

# YES! AND... CREATIVE GORILLA # 74

*If you want technology to be successful, you have to ensure it meets a few clear criteria...*

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## Make New Technology a Success...

*"New technology turns adult and child roles on their head. If technology is easy to use now, we should say "it's adult's play" not "child's play". John Brooker ~ Adult player*



**New and old technology**

What makes a new technology product successful?

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I'm writing this in my hotel room in Morocco, having just finished my first ever video call to my family. This excited me so much that I was jumping up and down and clapping with excitement when we connected.

We used Windows Live Messenger to make the call, which my daughter showed me how to use at the weekend. Once I had connected to the hotel's internet (two minutes), it took me just a minute to set up the video call, with a bit of on line coaching from my children.

This technology has given me the opportunity to see and talk to my family, easily, simply and for free (hotel internet prices aside!). They can show me their homework, we can play games and generally have fun, so much so that we spent forty minutes on the call. On the telephone, it is

usually a couple of minutes' chat and then they get bored. It also costs me £1.25 a minute.

Some of you with a key driver (e.g. speaking to relatives overseas) may have been making video calls from your PC for quite a while, many more of you will use video conferencing at work so what is the big deal about my experience?

Well, I think the deal is that the environment has changed to the point where big players like Microsoft have got a winning product here. Broadband (which is getting faster) is now in 14 million homes in the UK and 66 million in the US (OECD June 2007) and mid range mobile PC's have installed cameras and faster processors, making it easy to access and use video calling.

What Microsoft and others have done is to make a product that so enhances my experience compared to the alternatives (my mobile 'phone and e-mail) that it actually excites me. They have taken advantage of the environmental changes and made it extremely easy to access. They have made it simple to use and have given it to me free (agreed - you need to have Windows but Live Messenger is a free download).

For some of you, that last point will jar – if you give your customer your product for free they might get excited too – but I recall using Google when it first came out and wondering how they gave such a great product for free. They're not struggling too much now.

I also remember when I downloaded my first tunes down from iTunes. It was so simple and

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such a reasonable cost, I just had to go and buy an iPod; so I am sure Microsoft has a business model up its sleeve (perhaps gaming?). With faster broadband and faster processing in place, I can see this service taking off very soon.

## SO

Let's use this as a case study for my perspective on what a really successful technology product needs:

- It has to offer a superior experience to what has been on offer previously or it has to offer a whole new experience
- It needs to create a positive emotional response
- It has to be value for money (appreciating that the luxury brand market may be an exception to this)
- The user must be able to access it easily
- It has to be intuitive to use (especially if it is aimed at consumers)

## ACTION

- Review my list and challenge my thinking on this. Do you agree with these criteria? What would you argue with and what else might you add?
- Compare the new iPhone with this list. How does it compare?
- Try out Windows Live Messenger (or Skype) video calling and see what you think. If you don't have anyone to play with, drop me a line and I'll let you know my Messenger sign in to set up a call. I have to say the wide angle camera doesn't flatter anyone, so Gorilla suits are optional.

## TO CLOSE

People have joked for years that they can't programme their video recorder but still we continue to say that if something is simple, it is "child's play". My children have now made me realise that we have it the wrong way round, hence my quotation at the start of this article. From now on, when technology is simple, it's definitely adult's play!

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