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[Will Instant Searching Drive Branding?](#)

Posted on November 12, 2010 by [Dan Kelly](#)

Stephen Stolfi of [CT Corsearch](#) wrote an article published on [IP Law 360](#) last week (subscription required) about [Google Instant](#). Google is remarkable enough as is. Google Instant is downright unsettling--a search engine that finds what you're looking for before you finish typing it in. Mr. Stolfi observes how this might benefit brands that the search engine "suggests" through auto-complete technology as people type in queries--a natural extension of auto-suggest technology, which has been around for a while.

Here's an example: I tried typing in "Mary Poppins." Here were the top hits at each letter:

M - Mapquest

MA - Mapquest

MAR - Mark Dayton (MN Gubernatorial candidate--location seems to be a factor in the algorithm)

MARY - Mary Kay

MARY P - Mary Poppins

Mr. Stolfi's article reminded me of a phenomenon that we don't see much of anymore in branding: picking a name starting with "A" to get to the top of the list in yellow pages and other alphabetical business listings--things like AAA, Acme, and A-1. Alphabetical listings have not completely gone the way of the dodo, but they are on the way out for many (most?) practical purposes.

No. We are still at the mercy of what must be the oldest law in design: form follows function.

What form will follow the functionality of instant Internet search results? I am sure SEO 2.0 has already begun sifting instant search rubrics for valuable clues. I daresay the race is on to land one of the coveted top spots--one for each letter of the alphabet. And there will be fights so long as Google Instant suggests brand names or



proper names at each letter. Right now, "A" is for "amazon," "B" is for "best buy," and "C" is for "craigslist." "D" returns the only generic word that I found in the whole alphabet: dictionary. I could see Google monetizing one and two letter combinations. Why not?

Any predictions?



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