



## Viral Loop: From Facebook to Twitter, How Today's Smartest Businesses Grow Themselves

By Adam L. Penenberg

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--Ken Auletta, author of *Googled: The End of the World as We Know It*

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--Dan Heath, co-author of *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die?*

"One of the most astounding things about the Web age is how the best advertising is often no advertising at all. Penenberg masterfully explains how this works with case studies of products that were designed to spread. Every product can use a dose of this technique; this is the book to get to learn how."

--Chris Anderson, author of *Free: The Future of a Radical Price*

"In tight, engaging prose, Adam captures the essence of the ever-scaling power of the virus. It's not just for geeks anymore."

--Seth Godin, author of *Tribes*

"Penenberg discovers the perpetual motion machine for business and marketing... Buy this book. Catch a virus. Make a fortune."

--Jeff Jarvis

"Penenberg has unlocked the secret to the most successful digital businesses. An indispensable read."

--Robert Safian, Editor-in-Chief, *Fast Company*

"Instead of entrusting your business to a guru with an agenda and a ghostwriter, you should be turning to a pro journalist like Adam Penenberg, who understands the way media and money interact, has the critical faculty to engage with these phenomena in an unbiased fashion, and the technical facility to explain them to you in an entirely engaging, informative, and actionable way."

--Douglas Rushkoff, author of *Media Virus* and *Life Inc: How the world became*

*a corporation and how to take it back.*

**Here's something you may not know about today's Internet. Simply by designing your product the right way, you can build a flourishing business from scratch. No advertising or marketing budget, no need for a sales force, and venture capitalists will flock to throw money at you.**

Many of the most successful Web 2.0 companies, including MySpace, YouTube, eBay, and rising stars like Twitter and Flickr, are prime examples of what journalist Adam L. Penenberg calls a "viral loop"--to use it, you have to spread it. After all, what's the sense of being on Facebook if none of your friends are? The result: Never before has there been the potential to create wealth this fast, on this scale, and starting with so little.

In this game-changing must-read, Penenberg tells the fascinating story of the entrepreneurs who first harnessed the unprecedented potential of viral loops to create the successful online businesses--some worth billions of dollars--that we have all grown to rely on. The trick is that they created something people *really* want, so much so that their customers happily spread the word about their product for them.

All kinds of businesses--from the smallest start-ups to nonprofit organizations to the biggest multinational corporations--can use the paradigm-busting power of viral loops to enable their business through technology. *Viral Loop* is a must-read for any entrepreneur or business interested in uncorking viral loops to benefit their bottom line.

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### **Viral Loop: From Facebook to Twitter, How Today's Smartest Businesses Grow Themselves By Adam L. Penenberg Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In this clear-eyed collection of case studies, Fast Company contributing writer and NYU journalism professor Penenberg examines the engine driving the growth of web 2.0 businesses like Flickr, YouTube and eBay to Facebook and Twitter: the viral loop. The concept behind a viral loop is simple-in order to use the product, you have to spread it, thus creating massive, user-driven growth cycles-after all, Penenberg explains, social networks like Facebook are worthless to a user if one's friends aren't also using the products. Viral loops are nothing new, of course, and Penenberg has certainly done his homework, tracing the concept back through its analog roots via entertaining and enlightening anecdotes about companies like Tupperware, which used "parties" to turn ordinary housewives into an army of sales reps, to Charles Ponzi-yes, he of the Ponzi scheme, a viral scam recently taken to historic levels by Bernie Madoff. Penenberg truly succeeds, however, in showing how the viral loop has found its groove on the Internet, fueling a wave of billion-dollar companies all built on word of mouth-and, of course, user clicks. Solidly researched and briskly-written, Penenberg at once captures a great business and tech story, as well as a defining moment in our online culture.

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### Review

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### About the Author

Adam L. Penenberg is a contributing writer for *Fast Company* and a professor of journalism at New York University. He has written for the *New York Times*, *Slate*, *Wired* and *The Economist*, among others. A former senior editor at *Forbes* and reporter for Forbes.com, he garnered national attention in 1998 for unmasking serial fabricator Stephen Glass of *The New Republic*. Penenberg's story was a watershed for online investigative journalism and is portrayed in the film "Shattered Glass." He is the author of two previous books, *Spooked* and *Tragic Indifference*.

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