

# The Power of the Web Is at Your Beck and Call

*David Meerman Scott is happy to show you the way.*

By John Dunlap – Editor, SSA Globe

Ladies and gentlemen, your tour guide to all things electronic and worthwhile, Mr. David Meerman Scott, is here to whisk you away to the world of the Web and YouTube, a place where marketing and public relations can be done virtually (no pun intended) for nothing. Welcome, my friends, to the show that never ends.

Scott, the keynote speaker at the Self Storage Association's (SSA) Conference & Trade Show in Las Vegas this month,

will bring a message that everyone on hand most certainly will appreciate. After all, it involves promoting your business, using a sort of modern-day word-of-mouth and not cutting into your wallet. Think of the 48-year old Scott as your bearer of good news. And if you are willing to put into practice his take on doing marketing and PR primarily through the Internet (using certain tools available on the Web) you may

find yourself patting this Bostonian on the back for his good advice.

Scott is the author of the award-winning *BusinessWeek* best-selling book, *The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use News Releases, Blogs, Viral Marketing and Online Media to Reach Buyers Directly* (which is being published in 24 languages), as well as the new hit book, *World Wide Rave: Creating Triggers that Get Millions of People to Spread Your Ideas and Share Your Stories*. He is a recovering VP of marketing for two publicly-traded

technology companies and was Asia marketing director for Knight-Ridder—at the time one of the world's largest newspaper and electronic information companies. Scott has lived and worked in New York, Tokyo, Boston, and Hong Kong and has presented at industry conferences and events in more than 40 countries.

“When I first got out of college, I was working in bond trading for Dean Witter in New York and it was there that I became acquainted with real-time electronic data,” Scott says. “I spent about 10 years doing marketing that essentially revolved around electronic information products. Then, about 1995, when the Web really had its beginnings, I was able to see early on that this new medium would revolutionize marketing.”

## Buying Into Something New

“Of course, a lot of people pushed back against the notion of making good use of the Web simply because they viewed using the Web as sort of childish,” Scott said. “These days, nobody doubts that the Web is a critical part of marketing, simply because everybody uses the Web virtually every day. Nowadays, if you want to solve a problem, like buying a car or taking a vacation or deciding what self storage business to use, you can do it all on the Web.”

Scott also thinks part of businesses' reluctance to use the Web stems from a connection to more traditional forms of marketing and PR. But he says you can have it both ways.

“Fifty years ago, when TV was emerging on the scene, people thought it was silly, but marketers and advertisers saw it as a pretty cool thing and started placing ads, albeit in the form of radio ads. Fifteen years later people were watching TV all the time and ads were evolving. But that didn't make radio go away or be any less relevant.”

“For most businesses these days it is not a situation where you have to start putting all your money and efforts into online marketing,” Scott says. “You can use both. I don't



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advocate that people stop what they are doing offline, but it is critical to know that many, many people are using the Web every day, and those people can be reached for less money than you might imagine.”

“Five years ago, there was no YouTube for videos, no blogs and no photo sites like Flickr,” Scott continues. “And five years ago, you probably needed a professional to help you create a website. These days, you can do it yourself. It is so simple to post photos on the Web. If a self storage facility wanted to have a video tour of its facility on its website, all you have to do is put it on YouTube and have it embedded on your website.”

### Use What Works for You

But Scott says that making good use of the Internet doesn't mean giving up on marketing techniques that work for you.

“If you are a self storage facility and are finding that using the Yellow Pages is providing good results for you, then you most certainly should not stop using it,” Scott says. “Why would you want to change? But imagine also having a great website of your own, with video and pictures that you keep changing and how well that speaks about you

as a business. I live in Boston, and if I was going to find a self storage facility, I'd use a search engine on the Web to find the three within 20 miles of my home, then go to their websites. If there is a guy who is showing a tour video of his site, I'm much more likely to store at his place.”

In his newest book, *World Wide Rave*, Scott talks about the power of word-of-mouth.

“It is all about the new rules of marketing where you don't have to rely on placing ads in media—you can do it yourself on the Web,” Scott says. “And when people see something they like on the Web, they are usually eager to share that information with their friends and other people they know. Suddenly, if people are seeing a video of your business on YouTube that you put up for free, you could have 3,000 people seeing it and talking about it with others.”

So, if you haven't already opened up to the world of marketing and PR on the Web, go to it! And perhaps people in your area will start raving about *your* business. ❖

Check out David Meerman Scott's blog at [www.WebInkNow.com](http://www.WebInkNow.com), or download his free book, *The New Rules of Viral Marketing: How Word-of-Mouse Spreads Your Ideas for Free*, at [http://www.davidmeermanscott.com/documents/Viral\\_Marketing.pdf](http://www.davidmeermanscott.com/documents/Viral_Marketing.pdf).

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