

Internet Intervention

I had to do it. They pushed me to it. I was drowning in social networking sites, instant messaging, handheld devices and emails. I couldn't keep all my internet worlds updated on every move I made—especially when the very existence of them was making my life less...like life.

I called a meeting.

Everyone from every site I was member of, every internet tool and widget was invited to come to the Huntington Beach Hyatt on Monday for a brief speech by me, cocktails—which proved a mistake—and then breakout groups.

When I arrived at the meeting there was already a ruckus at the front door. Great... “What’s going on?” I asked the guard I had cleverly hired, predicting trouble. “This guy says he was invited, but he isn’t on your ‘friends’ list.” Well, well, there stood “SirDan,” who had been trying to be my “friend” on MySpace for months.

Now there he was in person, nothing like his shirtless picture, but surprisingly, actually 99 years old! “Listen ‘SirDan,’ I have told you a gazillion times already, I don’t make anyone a ‘friend’ who I don’t know—nothing personal.”

He sulked away, slowly...I can only assume because of being rejected in person...and his advanced age, of course.

When I entered the room, everyone looked like they had arrived and were appropriately seated at their assigned tables—all the Friendsters at one table, Etsy girls at another....

I headed straight for my podium when up bounced AIM, “Hi! What ya’ doin’?” Grabbing her arm, I whispered through a forced smile, “I told you, be a good girl and please don’t interrupt me every five minutes tonight. I really have to get this

done.”

” □ ” She said and sat down quickly.

Perfect, now I was running late. I knew I had to avoid the “Twitter” table at all costs...”OMG! Who ARE all these droll, tedious people?” one mused. “A lot of these are my friends...you know, people I have actually met in real life,” I futilely attempted to explain.

They all just looked at me blankly for a moment, as if not processing what I was saying, then went back to chatting passionately about the obvious awesomeness of “Grease 2.”

Oh, this is going to be harder than I thought. I needed a drink—pronto.

I headed out of the room and into the bar. I pulled out my iPhone to call my husband, who was sitting at the LinkedIn table, to make some excuse for me.

“Hi hon, can you...what?...I’m sure I sent them to him...” Apparently, our accountant, sitting with my husband, just couldn’t adhere to the “no work-talk” rule I put in place for that table. “I’m going to the bar, please stall for me.”

As I approached the bar, I noticed one solitary figure standing there. Squinting, I couldn’t quite make out who it was... “Don’t even think about pretending you know who I am,” he burned.

Then it came to me—It was the Palm Pilot I received for my birthday 10 years ago. I slowly slipped my iPhone into my handbag and greeted him with a smile.

Unmoved by my friendliness, he said, “I know you had to look up “retro handheld devices” last week trying to remember what I was called,” he said, poking me in the chest with his stylus. “You and your friends had a good laugh,” he growled bitterly. Then turned his square back to me and ordered

another drink from the bar.

This was my chance, I was dying to ask him for my friend's phone number I had entered nowhere else but in my Palm Pilot..."Do you by any chance still have the number of..." He slowly turned back to me and gave me the most sinister blue/green stare. "I just really want to get ahold of her," I weakly finished.

Defeated, he threw his perfectly calculated tip at the bartender and staggered out to a car that sped away down PCH—my old pager at the wheel—listening to the mixed tape my college boyfriend made for me.

At that moment, my phone rang and I dug deep to find it. "You have GOT to get back in here! All of your old college friends on Facebook started to tease your high school friends from Classmates about how the 80's was a 'vast vortex of mediocrity' and the bands from your MySpace page took the spat as their cue to trash the place. Hurry!" shouted my frantic husband.

I ran in just in time to see Morrissey throw his goat cheese salad at David Sedaris, both seated at the MySpace table, apparently because of David's remark about pompadours being a "clear grasp at fleeting youth."

Naturally, the Flickr table took full advantage of the photo op and the bloggers, who had their cameras out taking pictures of their dinner, snapped a few good shots, as well.

This was obviously a bad idea. Bringing together these different worlds, which had been safely separated by passwords and usernames, was clearly not meant to be.

I suppose I should just go back to relating to everyone (and thing) the old fashioned way—via my Mac.