

# 'Solve for <X>' Google forum solving global problems

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Solve for X, a small phrase that haunts the nightmares of a millions of students all over the globe, a phrase that titillates a mathematician's dreams, a phrase that is heard more than any other phrase ever.

Google, the ubiquitous search engine has taken this ubiquitous phrase to the next level by starting a forum with the name 'Solve for <X>'. With a tagline 'A forum to encourage and amplify technology-based moonshot thinking and teamwork', Google aims to dedicate the forum for developing ideas that change the world.

According to Google, "Solve for X is a place to hear and discuss radical technology ideas for solving global problems." Defining the

term 'Moonshot ideas', Google says "Moonshots live in the gray area between audacious projects and pure science fiction; they are 10x improvement, not 10%. That's partly what makes them so exciting."

The basic idea of Google is to host talks by the people with these 'Moonshot Ideas'. Although it sounds a lot like TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design), there are two major differences. For starters TED talks, with a tagline 'Ideas worth spreading' is driven with the mission to 'Spread Knowledge', whereas Solve for <X>'s mission is to solve huge problems that prevails in the world around us.

The second difference has to do with the level of openness, as in that Google talks are more exclusive than TED talks and has particular criteria for lectures. The content of the lectures must satisfy three criteria: "Does it

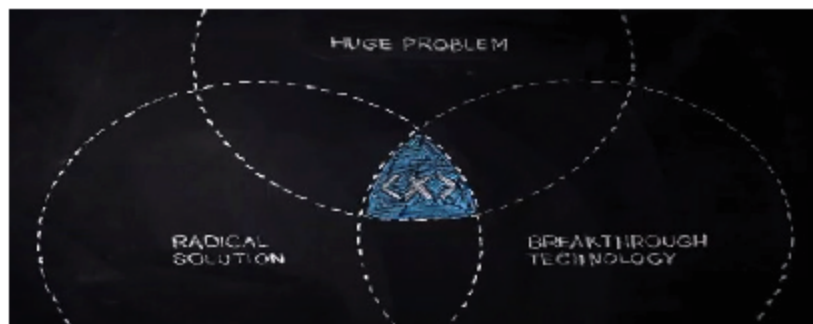


Image courtesy of google.com

highlight a huge problem?", "Is there a concrete solution that could make a radical impact?" and "Does it explain breakthrough science and technology that could enable this solution?"

Google has also started a website

wesolveforx.com where all the talks will be posted and a conversation has also started in G+, where anyone can discuss about their own talks and ideas.

# 'Chronicle' showcases unique camera angles, point of view

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Recently, a couple friends and I went to see the movie Chronicle. The basis of the movie was that three high school seniors, Matt, Steve, and Andrew, discover a strange, crystalline object and are granted telekinetic powers.

To give context to the characters, Andrew is a social outcast who is constantly bullied not only at school, but also by his abusive, selfish, and alcoholic father. Matt, Andrew's cousin, is a bit more detached from

school life, and lives a carefree life. Lastly, Steve, who is the lead quarterback and the future class president, he lives an easy life given his successful sports career and popularity at school.

After receiving their powers, they begin experimenting with them and pranking people. At first the pranks they cause while using their powers are juvenile and meant for fun, but when Andrew accidentally injures a driver on the road with his powers, a line becomes drawn in the sand over how and why they should use their powers. They decide to never use their powers on living beings,

never in anger, and never in public. From there they continue to use their powers, but when Andrew becomes horribly embarrassed at party, events start spiraling out of control.

To start off, the entire movie is filmed from the viewpoint of Andrew's camera. Normally, I'm a little adverse to the documentary-esque shooting style, thanks to Cloverfield's nauseating method of filming. However, I actually liked the way in which the camera was positioned for this film.

Moving on from the overall shooting of the film, I liked the superpower theme,

especially the differing aspects of human nature. Instead of a clean-cut, good/evil outlook, the theme of superpowers takes on a more independent role; you either value the fact that you have powers and utilize them wisely, or you lose control over how powerful you are.

The theme of "Chronicle" is constant through a series of recent entertainment mediums, especially video games (inFamous for example). In short, I liked the movie overall and would definitely recommend it. I give the film 4.5/5.

## Tech[nology]News:

# Samsung Galaxy Tablet inspires envy with software, 4G network speed

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Now, don't get me wrong - iPads are pretty sweet. I was skeptical of their use and practicality at first, but after receiving one when I became a student here at IIT, I was won over by the slickness of the interface, the ease of use of the software, and the 'cool' factor that the whole tablet exuded.

