

# THE CASE OF THE ADDED ADS

A  
MAX IMPACT  
MYSTERY

VOLUME ONE  
ISSUE TWO

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I WAS STILL SCRATCHING MY HEAD AFTER DEALING WITH THOSE TWO DUDES FROM OMNIWORLD MEGASYSTEMS (IN *THE COMPELLING CONTENT CAPER*, IN CASE YOU MISSED IT). IT WAS A PRETTY QUIET DAY IN THE OFFICE, SO I HAD THE LUXURY OF DAYDREAMING ABOUT THAT PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE INTO WHICH ALL THE COMMON SENSE SEEMS TO HAVE VANISHED.

I IMAGINED FINDING IT, PACKAGING IT, AND SELLING IT BACK TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO'D LOST IT OR THROWN IT AWAY. I WAS STARTING TO FANTASIZE ABOUT ACTUALLY BEING ABLE TO RETIRE ... BANG! BANG! BANG! WHOEVER WAS POUNDING ON MY DOOR WAS ANGRY, IMPATIENT, OR BOTH.



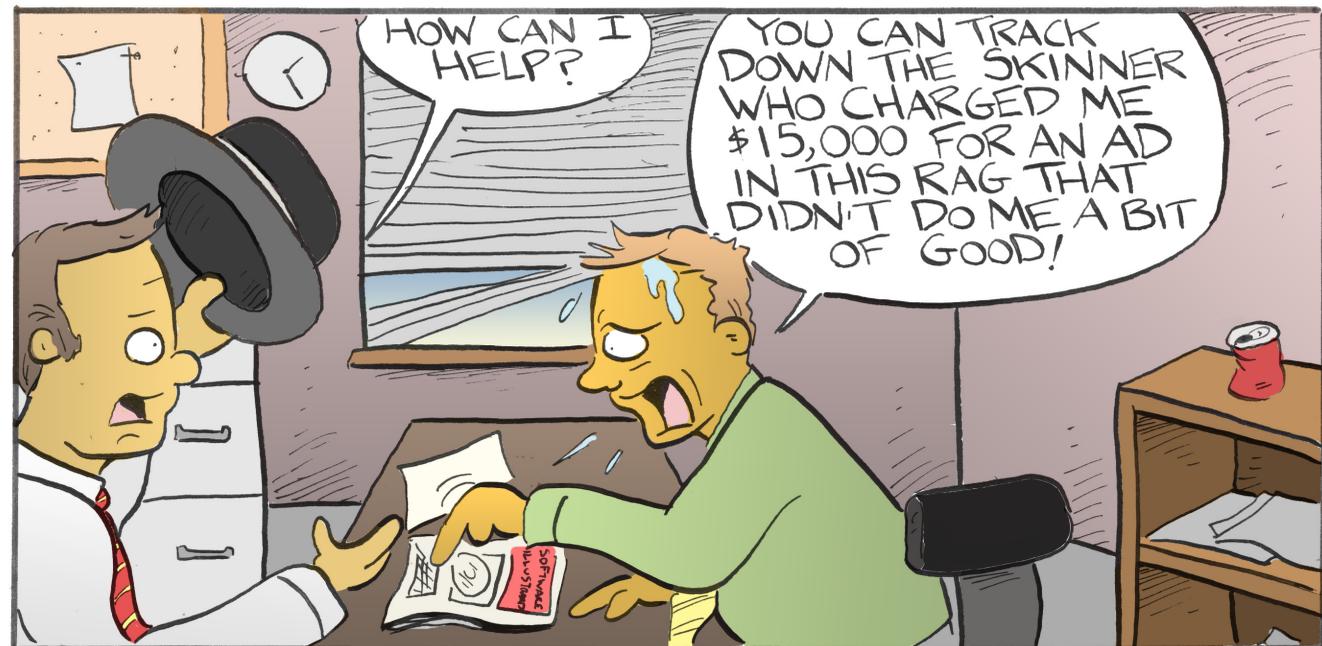
THIS IS WHY ADVERTISING IS DEAD!

MAX  
IMPACT  
MARKETING  
DETECTIVE

GOOD MORNING. I'M  
HAPPY TO SEE YOU, TOO.  
WOULDN'T YOU COME IN?

