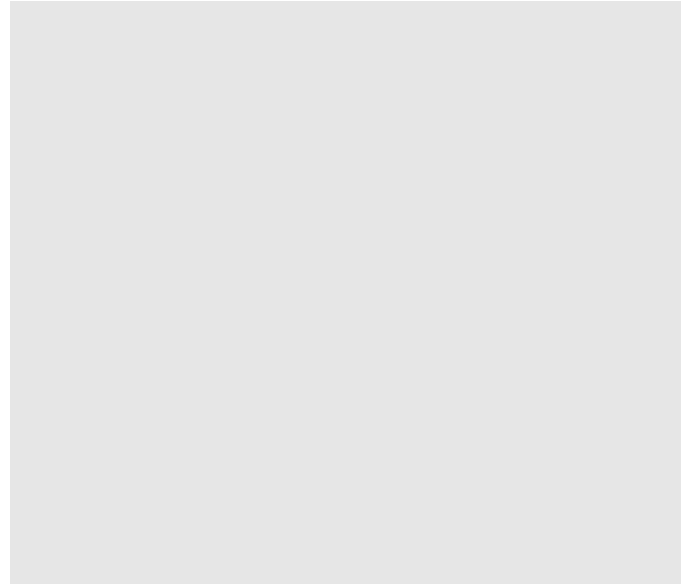
A new brain-computer interface may someday enable your computer to monitor your brain activity and take over certain tasks when you become overburdened. Called Brain put, the system uses functional near infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) to analyze brain signals and determine when a person is multitasking.

Currently, a sensor is strapped to the user's forehead to track activity in the prefrontal cortex – the part of the brain that is involved in high level processing. By isolating patterns of activity and developing algorithms based on them, the system can detect when a specific type of multitasking (known as branching) is taking place, and signal the computer to take on some of the work.

Such a device could be used to help distracted drivers or improve performance in individuals who regularly juggle multiple tasks at one time.

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Laser-Powered Video



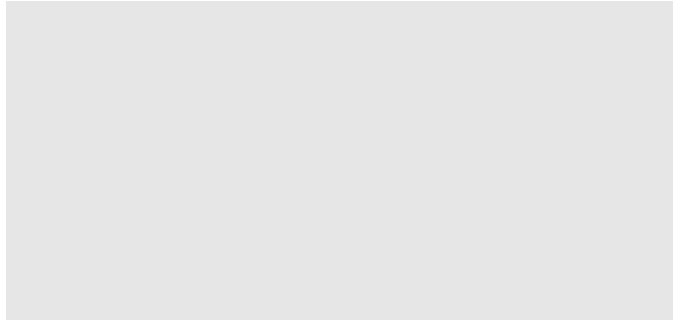
Because their light is very bright, lasers are considered to be an attractive alternative to LEDs or bulbs for illumination and imaging. One drawback, however, is the speckling pattern that lasers produce when they strike a screen or other surface.

Speckling occurs because of a property called coherence, meaning that the light waves are perfectly aligned as they are reflected off of mirrors at either end of the laser. But when they hit air, they encounter turbulence, causing the waves to interfere with each other and creating shifting patterns of light and dark.

Now, a team of researchers has created a low-coherence laser in which the light waves are reflected off of random particles suspended in a fluid. The result is a laser image that is speckle-free. While reducing the coherence does affect the laser's ability to project over long distances, devices such as this could have potential applications in medical imaging and video projection.

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Floating High-tech City



A seaborne community called Blueseed is slated to launch sometime in the third quarter of 2013. The concept is to create an environment in international waters where start-up technology companies can draw the best minds and ideas from all over the world while operating outside the jurisdiction of visas.

Docked off the coast of northern California, the floating city will be served by daily ferries for those who wish to commute back and forth; however, it includes accommodations for employees as well, with single occupancy living spaces starting at \$1600 per month.

In a recently released report, the developers announced that they already have 133 companies ready to move their operations off-shore next year.

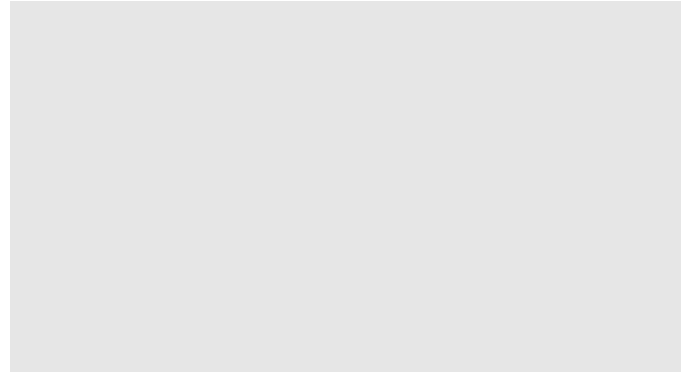
For information: Blueseed Inc., 395 E. Evelyn Avenue #234, Sunnyvale, CA 94086; Web site: www.blueseed.co/faq.html

Super-Efficient Transistors

For some time, engineers have been striving to create a reliable graphene transistor. A special type of carbon in which hexagonal units form a sheet only one atom thick, graphene has the potential to revolutionize computing with nano-scale, super-efficient transistors.

