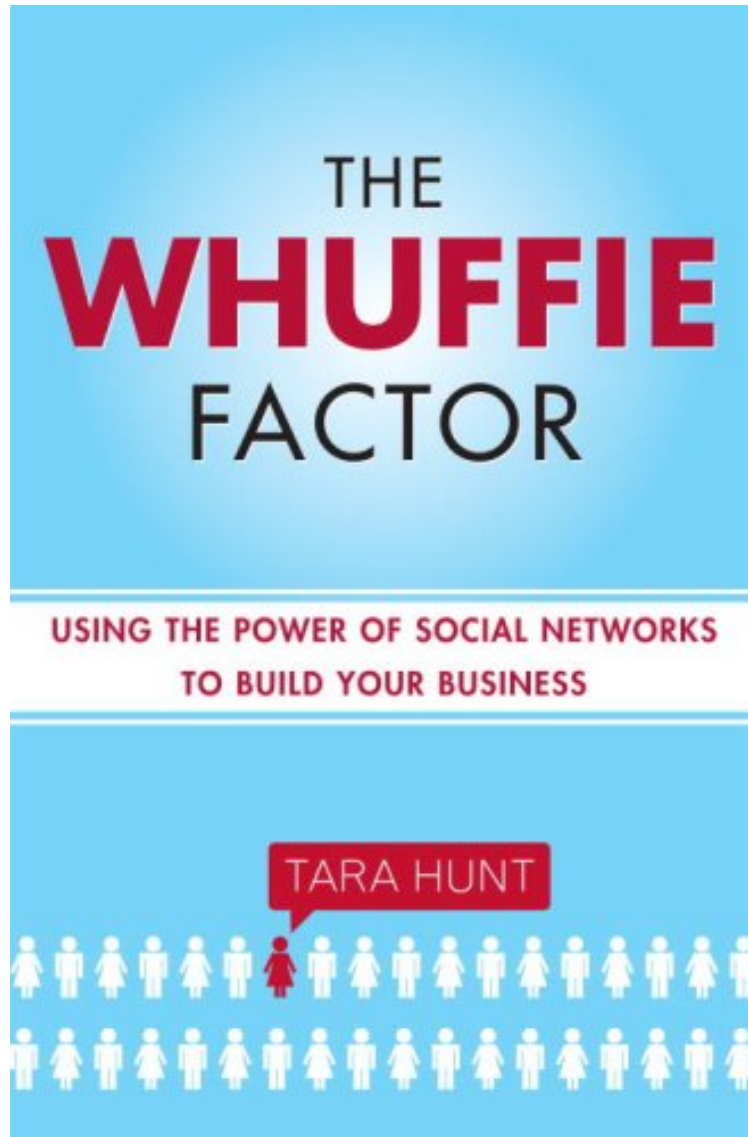


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# The Whuffie Factor: Using the Power of Social Networks to Build Your Business

Tara Hunt

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**Tara Hunt : The Whuffie Factor: Using the Power of Social Networks to Build Your Business** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Whuffie Factor: Using the Power of Social Networks to Build Your Business:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Whuffie. What am I?By MagnussUnless you have to read this for school like me I wouldn't bother. Here's the gist in a few sentences:You are a person and in the business world you have reputation. Networking helps build up this reputation. Measure the reputation in a made up unit called "whuffie"

(wuh-fee) and gauge how much networking capital you have. Spend this "whuffie" in resourceful and genuine ways to grow your network. Time could be better spent. 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Excellent points, entertaining and expertly stated. By James Beswick I was lucky enough to meet Tara Hunt at the WordCamp 2009 conference in San Francisco, and heard her 30-minute piece on 'Whuffie'. Apart from being an engaging presenter with a clear perspective of her subject, she makes excellent points that are crystallized in the book. I'd thought about some of the ideas prior to hearing her but never really formed an over-arching opinion of what it meant - this book convincingly cements some of those concepts. Rather than summarize the book in detail, the fundamental concept is that marketing to your customer has changed. The long-entrenched system of throwing money at marketers to create ads that scream for our over-stretched attention is dead: we see this in the death of newspaper ads and the collapse in the cost of TV advertising. We just get too much noise with too much disinformation to be interested, and we don't believe the messages. In the new model, we trust opinions of friends and we like companies that aren't afraid to hear criticism and deal with it, and she gives several excellent examples of this. This is 'Whuffie' - social capital that you can trade for business. Many people I've heard talking around this topic tend to slip into vagaries at about this point, but Tara Hunt has solid hands-on practical advice to help generate Whuffie. Clearly, there's no definitive 12-step plan for every company, but there are ideas that are employable in every business. My wife's a Marketing Director and has already started to use some of the advice in the book, and her opinion is that it's \*transformational\* in terms of customer relationships and staking your place clearly from competitors, compared with barely incremental in traditional advertising. If you've had a nagging feeling for a while that social media is changing everything, this book is valuable in understanding how to engage your customers and create this social capital that allows your business to flourish. I just wish it wasn't called Whuffie, but at least it makes the point memorable when trying to enthuse your co-workers. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Still relevant. By Joanne Kaminski This book was written a few years ago, but it is still relevant today. The whuffie factor goes into detail on how to engage with people online in ways that truly matter. This is a must read for anyone that needs to market their product or services.

