

'What we do know now is that the "e" in e-commerce doesn't stand for "easy".'
 John Hagel, US author and consultant

OVERVIEW

LISTENING AND DISCUSSION

Developments in online business

READING AND LANGUAGE

The new corporate firefighters

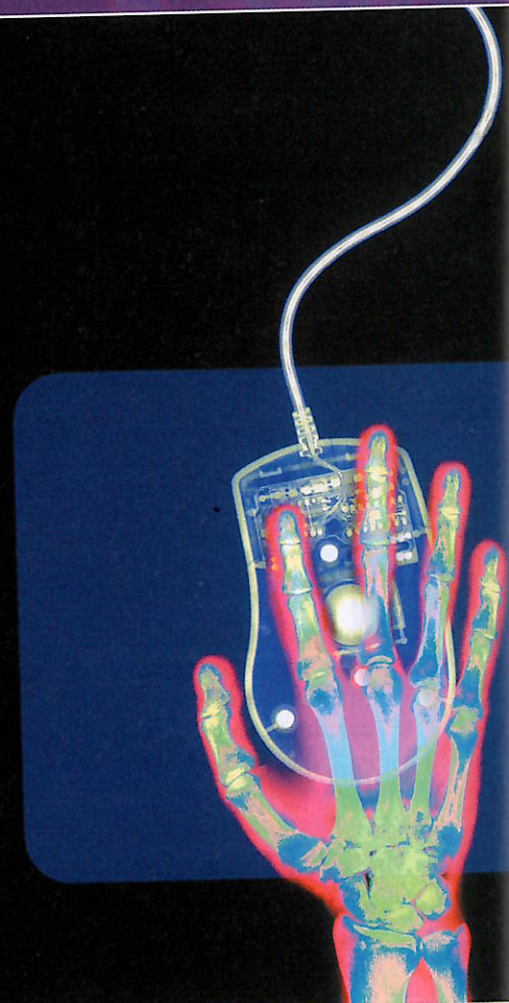
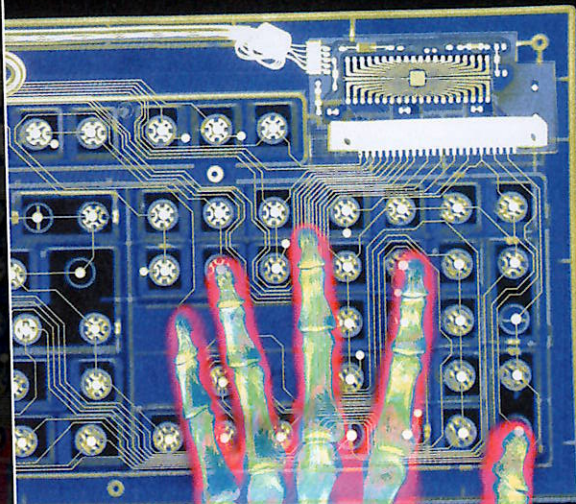
Rhetorical devices

BUSINESS SKILLS

Presentations: thinking on your feet

CASE STUDY

The fashion screen



LISTENING AND DISCUSSION

Developments in online business

A

How much do you know about the history of the Internet and e-commerce? Complete the gaps.

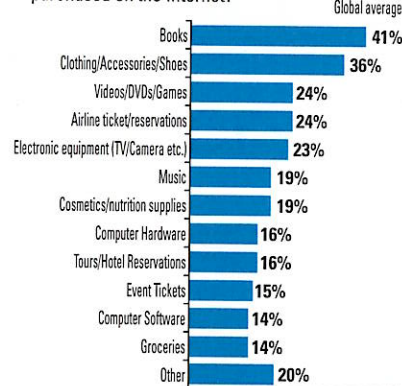
- 1990¹ creates the first web browser, the World Wide Web.
- 1995 Jeff Bezos launches online bookseller.....² and sets the standard for customer-oriented e-commerce. The online auction site.....³ is founded, enabling Internet users to trade with each other.
- 1997 The PC maker.....⁴ announces a single-day sales record of a million dollars on its website.
- 1998 The search engine.....⁵ arrives. It pioneers a ranking system that uses links to assess a website's popularity.
- 1999 The peer-to-peer file-sharing software.....⁶ is launched. Internet users can swap music files stored on their computers.
- 2000 The dotcom crash
- 2003⁷ has its first full year of profit in online sales.
- 2004 Mark Zuckerberg launches.....⁸ at Harvard University. By 2009, the site boasts over 200 million active users.
- 2005⁹ launches, enabling people to easily publish videos online.
- 2006¹⁰ is created. Unlike online blogs, messages are limited to 140 characters.

