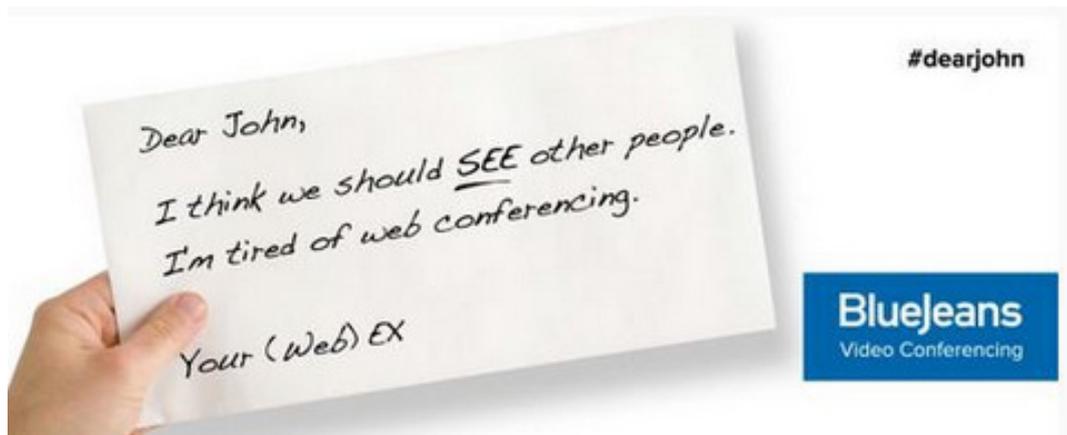


Blue Jeans' Billboard Joke

Written by Roger Douglas
20 February 2014



Silicon Valley loves competition and a new billboard on a San Francisco street is bringing a videoconferencing controversy into local SF news.

A 20 x 50-foot sign hanging over 8th Street in San Francisco carries a message cryptic to most drivers, but clear enough to anyone in videoconferencing:

In a handwritten scrawl, it reads: "*Dear John, I think we should SEE other people. I'm tired of web conferencing. Your (Web) EX.*"

The ad is from **Blue Jeans Network** to contrast their cloud videoconferencing software with Cisco CEO John Chamber's WebEx.

Blue Jeans Network claims 500% year-on-year growth between 2012 and 2013 (much of that growth at Cisco expense).

For Valentine's week in USA, Blue Jeans Network offered "discouraged web conference users" a chance to break up with their existing web conferencing service and find their new soul mate (Blue Jeans video conferencing, of course). By saying "I do" to Blue Jeans, customers showing cancellation requests for WebEx, Cisco or Polycom received a two-for-one deal from Blue

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Stu Aaron, chief commercial officer of Blue Jeans Network, says people want a technology where they can “see other people” (a phrase which also is a very common breakup line as in “I think we should start seeing other people...”)

He told press. “This billboard is, to our knowledge, the world’s first ‘Dear John’ billboard.”

For Cisco to reply with a “Dear Stu” letter simply would lack the same cultural impact.

In English, a “Dear John” letter is synonymous with breaking up a personal relationship. While this phrase came into being during WWII, the Vietnam War is said to have inspired more Dear John letters than any other US conflict.

Go [“Dear John” Valentine’s Week Campaign](#)