

The economy of compliments on Yelp.com

A View from Social Interaction Design

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We look simply to see, see others looking, see we are seen looking, and soon become knowing and skilled in regard to the evidential uses made of the appearance of looking.”

Erving Goffman, Forms of Talk



Yelp.com



Yelp.com

- Yelp is “real reviews, real people”
- Using “consumer generated reviews,” Yelp also
 - generates traffic to reviews through people
 - and traffic to people through reviews
- Reviews build a profile for the user so that users can engage with reviews or with each other



Yelp.com

- To facilitate conversation on Yelp, the site offers a set of compliments:

Choose your Compliment Type:


Thank You Cute Pic Good Writer

Hot Stuff Just a Note Like Your Profile

Write More! You're Cool Great Photo

Great Lists You're Funny

At first I was afraid, I was petrified. Kept thinking I could never live without Yelp by my side. And then I found your reviews, they gave me strength to step out the door, and now I'm calling all my friends and hitting the dance floor.

 Status: Ready [Cancel](#)



Yelp.com

- Users give each other compliments
 - directed either at the person
 - at their reviews
 - at their style
 - at their looks, etc
- And because communication solicits response, a compliment given is often a compliment returned



...this place looks cool



Swig San Francisco, Civic Center/Tenderloin | Yelp

Search for (e.g. taco, salon, Max's) Near (Address, Neighborhood, City, State or Zip) San Francisco, CA

Welcome About Me Write a Review Find Reviews Invite Friends Messaging Talk Events Member Search Account Log Out

Yelp Nightlife brought to you by Beck's BECK'S

Swig
based on 285 reviews Rating Details

Category: Lounges [Edit]
Neighborhood: Civic Center/Tenderloin
561 Geary Street
(between Jones St & Shannon St)
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 931-7292
www.swigbar.com/index.php

Hours: Mon-Sun 8:00 a.m.-1:30 a.m.
Wheelchair Accessible: Yes
Best Nights: Fri, Sat, Thu

Price Range: \$\$
Parking: Street
Outdoor Seating: No
Happy Hour: Yes

Accepts Credit Cards: Yes
Good for Groups: Yes
Music: DJ

Edit Business Info Link to This Page First to Review Jeremy S.

Send to Friend Bookmark Send to Phone Edit my Review Print version

You Might Also Consider Sponsored Result

Lingba Lounge
San Francisco, CA
149 reviews
A Southeast Asian hideaway nestled on Potrero Hill. Visit for exotic drinks, a lush setting, and hypnotic grooves.

285 Reviews for Swig
Sort by: Recent + Votes | Time | Rating | Useful | Funny | Cool | Total Votes | Friends

Favorite roshni r.
627
dynamite with a laserbeam!
12/07/2005

man, i was all excited about seeing real-life swingers but i couldn't find any...or maybe i just didn't look "swingable." that said, it was a pretty cool place with a lot going on for a tuesday night (without being overly crowded), the upstairs room was pretty cool and good for people watching. everyone seemed to be having a good time and i vaguely recall liking the music, but the memories are too vague to accurately comment.

Bookmark Send to a Friend
Was this review ...? Useful (1) Funny (2) Cool

Elite Starla D.
439
Vegan bacon, not made from real vegans.
09/24/2007

Browse Nearby:
Restaurants | Night Life | Shopping | Coffee | All

People Who Viewed This Also Viewed...

- Anu 129 reviews
Neighborhood: SOMA
Category: Night Life
- BK Lounge 7 reviews
Neighborhood: Civic Center/Tenderloin
Category: Lounges
- Rye 359 reviews
Neighborhood: Nob Hill
Category: Lounges
- The Ambassador 243 reviews
Neighborhood: Nob Hill
Category: Bars
- Bourbon & Branch 504 reviews
Neighborhood: Civic Center/Tenderloin
Category: Bars

Related Lists

- if I Were a Man
This is where I'd take my Ino!





Swig

★★★★★ based on 285 reviews [Rating Details »](#)

Category: [Lounges](#) [\[Edit\]](#)

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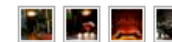
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Sponsored Result

[Lingba Lounge](#)

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★★★★★ 149 reviews

A Southeast Asian hideaway nestled on Potrero Hill. Visit for exotic drinks, a lush setting, and hypnotic grooves.




[Add Photos](#)




she's hot!






[All 40 Photos](#)



"Mr. Pibb + Red Vines = Crazy Delicious"

279 Friends 

378 Reviews

15 Firsts

107 Fans

1 Local Photo

Add as a Friend

Send A Compliment

Private Message

Add To Favorites

Show Similar Reviews

Review votes:
1860 Useful, 2091 Funny, and 2171 Cool

Compliments

(372) (156) (527) (1038) (12)

(24) (165) (20) (111) (59) (69)

Swig

based on 285 reviews [Rating Details](#)


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and she's cool too!