B Look at the chart on the right and discuss these questions.

- Which goods and services do you buy online? Which would you never buy online?
- Which websites do you spend most money on?
- Which websites do you spend most time on?

Most Popular Online Purchases

In the past 3 months what items have you purchased on the Internet?



David Bowen

C CD3.22 What sort of companies have been the main winners in terms of doing business online? Listen and compare your ideas with David Bowen, a senior consultant for Bowen Craggs & Co., a website consultancy group.

D CD3.23 Listen to the second part of the interview and complete these notes, using one or two words in each gap.

Key features of a global website

A truly global company website is¹ in its nature. It has to serve many people who are often² and also different types of audiences, e.g. customers,³,⁴, governments and so on. Therefore the⁵, the navigation and the⁶ of the website are very important. Another issue is⁷, which means that the company's image and website must be much more⁸ than in the past.

E CD3.24 Listen to the third part of the interview about the impact of social media on e-business, then correct the six factual errors in this summary.

Through the use of social media, businesses can get their messages across in a different way from the method they use in more traditional media. They can have more engaging, two-way conversations with customers. Companies can also use social media for other purposes, such as using Facebook to contact young people to investigate market trends.

On the other hand, social media present a big financial risk. A story can spread very fast, so companies have to react much faster to counter the risk. One example is a story that was going around that Ford had tried to buy out a very small dealership's website. Ford's Social Media Manager sent out e-mails to find out Ford's side of the story and he was able to take legal action against social media sites and successfully deal with the problem.

F CD3.25 Listen to David Bowen's views on where e-business is heading. What three developments does he mention?

G Discuss these predictions about trends in e-business. Which do you think are most likely to happen? What other developments do you see happening?

- E-commerce and online shopping will become more related to blogging and social media.
- User-generated content will be king – for instance, people will increasingly expect to see customer reviews as a standard feature.
- As companies spend more on advertising on the Internet, many newspapers will run out of advertising revenue and go bankrupt.
- Online video will become the most important medium online.
- The Google search monopoly will become even more apparent in more countries.
- Retailers will start monetising (*making money from*) their web pages by linking to other sites offering products and services that suit their target market.

Watch the interview on the DVD-ROM.



READING AND LANGUAGE

A Are you a keen blogger? Under what circumstances do you or would you a) read a blog, b) contribute to a blog, or c) create your own blog?

B Read the article about social media and business on the opposite page and answer these questions.

- 1 How many different titles can you find for the new social media job?
- 2 In how many different ways is Dell interacting with customers online?
- 3 What impact has customer feedback had on Dell's business?
- 4 What are some of the financial benefits of engaging with social networks?
- 5 What are some of the PR benefits for companies?

C Find words or phrases in the article that are similar to or mean the following.

- 1 when you become involved with someone or something in order to understand them (paragraph 1)
- 2 major change in the way people think about something or in the way something is done (paragraph 2)
- 3 It doesn't happen any more. (paragraph 2)
- 4 appeared, often unexpectedly (paragraph 2)
- 5 be or become familiar with the way someone thinks or behaves so that you can react to them in a suitable way (paragraph 3)
- 6 searching through a lot of documents, lists, etc. in order to find out information (paragraph 4)
- 7 to do something to show you are sorry for hurting or upsetting someone, especially something that makes it better for them (paragraph 4)
- 8 sending out a message or programme, especially by radio, TV or the Internet (paragraph 6)
- 9 achieved (paragraph 7)
- 10 extinguish fires by pouring water on them (*figurative*) (paragraph 8)
- 11 improve a difficult or dangerous situation, for example by making people less angry or by dealing with the cause(s) of a problem (paragraph 8)
- 12 a potentially bad or unpleasant situation (paragraph 8)

D Metaphors are often used in business and business journalism. What types of metaphors are used to refer to crises in the headline and paragraph 8 of the article?

→ Language reference: rhetorical devices page 138

E These are three techniques that are often used in order to emphasise a point. Match the techniques (1–3) and the examples (a–c).

1 **anaphora:** the deliberate repetition of a word or phrase at the start of successive clauses, phrases or sentences

2 **hyperbole:** a conscious exaggeration of a statement which is not meant to be taken literally

3 **paradox:** a statement that seems contradictory on the surface but often expresses a deeper truth

- a) The Internet has made life easier, harder and more complex all at once.
- b) This is it. This is exactly what I want from a summer movie. This is fun, fun, fun.
- c) This new e-reader will save the publishing industry from certain death.

F Find examples of each technique from Exercise E in the article.