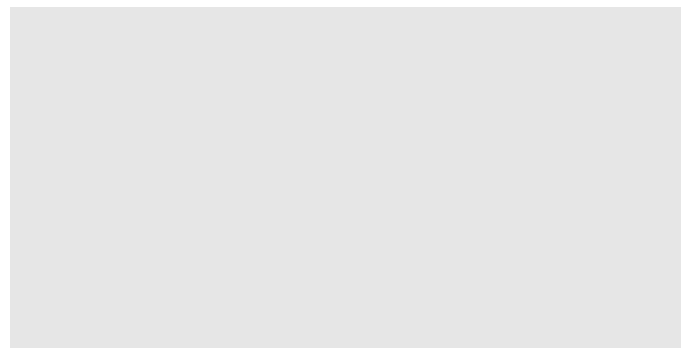
The problem has been that, due to its semi-metallic properties, graphene is highly conductive (about 200 times more conductive than silicon) making it difficult

to switch off the flow of electricity. Now a new design has been developed that uses a Schottky barrier to stop current from flowing, allowing the graphene to act as a transistor without sacrificing performance.



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Snakebots



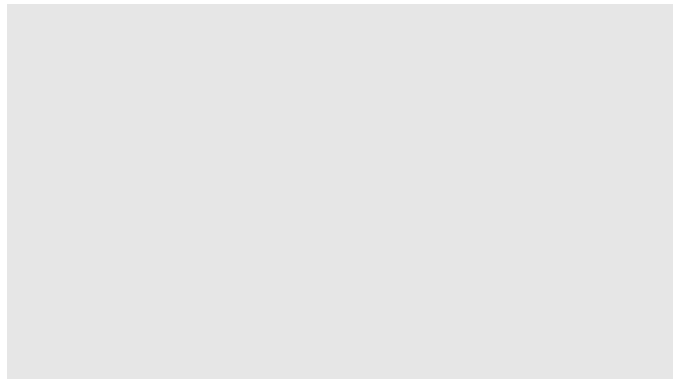
A new type of robotic tool is already being used to help doctors perform surgery and diagnose disease. Shaped like tiny snakes, they may help reduce medical costs by making surgeries easier and faster, with less trauma to the patient.

The latest designs carry cameras, instruments (like forceps and scissors), and advanced sensors, and are small and flexible, with the diameter of the head being less than the size of a dime. Instead of opening a patient's chest during heart surgery, the robot can be inserted into a small incision and guided to the proper spot.

Eventually, snake robots will be much smaller and will likely be equipped with sensors to test chemicals in the blood or the electrical connections of nerves.

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Soft-Tissue X-ray



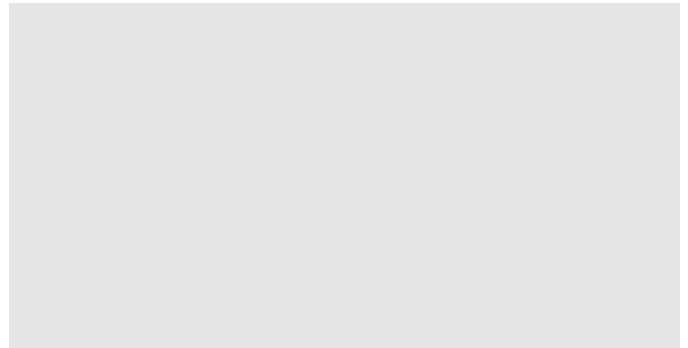
Clinical testing is underway for a new type of x-ray system that can image soft tissues in the body, such as cartilage, ligaments, tendons, blood vessels and even tumors. The goal is to market it as an alternative to more expensive MRIs for diagnosing rheumatoid arthritis and other diseases.

Similar to a traditional x-ray system, the new device incorporates two additional grates between the patient and the detector which create a Moire pattern that allows attenuated signals to be visualized. It can operate in three modes: as a normal x-ray, to produce images that emphasize the outlines of soft tissue, and to detect more subtle changes such as cancerous tissue.

Testing is scheduled to be completed by March of 2014.