HOW CAN I  
HELP?

YOU CAN TRACK  
DOWN THE SKINNER  
WHO CHARGED ME  
\$15,000 FOR AN AD  
IN THIS RAG THAT  
DIDN'T DO ME A BIT  
OF GOOD!



I MANAGED TO FIND OUT OUR FURIOUS FRIEND'S NAME WAS GIL BATES. HE'D FOUNDED A COMPANY CALL PUNYSOFT AND SUFFERED FROM THE AGE-OLD MALADY OF BELIEVING THE WORLD SHOULD THINK WHAT HE WAS DOING WAS AS IMPORTANT AS HE THOUGHT IT WAS. SINCE HIS WIFE APPARENTLY HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO DISABUSE HIM OF THAT NOTION, I FIGURED IT WAS OVER MY HEAD, TOO. BUT I WAS ABLE TO DETERMINE HIS IMMEDIATE BEEF: AFTER SPENDING \$15K FOR ONE AD IN *SOFTWARE ILLUSTRATED*, GIL WAS RIGHTEOUSLY MIFFED THAT THE BUYING PUBLIC HADN'T BEATEN A PATH TO HIS DOOR WITH ITS CHECKBOOK OPEN. I DIDN'T WANT TO ROUGH HIM UP TOO MUCH. BUT GIL DEFINITELY WASN'T A CANDIDATE FOR KID-GLOVE TREATMENT.



LET'S START FROM THE BEGINNING. WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

THIS FISH-WRAP HAS 14 MILLION READERS! AND I RAN IN THE SWIMSUIT EDITION!



SO, WHAT?

EVEN IF ONLY ONE PERCENT OF THEM BOUGHT SOMETHING, THAT'S 140,000 SALES!



HAD ANYONE HEARD OF YOUR BRAND BEFORE YOU RAN THE AD?

MY WHAT?



YOUR BRAND. PUNYSOFT. DID YOU ESTABLISH IT BEFORE YOU ADVERTISED?

IS THAT IMPORTANT?