The new corporate firefighters

by David Gelles

A growing number of companies, including Ford Motor, PepsiCo, Wells Fargo and Dell, are creating new high-level jobs to ready themselves for engagement with social media, with titles such as Director of Social Media, Vice-President of Experiential Marketing, and Digital Communications Manager. The role of these new executives is to monitor and influence what is being said about their companies on the Internet.

These new jobs represent a broad shift in media relations strategy at large companies. 'Corporate communications have radically changed,' says Andy Sernovitz, Chief Executive of the Blog Council, an organisation for heads of social media at big companies. 'It's no longer just companies talking to the press, and customer service talking to customers. All these other people showed up in the middle. They may not be press and they may not be customers, but suddenly their collective voice is bigger than the traditional channels.'

Jeanette Gibson, Director of New Media for Cisco Systems, says there is now a mandate at Cisco that all staff be attuned to what is being said about Cisco online. 'It has definitely shifted how we've done communications,' she says. 'Our executives are video-blogging every day. Everybody's job is now social media.'

Dell, the computer maker, has one of the most robust corporate social media programmes. Bob Pearson, former Senior Vice-President of Corporate Communications, became Vice-President of Communities and Conversation for Dell in 2007. He now has 45 people working for him. The core team works on 'blog resolution' – trawling the web for dissatisfied customers, then attempting to contact them to make amends. Others on Dell's social



media team manage the company's 80 Twitter accounts and 20 Facebook pages. Still others manage IdeaStorm, Dell's forum for customer feedback.

Dell is taking its customer feedback seriously. When the company launched the Latitude laptop last summer, six of the features, including backlit keyboard and fingerprint reader, were ideas that came from IdeaStorm. 'It's always worth talking directly with your customers. It's always worth listening to them,' says Mr Pearson. 'It's the wisdom of crowds.'

Peter Shankman, a social media expert, says many companies are still reluctant to get involved: 'Companies are slow to adapt because they're still not 100 per cent sure they can make money with social media,' he says. Yet Dell, for one, has made a business of it. By broadcasting discount alerts on Twitter, it says, it has generated more than \$1m in sales. And in the US, 59 of the 100 leading retailers, including Best Buy and Wal-Mart, now have a fan page on Facebook, according to Rosetta, an interactive marketing agency.

Other savings can be realised through the Web's ability to reach

many people at once. 'If you solve someone's problem on the phone, nobody knows,' says Mr Sernovitz. 'If you solve that same problem in writing on a blog, it costs you no more, but thousands of people are satisfied. And then, if 100 people never call because they found the answer, you very, very quickly get to multimillion-dollar savings.'

Other companies are using Twitter to put out public-relations fires before they erupt or to defuse a brewing crisis. In October, Comcast cable customers turned on their TVs to watch a playoff between the Boston Red Sox and the Tampa Bay Rays. Instead, they found an old sitcom. On Twitter, furious viewers began complaining about the problem. Frank Eliason, Comcast's Director of Digital Care, saw the 'tweets' and soon informed users that the problem was a power outage. 'Twitter allows for an immediate response,' he says.

'Social media is much more than getting out there and having conversations,' says Mr Pearson of Dell. 'It transforms a business if you use it correctly.'

G Discuss these questions.

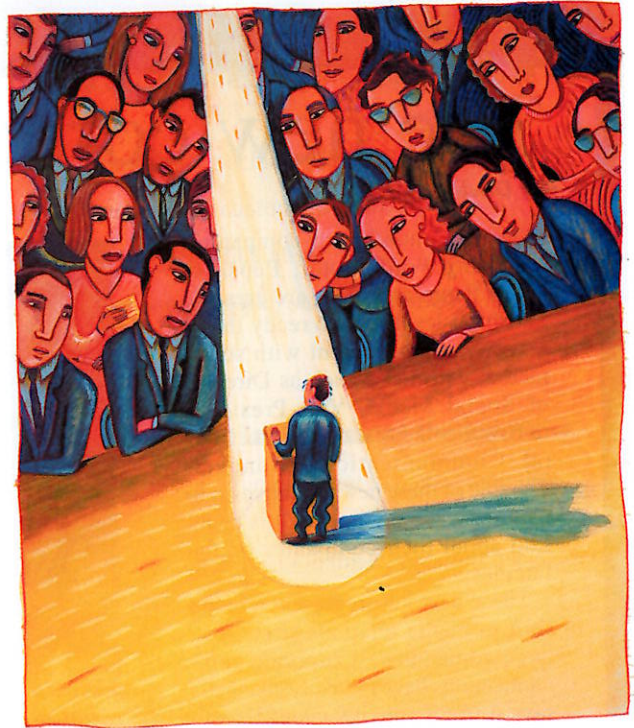
- 1 In what ways would a social media team be useful for your organisation?
- 2 Which do you think is the best department in a company to set up and run a social media team? Why?
- 3 What sort of skills would you expect the head and members of such a team to have?
- 4 What do you think would make being a social media director rewarding/difficult?

