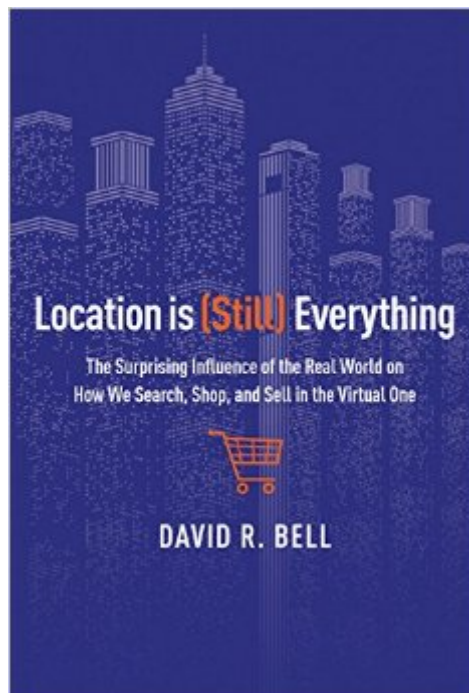


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# Location Is (Still) Everything: The Surprising Influence Of The Real World On How We Search, Shop, And Sell In The Virtual One



## Synopsis

Conventional wisdom holds that the Internet makes the world flat and reduces friction by erasing the impact of the physical world on our buying habits. But Wharton professor and marketing expert David R. Bell argues that the way we use the Internet is still largely shaped by the physical world we inhabit. Anyone can go online and buy a pair of jeansâ ”but the likelihood that we will do so depends to a significant degree on where we live. The presence of stores nearby, trendy and friendly neighbors, and local sales taxes, among other factors, play a critical role in our decision making when it comes to buying online. Our willingness to search for and consume information also depends on where we live and whom we live next to. In *Location Is (Still) Everything*, Bell offers a fascinating, in-depth look at online commerce and retailing through his years of research, investing, and advising experience. His unique GRAVITY framework is a powerful and practical tool that uses fundamental human behaviors and location-based conditions to explain how the real and virtual worlds intersect â ” and what Internet sellers must do in order to succeed. Entrepreneurs, managers, students, and investors will all benefit from understanding how and why we use the Internet to search, shop, and sell.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Many years ago while completing several assignments for American Airlines, I had the opportunity to spend some time at its training center and was intrigued by the flight simulator. Of course, the design and capabilities must be based on the real-world experiences it replicates. I recalled that visit

as I began to read this book. According to David Bell, the relationships that exist between our physical-world locations and our virtual-world behaviors can be - and usually are -- robust. "They'll be pretty stable and quite predictable. Indeed, the very idea that your experiences in the physical world shape your behavior in the virtual world may seem rather obvious after you've seen the reasons why. (Good and lasting ideas always seem intuitive once you have the means to appreciate them.)" Quite true. Bell suggests that gravitational pull is the reason he'd be better off taking the elevator in his apartment building rather than a "shortcut" to the street by jumping from the window. Yes, that is a simple example but its implications are anything but simple. The characters played by George Clooney and Sandra Bullock in the film Gravity can flow in space but not when approaching the space shuttle before the next flight. They and we live in two worlds: where we are located physically when purchasing a copy of Bell's book, and, where information as well as our thoughts and feelings about it exist. We have a physical location when using the Internet to complete the purchase but it makes no difference where and when we do so.

First (fun) fact: David Bell, the writer, is a pure blood Kiwi; he succeeds from the first pages of his book to mix references from the All Blacks, Lorde, and Invercargill, his home town. If you dream about the Southern hemisphere, buy the book. Yes, even if you do not care about e-commerce and/or Internet and/or academic research. New Zealand inhabitants are so few that Location is (still) everything is a rare way to enjoy Kiwi humor and culture. Second (serious) fact: if you are interested by e-commerce, Internet, academic research, then familiarize yourself with GRAVITY. This is the key concept which organizes David's book. G... Geography - Where we live determine to a great extent our preferences and the way we use Internet. R... Resistance - Internet is used to remove search frictions (in big cities) or geographic frictions (smaller locations). A... Adjacency - We are similar to our neighbors which induces geographic contagion. V... Vicinity - initial sales arise from proximity, later sales from similarity. I... Isolation - local sellers cater to the majority so the preference minority buys online. T... Topography - tax rates, delivery time, shopping environment is different in each place. Y... You - if you want to become rich then follow Warby Parker's example. David's main theory is to show that the way you shop online depends actually a lot of where you currently live (the "real" world). Third (fun) fact: if you are the kind of person who likes Trivial Pursuit or brainteasers, this book is a gold mine.

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