I'll tell her...



I'll tell her...





hey, look what I got!



hmm, he's cool









hey! back at me!



Now they're both happy



And everyone can see it



this works!



this works!



this works!



this works!



this works!







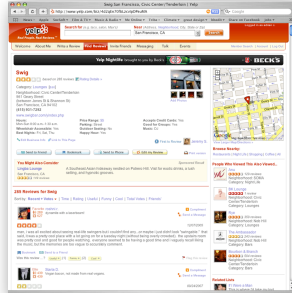




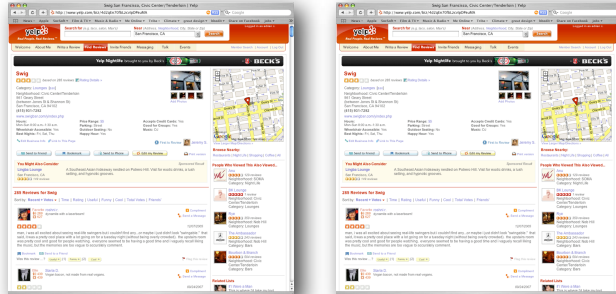
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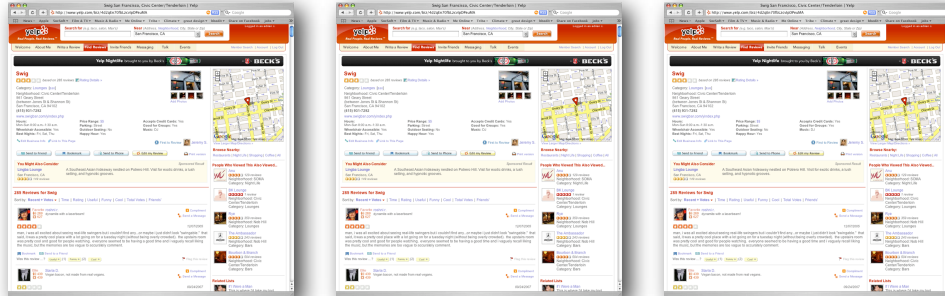
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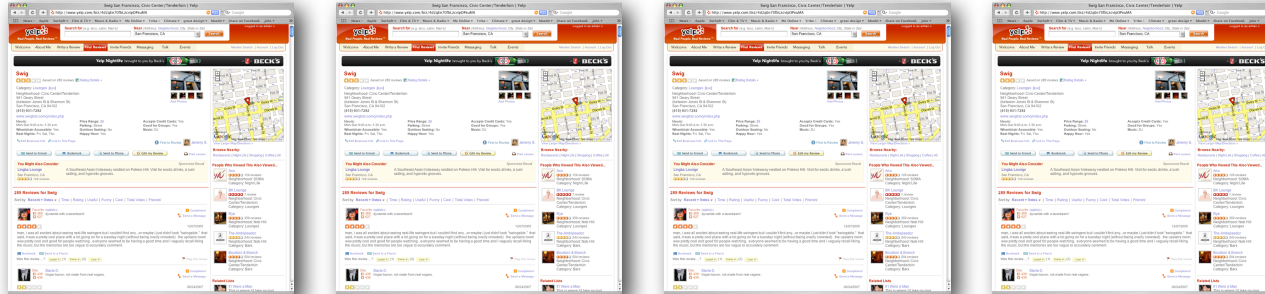