BUSINESS SKILLS

**Presentations:
thinking on
your feet**

A What would you say or do in these situations?

- 1 You are just about to start your presentation when you realise that the projector is not working. The audience of 50 people is looking at you expectantly.
- 2 You are finishing a formal dinner with some important clients from abroad. Your boss suddenly asks you to give an after-dinner speech, thanking your hosts on behalf of your organisation.
- 3 You are in an interview for your ideal job. The interviewer asks you, 'What can you do for us that other candidates can't?'
- 4 Your manager tells you some auditors are coming and you need to give them a tour of your place of work. You should start with a five-minute presentation, giving a brief overview of your company. You have only 20 minutes' notice.
- 5 You are responding to questions at the end of a presentation, and the same member of the audience keeps asking you difficult questions. There are still 10 minutes left.



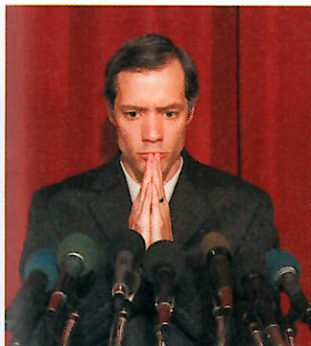
Sophie Rawlings

B CD3.26 **Sophie Rawlings is Head of Information Management in a UK government department. Listen to her giving a talk about creating web pages for small businesses. How does she deal with each of the questions? What other strategies could you use for dealing with questions?**

C CD3.26 **Complete the gaps with expressions the speakers use to introduce their questions. Listen again and check your answers. When do you use these kinds of question?**

-¹ were the main differences between government websites and those in the private business sector?
-² how a company can improve its online sales through web-page design.
-³ about copywriting.⁴ what kind of language you think works well on websites?
-⁵ there was any kind of language that you would *avoid* using?

D **Look at the strategies for dealing with questions in the Useful language box on the opposite page. When might you use each of these strategies? Can you think of any other similar expressions?**



E Look at what a speaker is thinking. What would he actually say? Compare your answers with a partner.

- 1 I wish you hadn't asked me that question.
- 2 As I've already told you all before, ...
- 3 I don't really want to talk about that right now.
- 4 I really haven't got a clue what you're talking about.
- 5 That's not what this talk is about.
- 6 I don't know the answer, but I'll make a guess so that I don't appear stupid.
- 7 We really don't have time to go into that kind of detail now.
- 8 At last! Someone who thinks like me! But the rest of the audience looks bored ...

F Look at these tips for giving a five-minute presentation. Which ones do you find the most/least useful? Compare your ideas with a partner.

The five-minute presentation

How can I get anything across in a five-minute presentation?

It is not as daunting as it seems. Advertisers can get a story across in less than 30 seconds, so five minutes should be fine. The structure could be as follows:

- Introduce yourself.
- Start with an 'attention grabber', e.g. a surprising fact or figure, or a funny story.
- Make one main point in the presentation and use a few slides and examples to illustrate it.
- Break this point down into three main concepts.
- End on a high point, e.g. a pertinent quote, a memorable image or a call for action. Experts say this makes a psychological impact and will be what people remember most, along with the start.



G Work in groups of two pairs. Each pair is going to give a five-minute joint presentation. Before you give your presentation, anticipate any challenging questions you may be asked.

Students A and B: Turn to page 166

Students C and D: Turn to page 162.

USEFUL LANGUAGE

PLAYING FOR TIME

Funnily enough, I'm often asked that question.

That's an interesting question.

Sorry, could you just repeat the question because I don't think everyone heard.

What I usually say is ...

I'm pleased you raised that point.

REPEATING IDEAS

As I've already said, ...

As my colleague pointed out, ...

Well, it's really what I was talking about at the start of my talk.

SAYING YOU DON'T KNOW

I'm afraid I don't have that information at hand, but ...

I'm sorry, but that's not really my field / area of research.

I'm afraid I don't have the answer to that one.

Can I get back to you on that one?

DELAYING AN ANSWER

Do you mind if we deal with that later?

Actually, I'll be coming to that point later in my talk.

I don't want to go into too much detail at this stage, as ...

Could I come back to you about that later?

I'd be happy to discuss this with you after my talk.