

A Short History of a Newfound Verb

A brand reaches its highest point in development when it slides into our everyday language - Kraft, Campbell's, Hershey even Green Giant.

To become a verb is even less common. "The Hoover" for "to vacuum" comes to mind. How about, "To Skype" meaning to make a video call, show modest promise.

To become a verb, "to Google" started as an intransitive verb; a pastime without an object; search for search's sake; a Sunday drive through cyberspace. But really, we know what Google is for – forensics, stalking, the transitive stuff.

In 2003, the American Dialect Society named Google, transitive verb, "the most useful" word of 2002. The Oxford English Dictionary minted it in June 2006.

Google's mission is "to organize the world's information." But "to Google," of course, does not mean "to organize"; it means to submit to Google's organization while pretending you're blazing a bespoke passage through the information superhighway, over the information Rockies and around the information Horn.

"To Google" something is to accept the fiction that Google is both the whole information world – and the only path through it.

On a side note, China's search engine, Baidu, while overtaken by darkness and censorship, nonetheless has the far better name. "Baidu" derives from "Green Jade Table in the Lantern Festival," a song dynasty poem by Xin Qiji about the annual festival during which maidens left their houses to be seen and courted.

Organizing the world's information sounds ambitious. Have fun and keep googling!

If you would like to submit a question or suggest a topic for future column consideration, please email your questions or comments to: info.vpcuc@gmail.com

The next monthly meeting of the Vernon PC Users' Club will be Tuesday, May 8th, at 7:00 PM in the cafeteria at the Schubert Centre.

We start off every meeting with a 'TANSQ' session. Come check us out!

Call Betty at 250-309-1590 or Grace at 250-549-4318 for more information.