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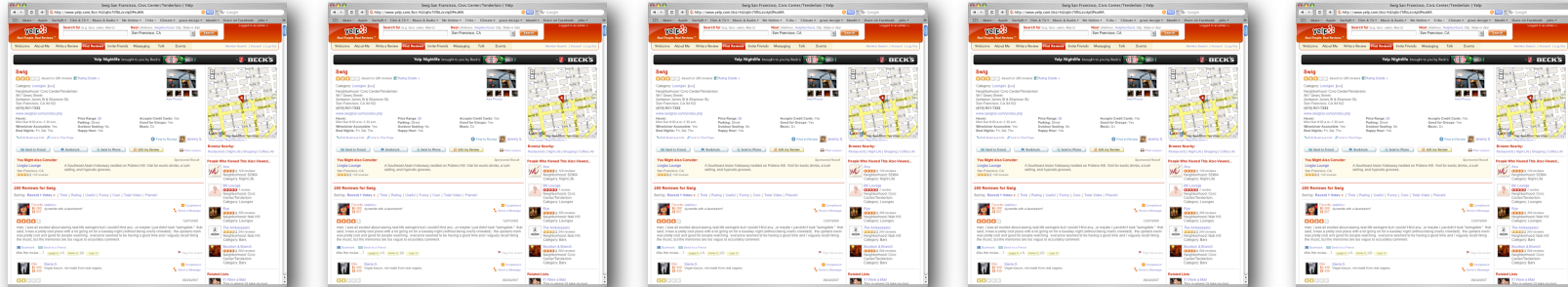
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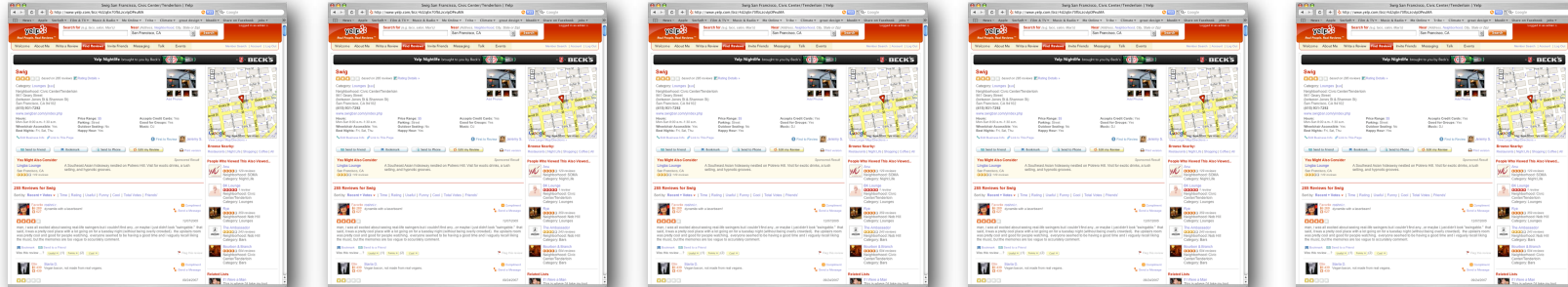
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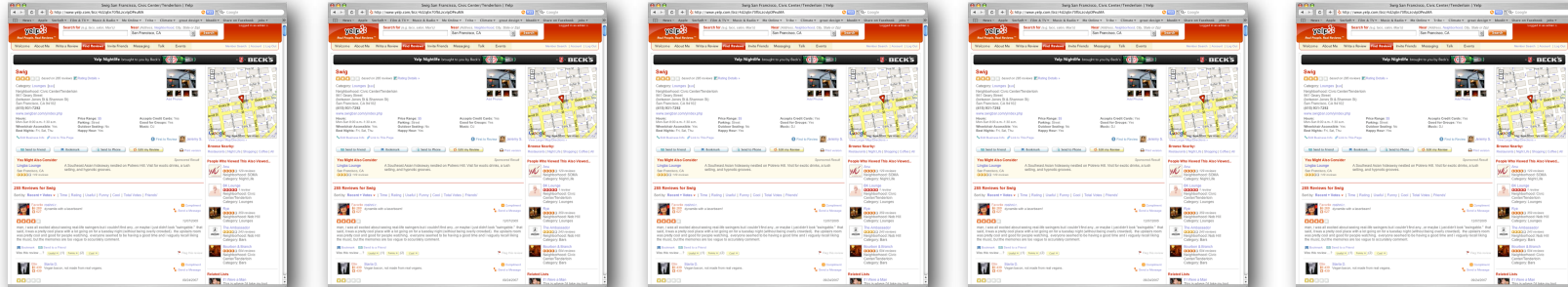