The one problem I had using the iPad was the fact that I was an Android fan-boy. Ever since the unveiling of Android back in 2007, I've loved the open source nature of Android, its tight integration with Google's suite of web services (Gmail, Calendar, Docs, etc.), and its slick notification system. These things, among others, made it my mobile operating system of choice, leaving me feeling weird using the iOS-powered iPad.

My love of Android led me to greet the coming of Android 3.0 Honeycomb with open arms. Google developed Honeycomb as a version of Android built just for tablets, and it delivered a solid interface that could compete with the likes of the iPad. This has made me seriously considering getting an Android tablet to replace my iPad, but with so many different options, I've never been able to decide which one to get. That's why I was very excited to get a hold of AT&T's new Samsung Galaxy Tab 8.9 and potentially end my search for an Android tablet.

Coming out in November of 2011, the Samsung Galaxy Tab 8.9 is the midrange member of Samsung's Galaxy Tab line. It sports an 8.9" display in a 16:9 orientation. This is an atypical tablet screen size, and I found that it makes a fantastic compromise between the large form factor that comes along with 10.1" tablet screens and the tiny 7" tablet screens that feel like a glorified phone.

The front of the device looks a lot like the iPad, with a screen surrounded by a black border and a front-facing camera. The back of the device is a blend of black and blue plastic. The plastic is slightly textured, making it feel very comfortable to hold, and allowing you to establish a firm grip. The device has a rear-facing camera with LED flash that takes acceptable photos. The device comes in at 0.34" thick,



Photo courtesy of samsung.com

which is about the same thickness as the iPad 2.

Overall, the hardware design of this device is fantastic. My only complaint regards the placement of the device's headphone port. When the device is held in a landscape orientation the port is at the top of the device, just about in the middle of the device. This works fine when the tablet is being held in the landscape orientation, but if you decide to switch and hold the device in a portrait orientation, the placement of the port can become a little annoying.

A tablet is nothing without software, and the Galaxy Tab 8.9 ships with Android 3.2. The Tab's Android 3.2 has Samsung's custom TouchWiz overlay applied to it, adding various features and modifying the UI of the system. Before touching on Samsung's TouchWiz enhancements, I'd like to address Android 3.2.

As I said earlier, Android 3.0 and its later updates were custom built for tablets, and it really shows. The Android operating system efficiently makes use of the larger screen size afforded by tablets. Switching between home screens, multitasking, and using the Tab is a breeze thanks to Android.

As with all versions of Android, the integration of Google services is seamless. With one simple login, all of your emails, contacts, and calendars are brought to your device from the cloud, and it makes setting up the device simple and easy. The only major problem I had is that the system can lag and show visual ticks quite often. This is probably due to the fact that Android 3.2 does not allow for hardware graphics acceleration.

When it comes to Samsung's TouchWiz enhancements, I find Samsung's work to be productive and unobtrusive. While I have never been a fan of TouchWiz on Samsung's smartphones, on Samsung's Tabs it merely makes the modern UI theme of stock Android a little more understated and classy. Samsung's enhancements also patch many of the issues that Android Honeycomb had. Overall, I enjoyed using TouchWiz, and felt that it made the Android experience much better.

Finally, the Samsung Galaxy Tab 8.9 ships with an antenna allowing you to use the device on AT&T's network. This tablet is actually able to utilize AT&T's new 4G LTE network. While on IIT's campus, I would use the school's

Wi-Fi network, but I found that wherever I traveled in the city I was able to access AT&T's 4G network. I found the speeds delivered to be comparable to IIT's Wi-Fi making it quite easy for me to browse the internet and send emails on the tablet when I was out in the city.

In conclusion, I think I finally found the Android tablet to buy. The hardware of the Galaxy Tab 8.9 is excellent, and while the software does have prominent performance issues that can become quite maddening, these issues should be worked out when Samsung begins sending out an update to the recently-announced Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich to the tablet. Android 4.0 enables hardware acceleration of graphics, which should eliminate these performance issues.

The Samsung Galaxy Tab 8.9 is available for \$479.99 from AT&T with the signing of a 2-year service contract. I'd highly recommend the Samsung Galaxy Tab 8.9 to anyone interested in an Android tablet, but also thinks that a 10.1" screen makes for too large a device. This Tab is a slick device that is sure to inspire envy in even the most diehard of iPad users.