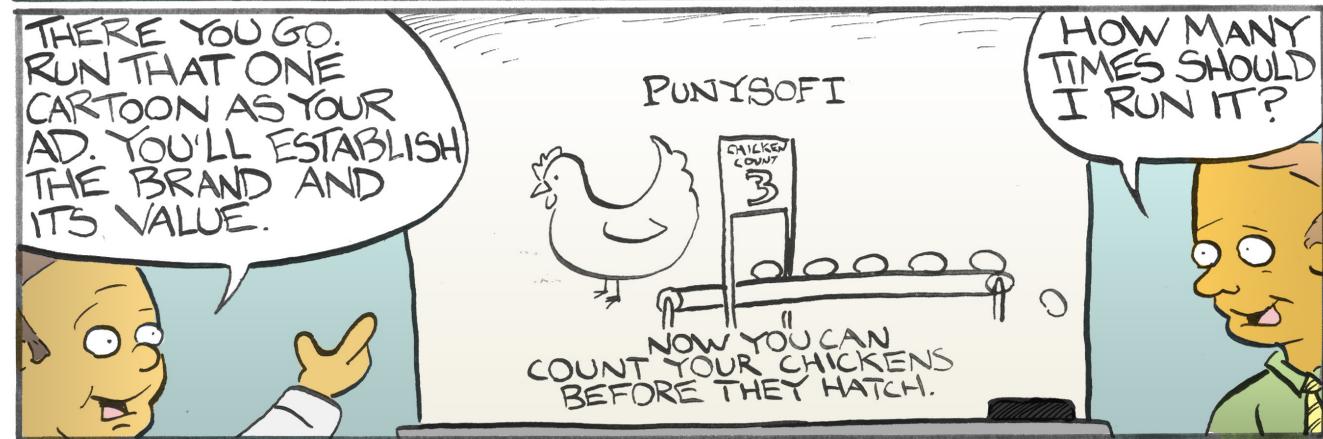
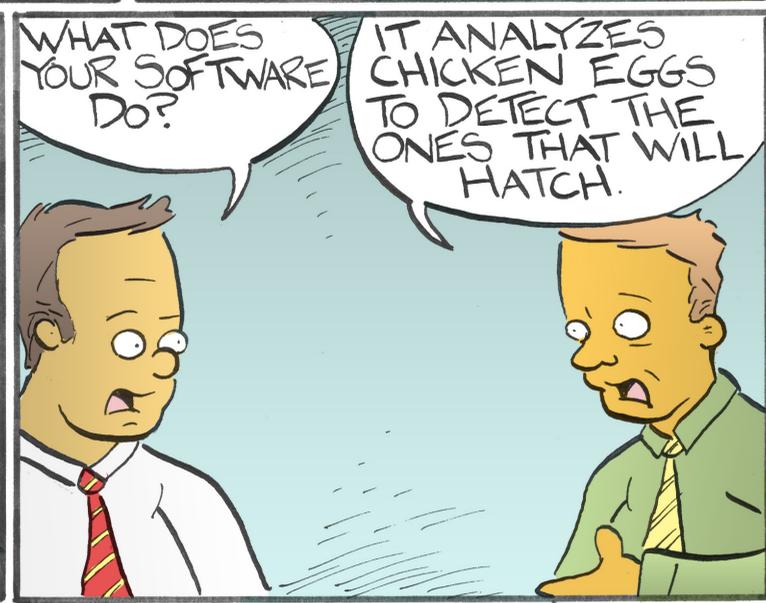
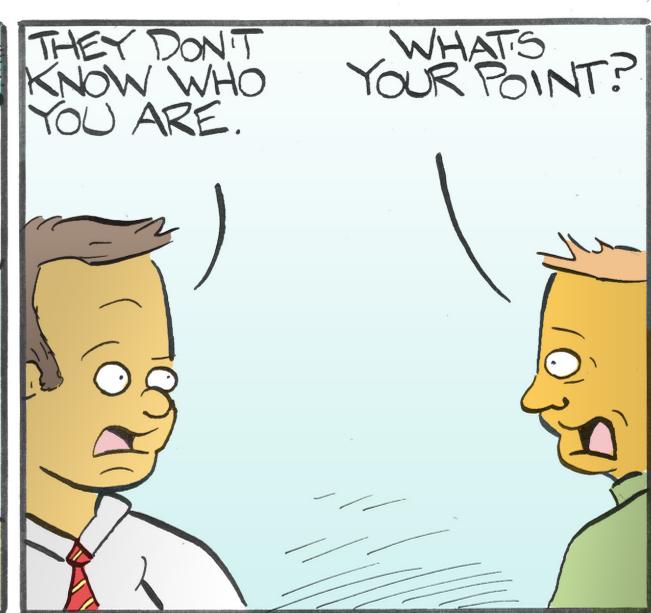
THE BEST THING YOU CAN HOPE FOR A GUY LIKE GIL BATES IS THAT HE'LL MAKE ENOUGH MONEY THAT HIS NAÏVETÉ WON'T HURT HIM ... OR PUT HIM IN A POSITION TO HURT ANYONE ELSE. BUT HE WASN'T GETTING OFF TO A VERY AUSPICIOUS START. IN ADDITION TO TRACKING DOWN THE ADVERTISING DIRECTOR AT *SOFTWARE ILLUSTRATED*, I WAS GOING TO HAVE TO GIVE GIL A FEW POINTERS ON TREATING HIS ADVERTISING DOLLARS AS AN INVESTMENT — AND TAKING CARE OF THEM.





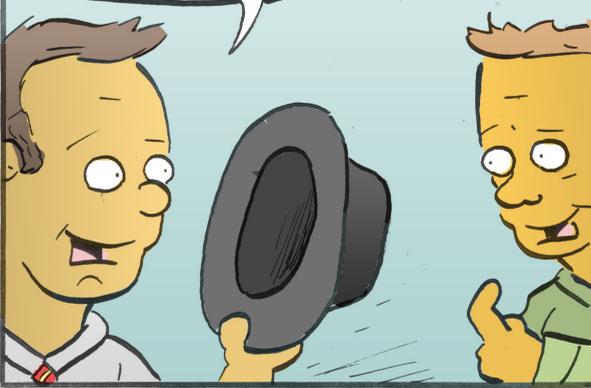
I DIDN'T EXPECT CASH BARRELHEAD TO BE A GOOD SAMARITAN AWARD NOMINEE ANY TIME SOON. BUT IF A SHEEP WALKS INTO YOUR OFFICE, YOU CAN'T BLAME A GUY FOR FLEEING HIM. GIL BATES HAD BEEN RIPE FOR THE SHEARING. HE HADN'T EVEN BEEN SUBTLE ABOUT IT. AND THE ONLY WAY I WAS GOING TO CLOSE THIS CASE WAS TO GIVE HIM A CRASH COURSE IN AD SAVVY.