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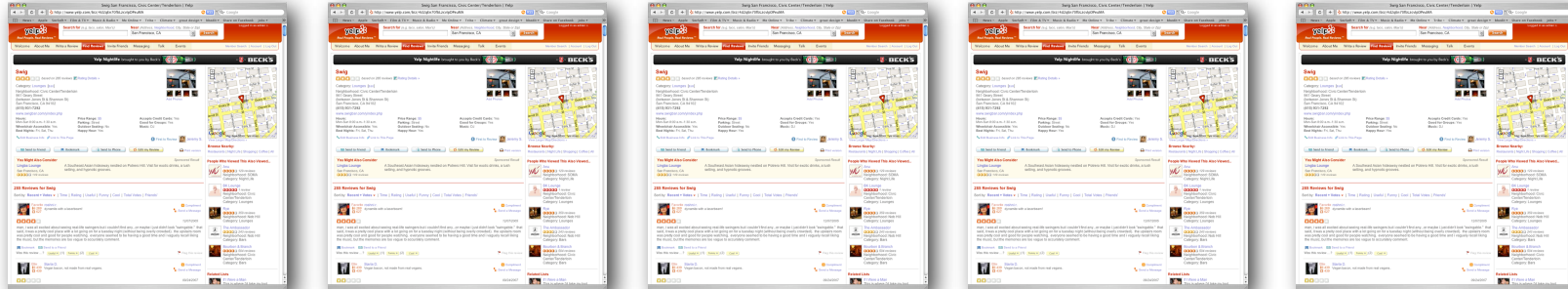
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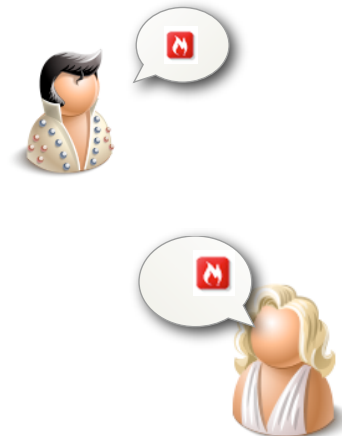
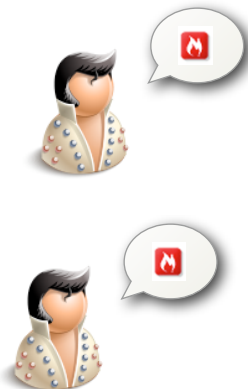
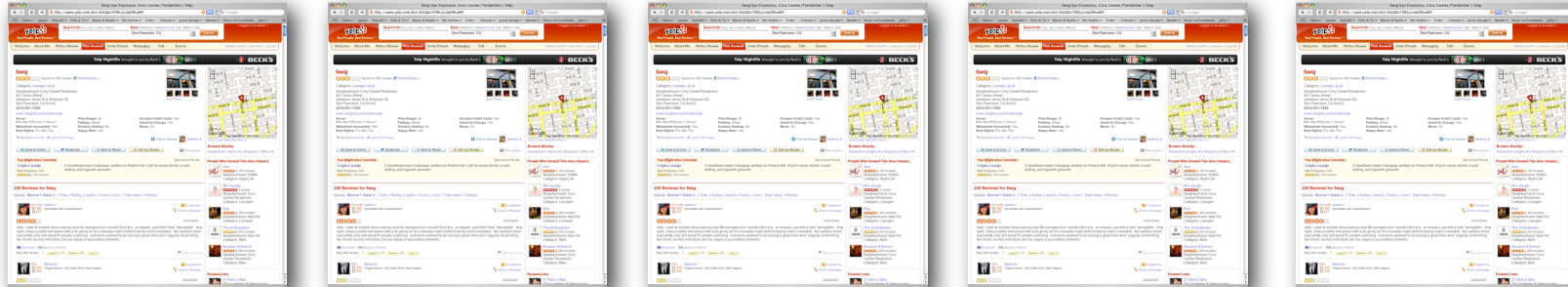
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