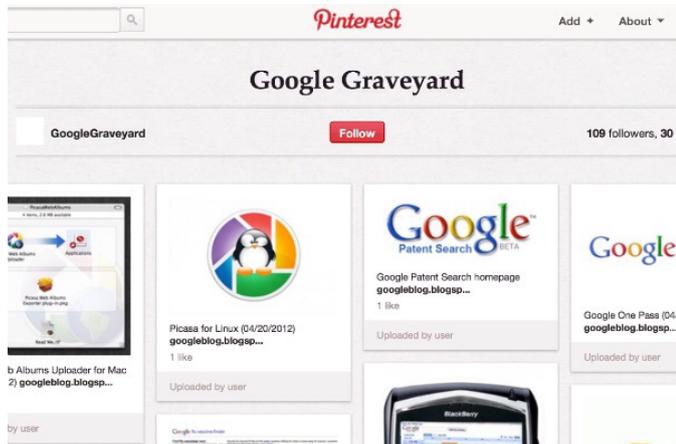


## Google Graveyard, Meet Microsoft's Morgue



Google used its official blog today to [announce](#) [1] that it's discontinuing a bunch of products. They range from the rather well-known iGoogle personalized home page to curios I'd never heard about until now, such as a search app for Symbian.

The move is just the most recent of several [mass executions](#) [2] which Google has performed since Larry Page returned to the position of CEO last year and declared that the company would henceforth be putting [more wood behind fewer arrows](#) [3]. (Its biggest arrow right now? Google+, hands down.)

Depending on your perspective, the company's ongoing elimination of underperformers (and products which no longer fit its strategic aims) is embarrassing, inevitable, unfortunate or admirable. Maybe a bit of all of the above. It's certainly preferable to letting them fester, which is what was happening to a goodly percentage of the items in question before they officially became goners.

Google's bad news inspired [Frank Shaw](#) [4], Microsoft's head PR honcho, to engage in some creative *schadenfreude*: He compiled a Pinterest board called [Google Graveyard](#) [5] and filled it with images of departed Google products and services. Just to make sure I saw the board, a representative from Microsoft's PR agency dropped me an e-mail with a link to it, noting that Google disclosed the discontinuations right before a national holiday, as if it were trying to-*gasp!*-minimize the attention paid to them.

On first blush, I found Microsoft's move odd. Publicly reveling in your competitors' foul-ups seems undignified. It also feels inconsistent with a laser focus on making your *own* products as cool and successful as they can possibly be.

But you know what? Maybe I'm just jealous that I didn't think of the idea first: It's pretty darn clever. And Shaw's Google Graveyard isn't necessarily a devastating commentary on Google mishaps.

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[6]

Scanning through its contents, you might also come away with a favorable impression of Google as a company that's willing to try a lot of things and realistic enough to know when they aren't working. A company which, in fact, has a lot in common with Microsoft.

Over its 37-year history, Shaw's employer has jumped into at an array of categories with at least as much gusto as Google. It's often jumped *out* of them, either lickety-split (Windows Smart Displays) or after years of effort (Microsoft Money). And like Google, it's lately been more self-restrained and seems to be trying to do fewer things, only better.

So in shameless imitation of the Google Graveyard, I've created a [Microsoft Morgue](#) [7] over at Pinterest. It contains some-though hardly all-of the company's offerings which have gone to the Big Microsoft Store in the Sky in recent years. Every one of them helped make Microsoft...well, Microsoft. Just as Google's failures have helped strengthen its character.

July 5, 2012

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**Links:**

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- [1] <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2012/07/spring-cleaning-in-summer.html>
- [2] <http://techland.time.com/2012/04/20/what-are-you-doing-to-google-patents-google/>
- [3] <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2011/07/more-wood-behind-fewer-arrows.html>
- [4] <http://twitter.com/fxshaw>
- [5] <http://pinterest.com/googlegraveyard/google-graveyard/>
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