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## At TechCrunch50, Patching Up the Old Is the New "New"

In kicking off this year's [TechCrunch50 conference](#), co-host Jason Calcanis borrowed a quote from [Disney](#)'s film *Ratatouille*, asserting, "our job is to support the new." If the first half of the conference is any indication, what's "new" in the tech industry these days is a renown effort to bridge gaps between industry archetypes that aren't.

### Playing Matchmaker to Fill in the Gaps

A good number of yesterday's pitches hint towards a revived trend of matching and converging certain existing products and services in the effort to make better use of them. Here's a quick rundown of a few of the judges' favorites:

- Matching physical toys and the web: [Toybots](#), a startup that aims to make physical toys more interactive by allowing them to transmit messages and voice recordings via the internet (read: [Teddy Ruxpin](#), now potentially more creepy. But in a good way).
- Matching site design flexibility and functionality: [FluidHTML](#) aims to close the evasive gap that's hindered Flash content from getting indexed by search engines. For millions of sites, Flash is used to inject a more aesthetic experience than HTML offers. But HTML has the benefit of being easily indexed by search engines like Google -- which is important for building traffic (and therefore attention, ad revenue, etc.). The company hopes to bridge the strengths of both by getting developers to adopt a new language that merges Flash-like functionality with user-friendly HTML language.
- Matching offline games to online experiences: [Spawn Labs](#) wants to bridge the gap between the console gaming and online worlds by letting Xbox and Sony Playstation users play games from any computer, allowing them to challenge friends remotely while playing the games usually anchored to home consoles.
- Matching traditional TV curation with web entertainment: [Clicker](#) seeks to become the TV Guide of online television, movies, and music videos, thereby solving the problem of not having one destination (e.g., Hulu, Google Video, etc.) to hunt for that content.
- Matching contextual ads to unused space: [5:1](#) hopes to be the iTunes and Match.com for ads by allowing large online publishers to quickly select the ads they use fill unsold/non-premium ad space (read: without relying on those dancing-mortgage-guy ads).
- Matching product placement and social networking: [Udorse](#) wants people to use their liking on social networks like [Facebook](#) to become product endorsers. By tagging their online photos with links to products or places, users earn a small commission that they can take as cash or share with a charity organization.