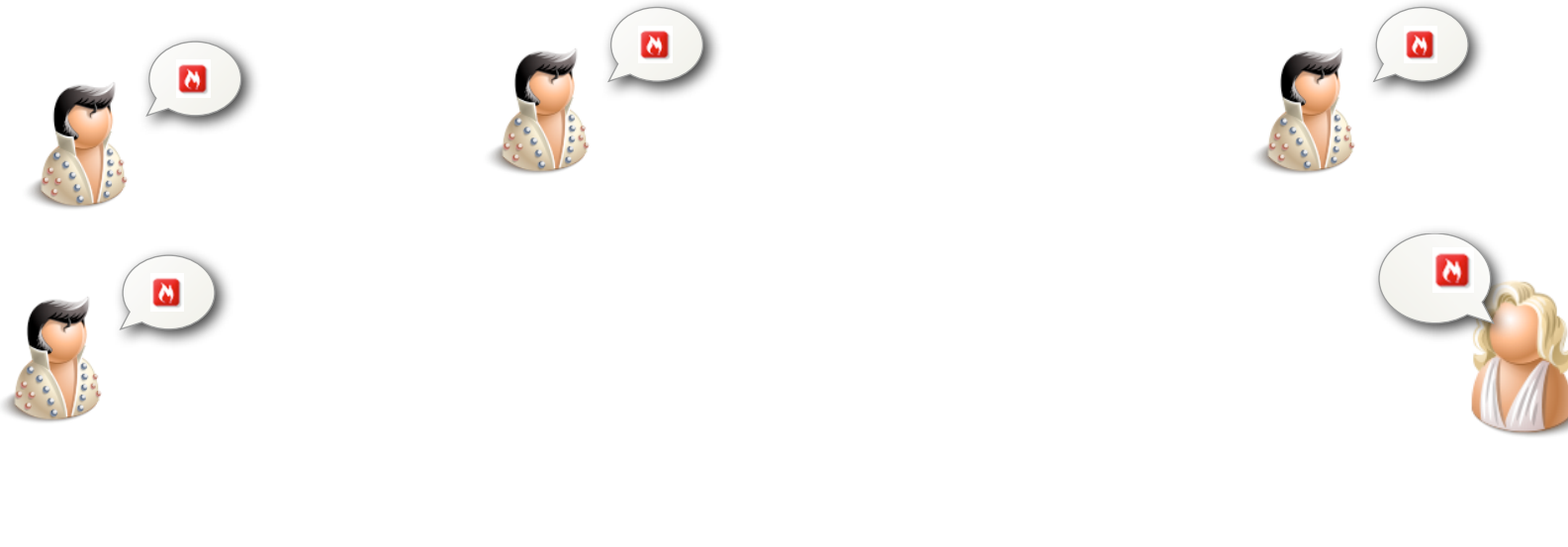
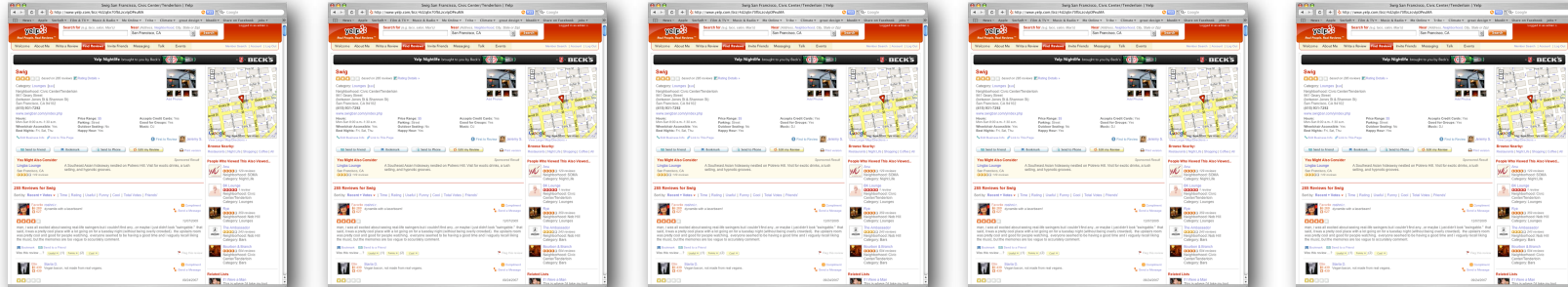
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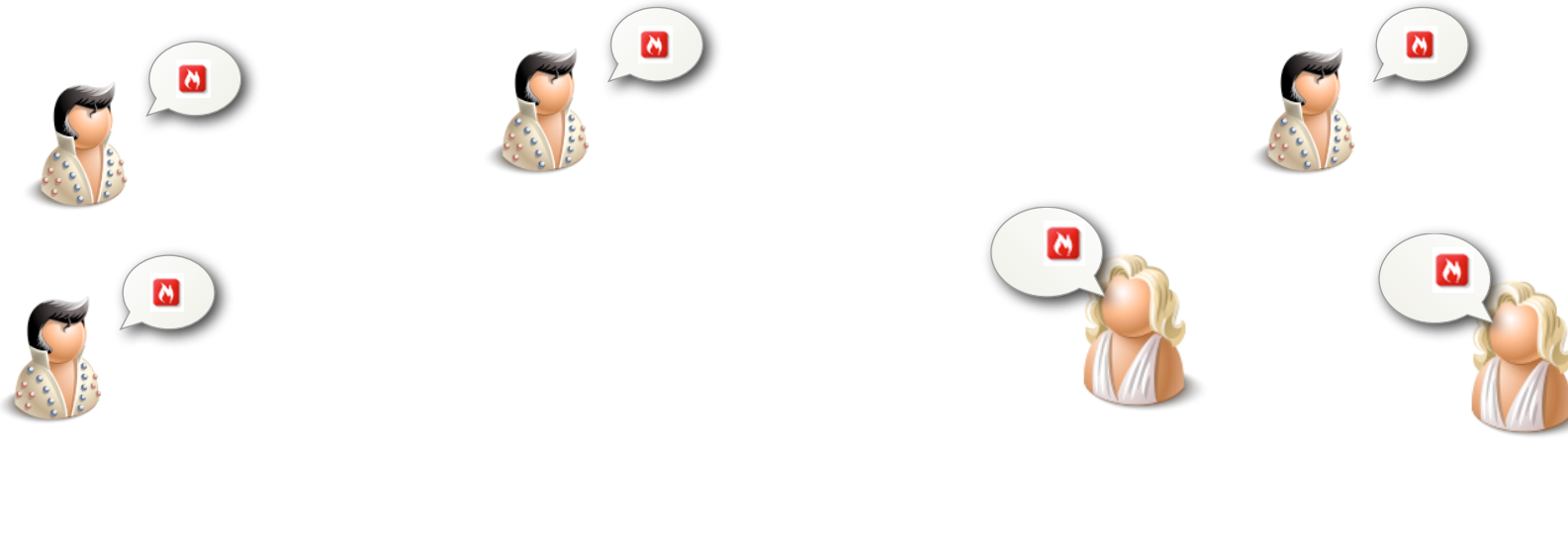
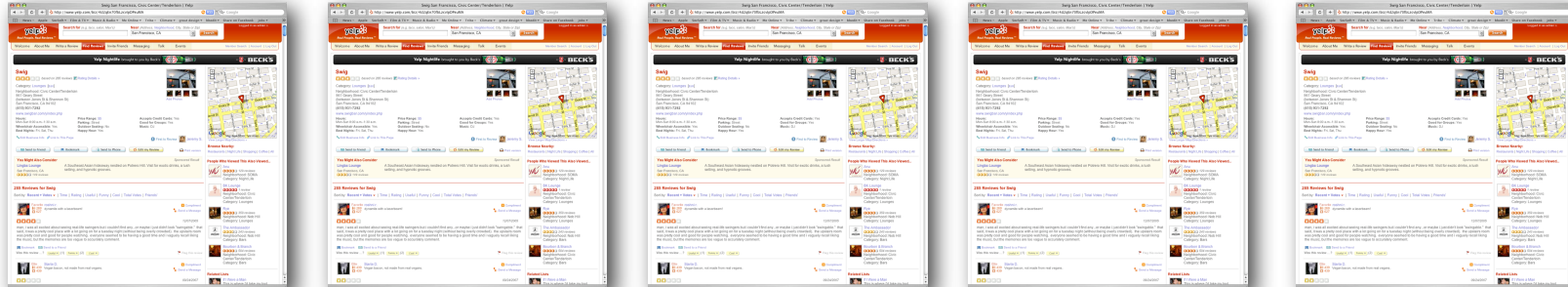
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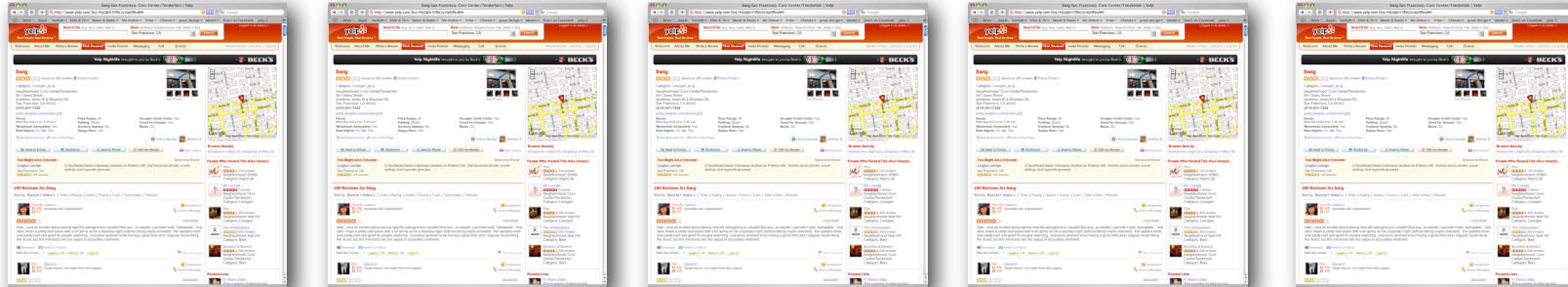
