

Finding 'The New New Thing'

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

Finding 'The New New Thing'

Mike Schmidt, Associate Editor, Manufacturing Business Technology

“The New New Thing” is out there waiting to be developed, deployed, and utilized. Microsoft isn’t waiting to stumble upon it. The company is actively searching for it. For that it should be commended.



In 1991, Microsoft released "Windows for Pen Computing," an add-on to Windows 3.1. Its operating system accepted input from an active "pen," which was actually a stylus.

If at first you don't succeed... wait a handful years and hope everyone forgets?

It seems that's the lesson Microsoft took from its many ill-fated forays into the interactive computing business. The tech giant recently made headlines when it unveiled its latest interactive computing device: an iPad-like tablet called Surface. Microsoft boldly declared its latest offering differed from other tablets because it is an entertainment device that doesn't "compromise the productivity that PCs are uniquely known for."

If you just had a déjà vu moment reading the previous paragraph, don't panic. This is not the first time Microsoft has released a product called Surface. Just four years ago, the company touted a desk-like computer that utilized a touch-screen technology similar to that of Apple's iPhone. It was a bold idea designed for a variety of business applications, but it didn't catch on. So don't feel bad if you have no recollection of this technology...

Despite the undeniable failure of the first iteration of Microsoft Surface, the company has been undeterred in its efforts to marry your fingers to its touch-screen

Finding 'The New New Thing'

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

offerings. After all, [it has tried to do so on many occasions](#) [1].



Microsoft launched "Project Origami" in 2006 with several other companies. The idea was to make really small PCs with screens sensitive not just to pens, but to fingers.

However, pushing forgettable products and developing doomed offerings is not an issue exclusive to Bill Gates and Co. Just about every business has rolled out some sort of product or service offering, only to watch it hit the market with a resounding thud. This is becoming increasingly common today, where technology and customer needs are constantly changing. It's becoming increasingly difficult to develop the sort of offering that satisfies customer needs at a price they are willing to (or can afford to) pay. However, that doesn't mean your company should scale back its efforts to develop ["The New New, Thing."](#) [2] Doing so just opens the door for your competitor to seize an opportunity.

Time will tell if Microsoft's latest Surface product will thrive, survive, or fall by the wayside. However, at least the company has the confidence to move forward with its vision and attempt to meet customers' needs with new and (potentially) useful products. The company is displaying tremendous foresight in its ability to look past its previous failures in the interactive computing market and recognize there's nothing to gain from standing pat and simply accepting its niche in the technology world. "The New New Thing" is out there waiting to be developed, deployed, and utilized. Microsoft isn't waiting to stumble upon it. The company is actively searching for it. For that it should be commended.

What are your thoughts? Email me at mike.schmidt@advantagemedia.com [3].

Source URL (retrieved on 09/21/2014 - 9:23pm):

Finding 'The New New Thing'

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

<http://www.impomag.com/blogs/2012/07/finding-new-new-thing>

Links:

[1] <http://www.mbtmag.com/news/2012/06/microsofts-long-and-tortured-history-tablets>

[2] <http://www.amazon.com/The-New-Thing-Silicon-Valley/dp/0393048136>

[3] <mailto:mike.schmidt@advantagemedia.com>