AS MANY TIMES AS YOU CAN AFFORD TO. THE HIGHER THE FREQUENCY, THE BETTER THE PAGE RATE AND THE GREATER THE EFFECTIVENESS.

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, PUNYSOFT WILL DOMINATE THE POULTRY MARKET!



DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICK... NEVER MIND.

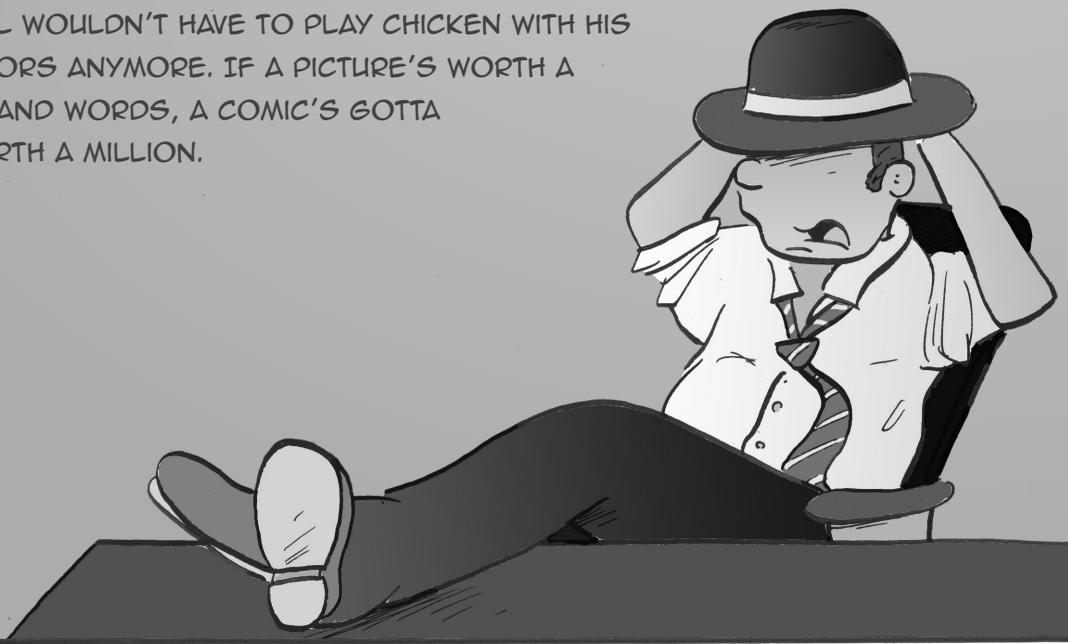
HUH?



GIL'S DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR NOTWITHSTANDING, HE REALLY WASN'T A BAD GUY. WITH SOME ADULT SUPERVISION, HE MIGHT EVEN MAKE A GO OF PUNYSOFT. CRAZIER THINGS HAVE HAPPENED.

IN THE MEANTIME, NOW THAT HIS ADS WERE CREATING SOME AWARENESS FOR THE PUNYSOFT BRAND AND CONVEYING ITS VALUE, THEY'D START PULLING. GIL WOULD BE ABLE TO LEVERAGE HIS FREQUENCY TO SWEAT SOME VALUE-ADDS OUT OF CASH BARRELHEAD (ALTHOUGH, GIL'S WIFE NIXED THE IDEA OF HIS VISITING THE PHOTO SHOOT FOR THE SOFTWARE ILLUSTRATED SWIMSUIT EDITION).

AND GIL WOULDN'T HAVE TO PLAY CHICKEN WITH HIS INVESTORS ANYMORE. IF A PICTURE'S WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS, A COMIC'S GOTTA BE WORTH A MILLION.



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