*For information: Konica Minolta, Marunouchi Center Building, 1-6-1 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan; phone: **+81-3-6250-2111**; Web site: www.konicaminolta.com*

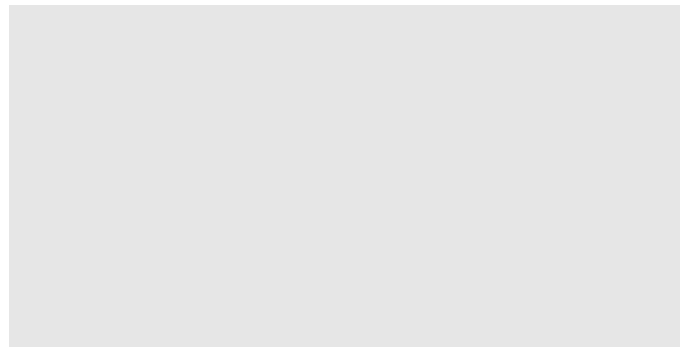
2-D Image to 3-D Rendering



A free iPad app was recently released that's designed to make 3D printing easier than ever. Dubbed 123D Catch, it eliminates the need for costly and complicated rendering software. Users simply take pictures of the object to be rendered from different angles using their iPad. The images are uploaded to the Autodesk cloud service where they can be transformed into a 3D model. An identical copy of the original object can then be manufactured using 3D printing technology.

*For information: Autodesk, Inc., 111 McInnis Parkway, San Rafael, CA 94903; phone: **800-578-3375**; Web site: www.autodesk.com*

Map of Life



Now you can use Google Maps to track your favorite animals by species, using either the Latin name or the common name. Called the Map of Life, the aim of the project is to map the distribution of every type of living thing on the planet – from plants to birds to mammals to reptiles, and everything in between.

So far, the developers have cataloged about 30,000 species of terrestrial vertebrates, with more being added every day. The work is supported by NASA and the Encyclopedia of Life project.

*For information: Walter Jetz, Yale University, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, P.O. Box 208106, New Haven, CT 06520; phone: **203-432-7540**; email: walter.jetz@yale.edu; Web site: www.yale.edu or www.mappinglife.org*

World's Largest CO₂ Recovery Plant

A design for a new carbon dioxide recovery plant was recently unveiled that can capture 3,000 tons of CO₂ daily, making it six times more efficient than existing facilities at preventing greenhouse gases from escaping into the atmosphere. The new technology is designed for blast furnaces, coal-fired power plants and other large industrial facilities that produce large amounts of CO₂.

Special absorbents capture only the carbon dioxide, which is stored underground. The plant can also be combined with other facilities for reclaiming the gas.

*For information: Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd., 16-5 Konan 2-chome, Minato-ku, Tokyo 108-8215, Japan; phone: **+81-3-6716-3111**; fax: **+81-3-6716-5800**; Web site: www.mhi.co.jp/en*

Making Text Marketing Work

SET POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS: No one wants to receive an inordinate number of text messages from any company. If you send them too many messages, they'll quickly ask to be removed from your list. That's why you have to tell them upfront, in the first text you send them, how many messages they'll receive from you each year. Keep the number low! I suggest a maximum of 12 per year.

In my welcome text to people I clearly state that they will receive 0-4 messages per year from me. This may seem very low, but in my case I have several goals. The first is to have none of them opt out of future text messages from me. So far, no one has asked to be removed from my list. Why? Because the low number is a quick way of telling them I'm not going to be intrusive. Rather than send them information every day or week, disturb them, and impede on their message and data limits with their service provider, they know I'm only going to send them important information no more than 4 times per year.

Essentially, I've removed any fears or false assumptions and have set a reasonable expectation for the texts. Second, I will only text them for major promotions of very high value to both them and me. Third, I want to train them to read and act on all of my messages. The number of texts you choose to send may be different, but remember to keep it low for best long-term results.

GIVE HIGH-VALUE INFORMATION: Texting something that isn't useful, even if you do it only once in a while, will only annoy your customers. So be particular about what you send out via text.

In my case, my initial message contains a link to an app, and that is where they can have immediate access to all my social media feeds, YouTube videos, newsletters, and blogs. I also provide a link where they can get a three-month trial subscription to my newsletter. It also lists all my products, which people can purchase right from the app, and it has all of my contact information at the touch of a button. Essentially, it gives them access to continuous, updated offers and useful information on an app they install on their smart phone. And because the free newsletter subscription requires their email address, I have now captured both their mobile number for text message marketing and their email address for email marketing. When I use them in an integrated marketing approach, I have superior results!

Of course, this strategy works for more than just authors, speakers, and consultants. Suppose you are an auto dealer. Instead of just offering an app via text that simply lists your locations and hours, it can be a place where customers can store all the auto service records and receive reminders for when service is due. Perhaps it can even give customers the ability to schedule appointments, watch informational video about car maintenance, and even call for emergency roadside service. The possibilities for any company are endless.

Once your organization's app is downloaded onto your customers' phones, you can do push marketing messages to the app and save text messaging for a few, big offers. Depending on how customers have their push notifications set up on their phones, they'll see a

notification on your app that a new announcement is waiting for them. This, combined with your periodic direct text messages, is a powerful strategy for reaching and engaging customers.

THE NEXT FRONTIER OF MARKETING

Text marketing is a hard trend that will be increasingly more powerful as time goes on. Not only is it an effective way to reach customers, but it's also a prime opportunity to provide useful information and resources that make you stand out as the market leader. So if you haven't developed a text marketing strategy yet, do it now. Text marketing, when done correctly, will help you to both increase profits and jump ahead of the competition.



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