



Thanks to the TOD Staff, and to the TOD Community. (Social Capital is Alive and Well...)

Posted by [Nate Hagens](#) on December 28, 2008 - 1:09pm

Topic: [Site news](#)

Tags: [thanks](#) [super g](#) [et al](#) [[list all tags](#)]

As a tumultuous year draws to a close, both from an energy perspective and just in general, I wanted to thank the staff of this website, as well as TOD's readers and community who raise our level of discussion and potential impact by adding links, references, graphs and ideas, and by effecting local and individual change. I'd particularly like to thank our (sole) technician, Super G, and Drumbeat editor, Leanan, who have both tirelessly put in another year of volunteering their skills towards making the site run smoothly, and in the case of Leanan, continuing to find, organize and disseminate energy and resource depletion based news items every day of the year! (outside spring baseball training)

We are into our 4th year of theoil Drum.com's existence. The staff has grown considerably since 2005, though the core founding group of Prof. Goose, Heading Out and SuperG remain. We have satellites in Canada, Australia and Europe. Libelle and Khebab hail from Canada: Big Gav, Phil Hart, Ace, and Aeldric from Oz: Chris Vernon, Euan Mearns, Luis de Sousa, Rembrandt Koppelaar, Ugo Bardi, Rune Likvern, Jerome a Paris and Francois Cellier from Europe: and Gail the Actuary, Robert Rapier, Glenn McAnanama, Jason Bradford, Jeff Vail, JoulesBurn, and Leanan stateside. Also not to be forgotten were the stellar foundational contribution by emeritus contributors Stuart Staniford, Stoneleigh, and Dave Cohen.

In many ways, this site, (as well as the thousands of emails exchanged between staff behind the scenes), represents a microcosm of post-peak oil social interaction. It is not always smooth and there are occasionally sharp disagreements and personality clashes, but the community at large, over time, pares away the informational chaff and furrows closer to the truth on the issues discussed, while maintaining [strong reciprocity](#) within the tribe. None of us (staff or readers) are compensated by the measure which currently drives society - money. Though there are probably [many explanations](#) why we volunteer our time here, prominent among them is hope for a better future: an altruistic vision that what is discussed and learned here will raise the bar of both national energy/resource discussions and their implementations. Thus we *are* being 'paid', but by social and human capital.*** Perhaps this in itself is an important model to attempt.

In any case, after discovering that Super G has been up until 2 am for much of the last few weeks working on the Drupal upgrade and associated bugs, I wanted to give a public acknowledgement to his and others continued efforts behind the scenes. He, like most on staff, knows that what we are doing has no blueprint, and has no material reward, but that sharing analysis on a topic that appears to have institutionally gaping holes and blindspots - energy - is a worthwhile use of ones time.

In my opinion, the events of the world in finance, energy and the environment are happening too

fast for the slow and percolating peer review process of the academy to have timely impact. The governmental and corporate institutions that wield the power in our world cannot easily hold open and transparent discussions regarding resource depletion and overshoot that by definition may threaten their own charters. Also, even if more people connect the disparate dots between ecology, energy, finance, and human behaviour, the aircraft carrier which is global energy (consumption and production) policy may in the end change it's direction too slowly. Discussions on this site thus also provide opportunity for local and regional 'captains' to chart their own future courses perhaps somewhat independent of the global ship. In sum, though we have little proof that what has been posted here over the years has made a difference (continued mandate on corn ethanol being one example), we hope that the efforts on TOD have improved peoples understanding of the biophysical (and biological) limits we are faced with and thus increase the odds of better decisions (collectively and individually) being made going forward. We will keep it going as long as we can.

(Though not as active recently due to personal obligations (e.g. job), I would also like to thank Prof Goose, without whose passion and drive behind the scenes would have left TOD rudderless long ago.)



Thanks to all. 2009 is going to be an important and trying year. Best to all who

visit here.

*** (As an aside, I think the [Capital Asset Pricing Model](#) that is taught along with [Modern Portfolio Theory](#) in all the business schools around the world is grossly erroneous - we DO achieve risk/reward benefits by diversification, but in the long run this diversification comes *outside* of financial assets, which are only a marker - the true efficient frontier is thus diversification between social capital, natural capital, human capital and built capital).



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