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## Goin' Dot Com: The Musical

*The heady days of the Internet boom (and bust) live on in a musical comedy playing in San Francisco.*

July 29, 2005

Events like the Gold Rush and the 1906 San Francisco earthquake left lasting imprints on the culture of California. While it may be too early to know if the dot-com boom will be remembered in the same way, it is already the subject of a rollicking musical comedy now playing in San Francisco.

The Eureka Theatre's production of *Goin' Dot Com*, running through August 9, serves as a reminder of the greedy myopia that led to the rapid creation, and ultimate destruction, of hundreds of Internet companies hawking everything from financial research to dog food.



In the play, four friends create the fictional web site RentalPuppy.com with the dubious business model of renting puppies to lonely men who want to lure soft-hearted women.

For anyone who ever worked at a dot-com, the scenes in Phil Schaaf's clever script will transport them back to the craziest moments of that heady time like the scene portraying the company's launch party starring Neil Diamond. For anyone who didn't live inside the bubble, the play offers a glimpse into some of the insanity they missed.

Conversations about job titles, stock options, and retirement plans flow like frothy cappuccinos as eager entrepreneurs, pony-tailed consultants, smarmy venture capitalists, and heartless investment bankers charge towards an IPO without the benefits of business plans, actual profits, or even cuddly puppies.

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CEO Jason and his girlfriend/partner, Stacey, played by Brett Milan Gajda and Anna Kristina, soon discover that their hopes of finding happiness have dissolved into a lifestyle where love has been displaced by the material distractions that surround them.

All along, the cast members sing and dance to such ditties as *Obfusk & Doop* or *The Consultant Buzzwords*. While most of the songs are comic, Ms. Kristina and Mr. Gajda bring a special sweetness to a duet bemoaning their dying love, creating a tender moment amid the

farce.

Mr. Gajda shows the athleticism of a young Springstein on the hard rocking numbers, while Ms. Kristina's wins the audience over with her heartfelt, breathy blues.

Capturing the era's jittery ambiance, the production starts off in a "Starducks" coffee shop and a jazzy band rocks throughout the production.

It's hard to know now whether we'll see a repeat of the errors of the dot-com era as the tech economy regains its footing, but the play's book is one for the ages.

Of course, we all know now how that story ends.

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