The book that catches the crest of Web 2.0 and shows how any business can harness its power by increasing whuffie, the store of social capital that is the currency of the digital world. Everyone knows about blogs and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, and has heard about someone who has used them to grow a huge customer base. Everyone wants to be hands-on, grassroots, and interactive, but what does this mean? And more to the point, how do you do it? As one who has actually launched a company using the power of online communities, and who now advises large and small companies, Tara Hunt (named by the San Francisco Chronicle, along with luminaries Jimmy Wales and Tim O'Reilly, as a digital Utopian) is the perfect person to do this book. While *The Whuffie Factor* will traverse the landscape of Web 2.0 and show how to become a player, it is not just another book about online marketing. People see the huge business potential of the online world and the first impulse is: "Let's throw a bunch of money at it." To which Tara Hunt says: "Stop! Money isn't the capital of choice in online communities, it is whuffie—social capital—and how to raise it is at the heart of this book." In the Web 2.0 world, market capital flows from having high social capital. Without whuffie you lose your connections and any recommendations you make will be seen as spam—met with negative reactions and a loss of social capital. *The Whuffie Factor* provides businesspeople with a strategic map and specific tactics for the constantly evolving, elusive, and, to some, strange world of online communities. By connecting with your customers through community interaction, you'll raise your social capital, create demand, and sell more product. Consumer loyalty is a direct result of whuffie. With great stories of online business successes and cautionary tales of major missteps—recording industry, anyone?—Tara Hunt reveals how social networking has more influence over buying decisions than any other marketing tool and how your business can tap into the vast world of Web 2.0 to build an unshakable foundation for twenty-first-century-style online success. For those without millions— even thousands— to throw around, here is a fresh perspective for using social networks to help build a business whether you are a start-up or a Fortune 500 giant. Even those in big rich companies need to learn how to be effective and not waste their money. For them—as well as the entrepreneur— *The Whuffie Factor* is an eye-opening guide to a world they probably don't understand all that well. From the Hardcover edition.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Hunt, cofounder of community-marketing consulting firm Citizen Agency, presents the hows and whys of accruing "whuffie," her word for social capital in the Web 2.0 landscape. Introducing a wide range of post-blogsphere social networks like Facebook, LinkedIn and Flickr, Hunt clues in marketers to the possibilities with online success stories, influential voices and winning strategies. Numerous anecdotes (from the Obama campaign, online t-shirt boutique Threadless, Zappos.com CEO Tony Hsieh, etc.) illustrate the power of even the most tossed-off communicators; micro-blogging site Twitter, for instance, may restrict posts to 140 characters, but is uniquely powerful in its ability to reach a swarm of "followers," establish new relationships and provide multi-various feedback. Hunt packs in many specific strategies and concepts, which include seeking out and incorporating feedback, educating and empowering your connections, and treating your company's message as a conversation (a good net

marketer's goal should be contained in the statement, "I want to create a culture of..."). Detailed, practical profiles of networks and related tools make this a valuable, illuminating title for anyone looking to the ever-expanding realm of online social life for business success. Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Embrace the chaos! The Whuffie Factor weaves stories from Moleskine, 37Signals, Threadless, Willitblend, and Gary Vaynerchuk into a compelling story of the way business is now done. Tara doesn't just talk about it, of course, she does it herself." —Seth Godin, author of *Meatball Sundae*

"Marketing—or doing business at all—in the age of whuffie and the world of social media means authenticity, listening, engaging, and trusting. That's what Tara Hunt says, and it's also exactly what she does. If you are in marketing now or starting a company that has customers, you need to read this book to understand exactly, and I mean precisely and with detailed examples, how the conversation between vendor and client, business and customer, has changed radically. Tara Hunt knows her stuff, and she knows how to put a great deal of knowledge into compelling stories that are a pleasure to read because her voice is not just the voice of extensive experience: Tara Hunt's voice works well in this book because it's who she is." —Howard Rheingold, author of *The Virtual Community* and *Smart Mobs*

"Social capital may be the most powerful currency of the twenty-first century, and this book is a guide to its care and feeding. Bursting with energy and enthusiasm, Tara Hunt shows us how to win friends and influence people in a Web 2.0 world." —Tom Kelley, cofounder of IDEO and author of *The Ten Faces of Innovation*

"The market power of social networking continues to grow exponentially. It may well overwhelm all other communication vehicles—and in short order. The Whuffie Factor is exceptionally readable, and both instructive and fun. You'd be foolish to pass it by, or fail to heed its advice." —Tom Peters, author of *In Search of Excellence*

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author TARA HUNT was the cofounder of Citizen Agency, a community-marketing consulting firm based in San Francisco, and is now leading the marketing efforts for Intuit's partner platform. She has been cited in national newspapers such as the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times and is well-known in the Web 2.0 technology and start-up worlds for her community-marketing experience. Her blog, [Horsepigcow.com](http://Horsepigcow.com), explores themes in marketing and economics and has been pivotal in raising Tara's own whuffie in the online marketing space.

From the Hardcover edition.