

Reasoning my way into new toys

Last Monday was my 40th birthday. I'm kind of used to having a quiet birthday; most of the people are always on holidays during this time of year. My girlfriend had organised a two day trip, she usually does something like that for my birthday, to an unknown destination to do something unknown. We were leaving on Sunday and returning on Monday evening.

Sunday we went to an outdoor activity centre where we goofed around in a Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB), got very muddy on a quad and very wet on some jet-skis. Very good fun and indeed a perfect way to spent a day for my birthday. A good diner-out and sleep-over in a hotel completed the day. I thought it was perfect and I thought it was over. . .

However, the next day the GPS steered me towards the town centre of Utrecht where she got me an hour to play with one of these:



For those of you who do not recognise it; it's the Segway i2 Personal Transporter. A self-balancing two-wheel transportation device. It's positioned somewhere in the gap between a bicycle and a pedestrian.

I've been mumbling about these things for a while now, but they cost a small fortune (for a toy, which it would be, for me). On top of that, their added value maximises in the city, and we live nowhere near a city! So, I can not defend a good reason to want one, other than that this is the most natural way to control a motorised vehicle I have ever driven. (or **glide**, what seems to be the segway term for driving).

Renting one of these things does not help to cure this curiosity, **au contraire!** Now I want one even more!

So, as of Monday I find myself thinking about formulating a consistent argument for buying one. A new one costs around € 5000,= so that is serious money.

I have actually done calculations how many kilometres I would have to glide, replacing short trips in my car and saving gas, to earn back the investment. (Quite a few, it turns out)

Would I travel by train more if I had one? The nearest train station is like 10 kilometres from here, which is more or less doable; the range of the segway is advertised as around 40 km on one battery charge. I visit most of my clients by car (most of them are big and are in industrial areas, not in cities), but I guess one out of four trips could be replaced by the segway/train combination.

Would I take it with me if going to town by car? Most definitely. Would we be going on city trips more? I guess, but we would then have to buy 2 of them.

Would I be running the errands in our village with it? I think so. What shops we have here are mostly at 4 to 5 km distance from our home, so that is well within the Segway range.

The above sort of reasoning goes on for a while and at a certain point I have convinced myself it is 'reasonable' to purchase it. At the very least, there is a feeling of: 'Hey, I have worked hard to earn this money, I have deserved this!' The reasoning has never failed, assuming the enthusiasm of a product of service did not fade. (If they do, they usually fade quickly for me).

It's not that I have regrets over previous toy purchases, but the question remains: "Is there still a way to prevent me purchasing one"?

For the moment, I think I am going to construct a symbolic big saving jar with the word 'SEGWAY' written on it.