

## Let Your Fingers Do the Clicking

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### Let Your Fingers Do the Clicking

If you only read one of my newsletters this year, READ THIS ONE!

Exciting things are happening that will change how small, local businesses benefit from the web. Until recently, using a search engine to find a local plumber was not very useful. The Yellow Pages were a more effective tool. Now local search is making Yellow Pages obsolete. As a result, small to midsize advertising agencies and design firms will have to reconsider the importance of the web, both for themselves and for their smallest clients!

In March of 2005, I attended the Search Engine Strategies New York conference. I came away with pages and pages of notes and months worth of ideas to work on here at Newfangled. Among all of this information, one thing in particular will affect small to mid-size advertising agencies and design firms the most. **Local search** is replacing the Yellow Pages as the preferred way to find local businesses and services.

#### Let's do a quick demo together

If you're reading this newsletter, you must have a browser open. Before we proceed, I want to show you something neat. Click this link to go to [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com). Before I make my main point, go ahead and play with it a bit. It's VERY cool! It is so much better than MapQuest. You can pan in real-time and zoom in to any level you want. No more clicking to move right or left, no more waiting for the screen to redraw. If you zoom in far enough, you'll see that the street names display right inside the streets...no more trying to figure out which street label is meant for which street. Okay, that's enough fun for now.

Next, I want you to zoom to where your office is located. Maybe display the map so that your entire town fills the map. Now, in the search bar type in "pizza" and hit enter.

How do you like that? Little balloons pointing to every spot on the map where there's a pizza place near you. You've got to be pretty impressed...I know I was (of course, I am easily amused). I'm sure you'll want to play around with this more; for example, you might want to type in "graphic design" or "advertising agency" and see what shows up, but allow me to move on to my main point first.

Another important way that online local search exceeds the usefulness of the Yellow Pages is that you don't have to know the right category in order to find a vendor; just type in the product or service you are looking for and voil