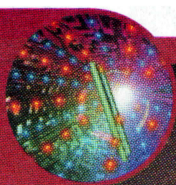


The *SBN Magazine* Guide to
The e-Future

David Radin
on the Internet,
viruses and the
New Economy





Internet with an attitude

Internet marketing guru David Radin shares his observations, insight, wit and strong opinions. **By Daniel Bates**

To see David Radin at his table, with headphones on and a microphone hanging in front of him, you could easily mistake him for any serious techno-geek.

He's tall, clean-cut and has the take-me-seriously look of a driven New Economy entrepreneur. For a moment he sits in silence, almost meditating.

Then a man behind a glass wall leans into his own microphone, grabs the mixer controls and, with a rich, trained radio announcer voice, begins the countdown: "Internet Insider segment one ... Five ... four ... three ... two ..." And he waves his arm and points to Radin.

Radin takes a deep breath and comes alive, arms flailing, and launches into a fast-talking, emotional tirade about one of his many Internet pet peeves. He snipes about the latest computer virus to hit the Internet. He gets the inside scoop on the Internet in Hollywood.

And he tackles the lifestyle issues of Hal Sparks, a straight actor and comedian playing a gay man in a new TV series on Showtime.

Radin is a high-tech entrepreneur who has turned his love for computers, the Internet and radio broadcasting into a syndicated series of radio shows that are as much about lifestyles in this

Internet age as they are about technology and business. The main show, "Internet Insider — Radio With Byte," along with several packaged snippets of tips and information, airs on 330 radio stations to more than 2.6 million people.

It's all produced locally by Radin and Lawrence Gaines, who provides the announcer voice and interaction.

An opinionated entertainer

Radin's expertise is in high-tech marketing, where he spent much of his earlier career. But it's the well-informed entertainer in him that has transformed this high-strung, opinionated, 45-year-old businessman from confident consultant and public speaker into a quick-witted, outspoken commentator and prognosticator about all things that revolve around this electronic superhighway. And he has lots to say.

On the New Economy and whether it still exists: "Was there *ever* a New Economy?" On those who create computer viruses: "**They are terrorists, and I think they should be treated as terrorists.**"

With regard to businesspeople and investors who got caught up in the unrealistic expectations of the Internet and its wealth-building potential: "It

goes totally beyond my belief that these rational businesspeople would expect the Internet to totally change the rules of business."

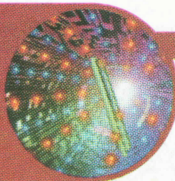
This Internet guru tackles Internet issues with intelligence, insight and wit that challenge the most advanced techies. He talks about gigabytes, orms and viral marketing. But don't call him a techno-geek.

"I'm not necessarily a technical person," he says laughingly but defensively after bristling at the techie label. "Let's just say I'm an admitted person who likes gadgets and things you do with them... I'm more of a business person who has a knack for technology," he says.

OK, so he's not a techie, but even his high school teacher, he finally admits, wrote in his 1974 yearbook that he "expected me to be the first person on Mars," Radin says. So he's not exactly an underachiever.

Radin got his start in technology and radio in high school, when he built a radio station using vacuum-tube technology and broadcast all over his school. After graduating in 1974, this New Haven, Conn., native earned his bachelor's degree from Yale University and his MBA from Duke University's Fuqua School.

From there, he settled into a



David Radin on the issues

Thoughts on the Internet sector bust, rational business, the future, computer viruses and even rocket science and the New Economy. **Interviewed by Daniel Bates**

On the Internet sector's financial bust

I was not surprised. We had been talking about the fact that expectation levels were way off for ages. As far back as 1997, we were trying to temper people's expectation levels and telling them they were way off.

I was always optimistic, always positive, but the fact is, a lot of people rushed in here.

Who were the people who lost their shirts? They were typically the people who were trying to make money off of other people's backs instead of trying to make money by trying to get a good product out to the market. They were trying to make their money by getting IPOs, by getting investors, etc.

... In my mind, nothing dramatically changed from the beginning of 2000 to the end of 2001 in terms of the basics of what the Internet business should be and where the technology and business processes are bringing us. The only thing that changed was that the capital markets decided they were wrong.

On dealing with the seeming collapse

We looked at the market, tried to figure out where the market was going, tried to figure out what we had to do to make sure we weren't stuck in a market that was going to be going down. And we made sure we were able to take advantage of the market the best way possible.

It was just doing the rational things that any business should do when something happens to their market or to one of their suppliers or to one of their customers. We just did the rational things.

On a rational business model

The biggest differentiator of a rational business model vs. a nonrational business model is the people who typically were playing in spaces they understood. Most of the others were trying to create market spaces by looking for opportunities they didn't understand.

What was interesting about it is people — supposedly ratio-

nal businesspeople — were expecting very short break-evens, where they wouldn't expect that in the normal course of business in their own industry. It goes totally beyond my belief that these rational businesspeople would expect the Internet to totally change the rules of business.

On what works and what doesn't

If they're not dealing with the Internet today, I would muster to say they probably haven't figured out a way to integrate it into their businesses, and it may still be difficult for them to do. I believe the Internet can be integrated in one way or another with 90-plus percent of businesses. But there are certain businesses where that doesn't make sense, and there are certain unwise ways to do it.