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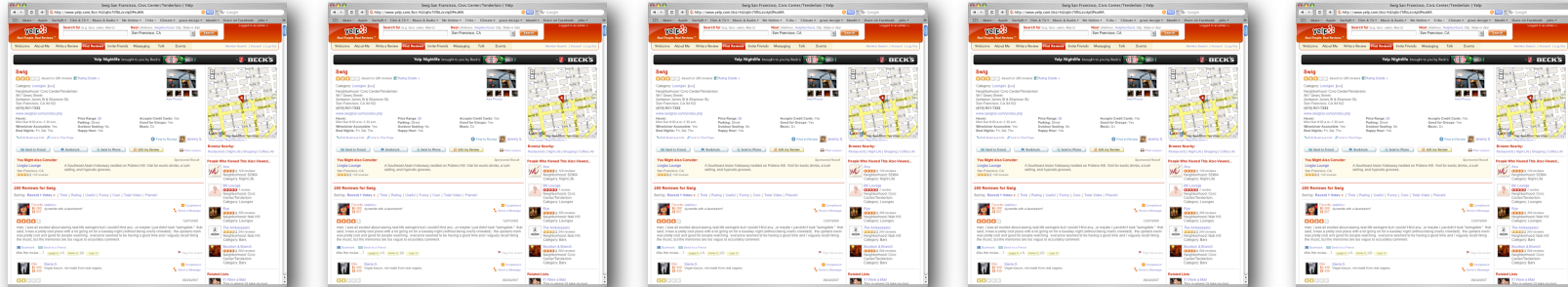
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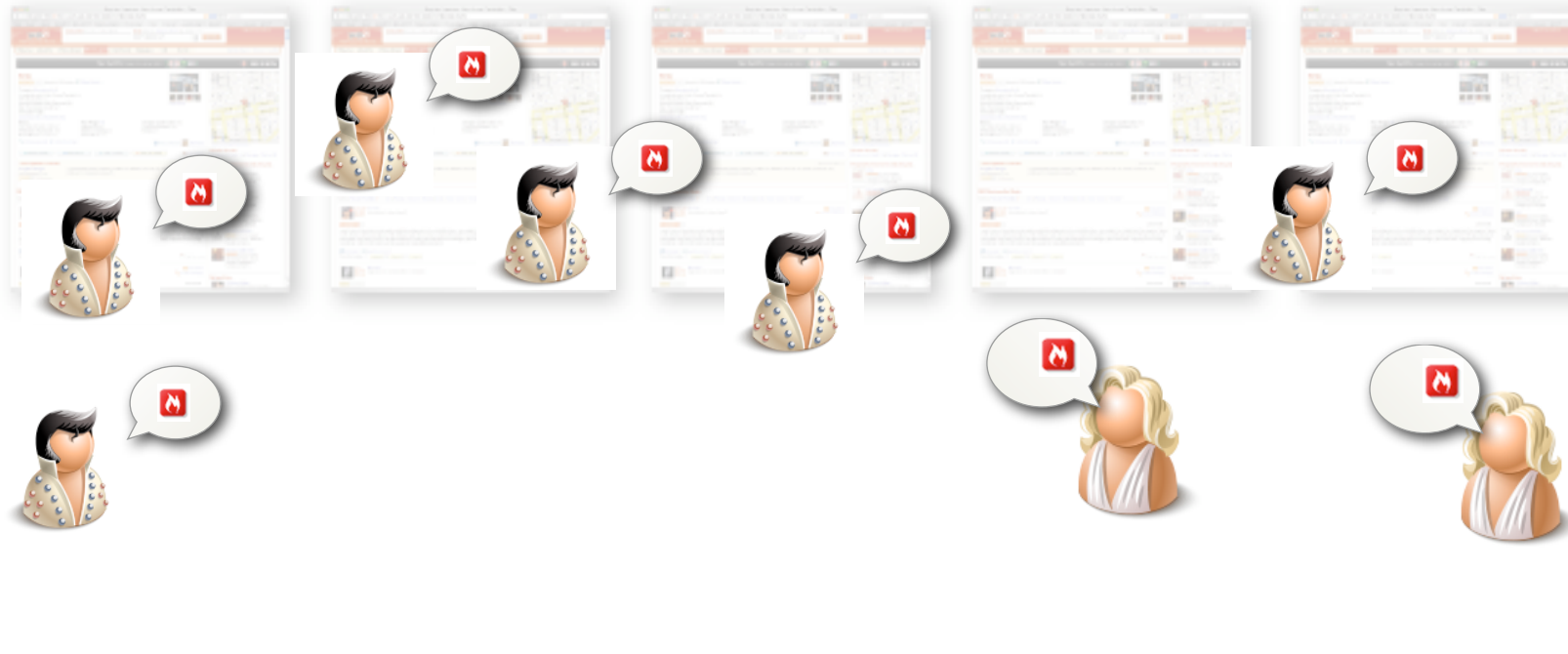
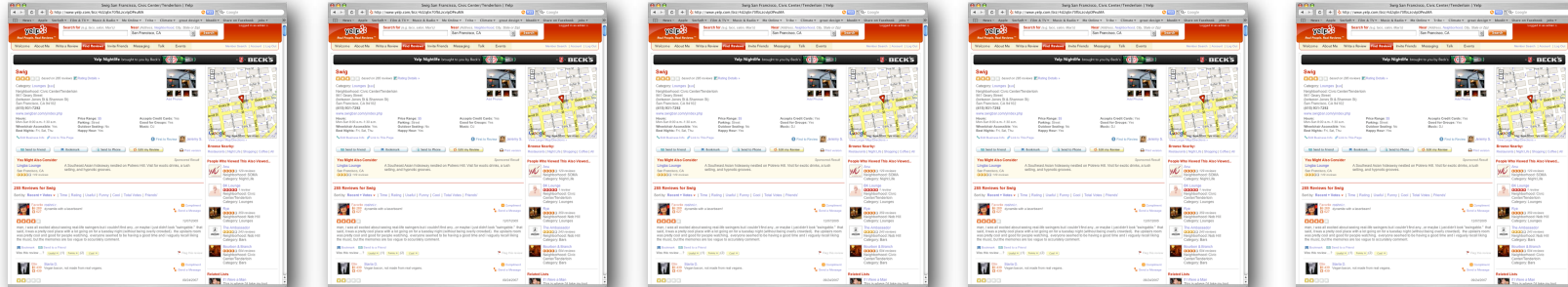
traffic!



