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Changing The Game by Bob Manna & Matt Manna • 0049EFCD(R03)

“Success does not come from knowing the past, it comes from knowing what’s possible in the future. Acting upon this fact ennobles the game changer above the marketer.”

A dominant belief among business/product developers, candidates, advertisers, and influencers of all sorts, is that success is dependent upon certain time-honored procedures. Among the most destructive of these is the belief that success depends upon identifying, segmenting, and targeting future behavior as suggested by the analysis of data representing past behavior.

Research and analysis of this sort is usually followed by application of the “four Ps” — the notion that a “target” will behave favorably when offered a Product that is Promoted at a Place and Price in line with research enlightened calculations.

When success does not flow as predicted, fault is routinely placed on the quantity or quality of data, or on the skill of those who analyzed the data, or on those who enacted the procedures suggested by the data.

Rarely, if ever, is the belief itself questioned. Until now. The belief that success is dependent upon the application of procedures, as suggested by data analysis of past behavior, is wrong.

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At its essence, data is distinct and disconnected from the behavior it represents. To put it plainly, behavior is as behavior does, not as it has done. The ability to create success does not come from analyzing the past, it comes from knowing what is possible in the future. The talent to act upon this fact separates a game changer from a marketer.

A marketer administers historical procedures to existing products. A game changer creates success where none exists. A marketer finds comfort in the past. A game changer greets the past with antipathy because he or she knows that past behavior cannot divine what is possible in the future.

To create success, data analysis of past behavior must be replaced with something forceful enough to inform messages, products, services, candidates, and causes with an understanding of what is possible in the future. This is the purpose of Customer DNA, which at its essence is principled with a single idea: *the cause of behavior is found inside the mind*. That is why we say, "It is better to know how people think than to know what people have thought!"

And how do people think? Without exception all people from every culture (1) create a set of convictions to make sense of their "world," (2) use their convictions as filters to disqualify incoming messages, products, services, candidates, and causes that are discordant to their existing convictions, (3) seek out and join with others that hold convictions similar to their own.

Convictions are behavior's doorways. Game changers parlay with them by creating messages, products, candidates, and causes that can pass through and rearrange existing convictions in a way that motivates new behavior. That talent ennobles the game changer above the marketer.

Steve Jobs believed that the historically based arguments of others were wrong and that convergence, not divergence, would be the future of the mobile phone. Some of the best marketing minds in the industry bet against the iPhone because it stood in stark contrast to what came before. ([Why the iPhone Will Fail](#))

But Steve Jobs was a game changer. To Jobs the past had no bearing on the future success of the mobile phone. Jobs understood that the iPhone would provide people with the comfort of continuous connection (a deeply held conviction) while coincidentally providing the means to make a phone call.

In 2007 Howard Schultz told a TV audience that he had no idea how many or what class of people would want to visit a Starbucks store. He went on to say that traditional processes like advertising and ubiquitous distribution were not major contributors to Starbucks's success. ([C-Span Global Innovation Video](#) — Watch the 4 minute segment beginning at minute 7:00 and ending at 11:10)

What Schultz did know is that human connection is a conviction that can be experienced through the basic and invariable meaning of the coffee break. Until Starbucks, there was no place to have a coffee break other than at work or at home. Hence there were no historical data upon which to argue for the creation of such a place.

However, there was (and is) an understanding by Howard Schultz of how people think. That's why Schultz is famous for saying, "We're not in the coffee business serving people but we're in the people business serving coffee."

Game changers create success when marketers cannot because game changers elevate the possibilities of the future above the certainty of the past. The simple truth is that data collection and data analysis are forceful only when they reveal convictions. Any attempt at creating success that does not accept and comply with this fact is fated for a future of failure.



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