Look at your pain points, at the things that are costing you the most, at the ways that are more difficult to reach your market. You look at the things that are causing your customers hardship in dealing with you, and say, 'How can I use this to get to the next step — to fix the pain points, to increase market share, to distribute information better, to make internal processes slimmer so that I waste less time with my people?'

On the suggestion this isn't exactly rocket science

Of course it's rocket science. The difference is, you've got to be well-versed in rationality, not technology. You've got to be well-versed in marketing. And you've got to be well-versed in running a business. If you're going to make a business out of this, you have to rely on your own personal core competencies.

On attacks by computer viruses/worms

Business owners need to be absolutely wary of viruses. I don't think there's anything amusing about them. From Day One I've said that if anyone is caught sending a virus through any kind of network, they should throw the book at them. This is not just defilement. I think these are major criminal offenses.

These people are not just pranksters. They are terrorists, and



I think they should be treated as terrorists, and nothing less than terrorists.

On the New Economy

Was there ever a New Economy? I'm not willing to say there was. I'm willing to say there is a new spin to the Old Economy. I'm saying there is a reinvention of processes and there is a reinvention of economies — the actual marketplace.

But it's always reinventing itself. To go and say that you throw away Old Economy values in order to create something new, though, is wrong. They were trying to create a revolution out of an evolutionary process.



marketing career specializing in high-tech companies. Eventually, he became a consultant, forming Marketing Masters Corp. in 1991. His first experience with the Internet, he says, was when he tried to pool a number of Connecticut businesses together to gain better access to what then was just an emerging technology.

In 1994, he moved his company and his wife to Pittsburgh (because of a "vital" community, proximity to the airport, quality of life, cost of living and cost of doing business), and found himself working primarily on Internet marketing strategies, which positioned him as an early expert.

An early observer

That positioning, coupled with an opinionated demeanor, made him a regular speaker at Internet trade shows.

"I gave the first presentation ever at the first Web World [trade show and conference]," Radin says. In his presentation, he says, "I was tempering vision and opportunity with the reality of the marketplace and human behavior. People initially said they were disappointed at the conference because they thought my message was gloom and doom. But I just said there are challenges there, and if they just go out there and try to take advantage, it's going to hurt them. This is not a new business model."

He became a regular guest on virtually every talk show on KDKA-Radio after approaching it about doing his own show.

"They said they weren't sure the Internet thing was going to take off, but they thought

I could explain the concepts," Radin says. "So they said, 'Let's have you as a guest on our show.'"

That's when he was invited onto Rob Pratte's talk show.

"The phones lit up. And I ended up on a lot of shows. None of us knew we were going to get that kind of reaction."

What made him different than so-called techies, he says, was that, "I'm a normal human being who knows how to take technologies and turn them into human things."

Radin landed his own show and drew up plans to create a syndicated version of his show, heard on stations nationwide—and at his Internet site, www.InsiderRadio.com.

An Internet crash?

Radin launched the syndicated program just in time to watch the financial bottom drop out of the Internet sector in the stock markets. From his perspective, his timing couldn't have been worse ... or better.

"I was not surprised," Radin explains. "We had been talking about the fact that expectation levels were way off for ages ... And it was a real hard thing for me for a couple years to go out there and say I was going to do this out of my own pocket because it wouldn't let me grow the way I could. But I also couldn't compete with that euphoria, and I think it was that euphoria that was misplaced."

Radin positioned himself as a guru of sorts who could continue to help people sift through the hype and understand the realities of the Internet when it comes to lifestyles, business and other aspects of life. Still, he didn't escape the collapse of the Internet's seeming good fortune.

"I had mixed feelings," Radin says. "It hit us early, and we noticed it real quickly. Instead of saying, 'Oh my God, what's the problem?' we said, 'OK, let's look at the situation. ... **Let's take steps right now to make sure it doesn't hurt us.**' And we felt it. "I had two big sponsors who were about to sign on the bottom line go away to the tune of a half-million dollars," he laments. "For a company of my size, that's significant."

It didn't stop Radin. For the first half of this year, he says, his company has made "a lot of

money," and he expects that to continue. "We look at the issues we think have a direct effect on our core audience," Radin says. "It's a show for anyone who spends a significant amount of time on the Internet. People who have an Internet lifestyle still have their favorite celebrities and their favorite music."

Still an entrepreneur

Radio show aside, Radin still fancies himself an entrepreneur who likes to educate people about technology. That's why he's launched a seminar series for businesses entitled, "The 5 Big Techno Time Wasters and How to Beat Them." It comes from his belief that the biggest problem for companies is that employees waste lots of time figuring out how to use new technologies or misusing the ones they have. To get that message out, he plans to create corporate workshops, keynote presentations, a book, an audiotape, a video, interactive guides and a newsletter on the subject.

With all of this happening, Radin couldn't be happier with the way things are going.

"I love doing it, and because I love it, it flows better," Radin says. "I have a charmed life." **How to reach:** David Radin and Internet Insider Radio, (412) 481-3800 or www.InsiderRadio.com

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