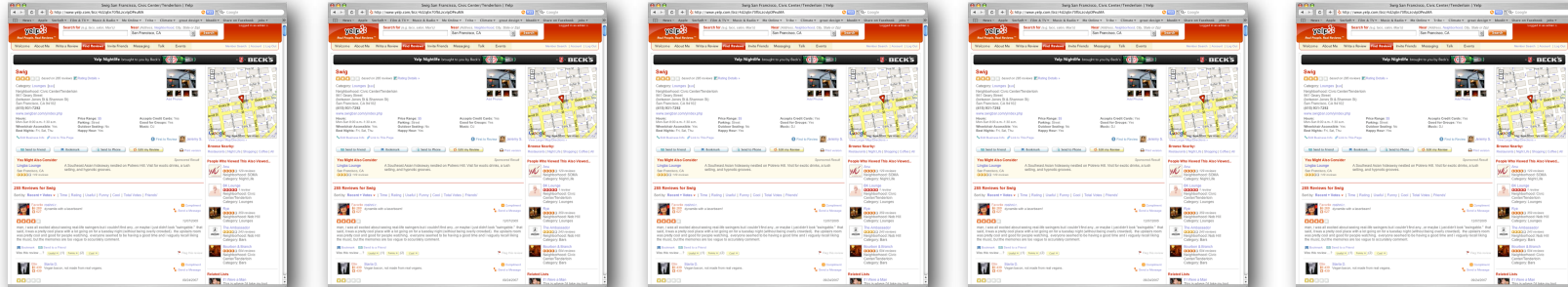
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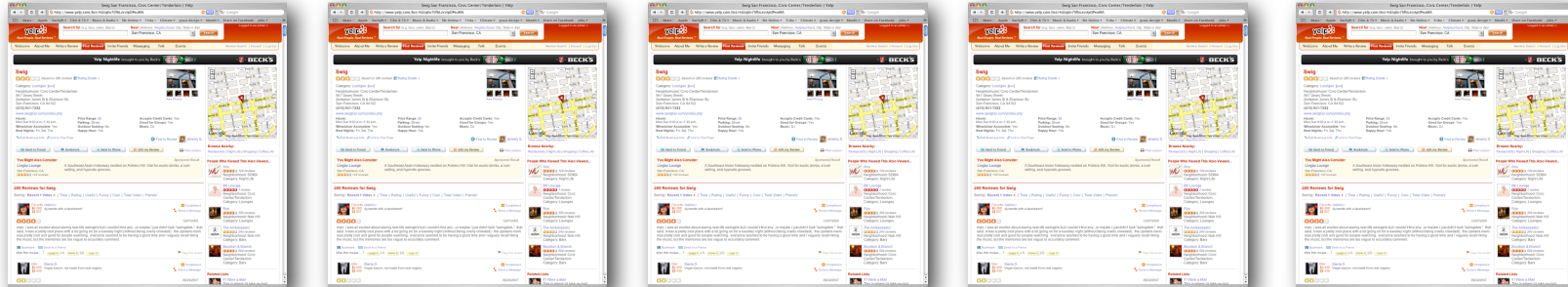
traffic!



traffic!



traffic!



Yelp.com



Yelp.com

- being friendly pays off
- people are the content
- compliments are a perfect ice breaker
- and though we give them to each other, they're given in public
- they add to our credibility and popularity
- and make the site more active
- which adds up to traffic and participation!
- however....



Yelp.com

- With its economy of reciprocity around the exchange of compliments
- Many of Yelp's users are motivated to review more and to interact more
- With the result that Yelp reviews are often biographical, subjective, and story-like
- Thus giving users personality through reviews that serve as their profiles



Yelp.com

- Yelp is an example of how review sites can become profile-based sites, and of how easily subjective user reviews (brands, businesses, and services) can be overtaken by members interested in their own rank and in each other
- By structuring compliments, Yelp can improve its data on members and on businesses
- And helps users be more precise — even when they would rather not be!
- Gestural languages like those on Yelp will continue to develop in order to distinguish communication between users, communication about users, and communication about content



“By an extension of meaning, ‘stroking’ may be employed colloquially to denote any act implying recognition of another’s presence. Hence a stroke may be used as the fundamental unit of social action. An exchange of strokes constitutes a transaction, which is the unit of social intercourse.”

Eric Berne, Games People Play

