



The Discipline of Market Leaders

Technology is as much a part of the modern business world as coffee machines and water coolers. Computers are everywhere, and procedures such as billing and shipping rely on automation, at least in part. While technology offers an array of benefits to businesses, it also comes with many potential drawbacks.

A Western Union internal memo in 1876 states, "This telephone: has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is of no value to us."

"Well, this is an absolutely fascinating device but what could I possibly do with it? (You could talk to people in other cities across the United States.) Why would I want to do that? I don't know any people in other cities". - Mayor of New York, quizzing Alexander Graham Bell, 1877.

Benefit: Saving Money

Technology limits the need for people to be in the same physical location. For example when companies hold a video conference with several employees located in different branches, countries or when they allow employees to telecommute from home. In some cases, this can save companies money because they do not have to pay travel expenses. When employees use technology for video conferencing, they can work in the comfort of their home instead of traveling to a workplace.

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers" Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

Benefit: Saving Time

Technology can decrease the time it takes to accomplish a task, which can ultimately save money and increase productivity. Communication speed also increases. Instead of sending an email you can engage customers, vendor, or telecommuting employee live instantaneously in a video conference or chat. Technology can also speed up various processes,. Imagine sending video emails with a personal message to hundreds or thousands of clients at close to zero cost and instantly delivered.

"There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in the home." Ken Olson, chairman, Digital Equipment Corp. 1977

"There will be fewer than 900,000 cellphone subscribers in America in 2000" AT&T internal memo upon cellphone invention, 1984.

Drawback: Dependency

On the downside, the use of technology doesn't always result in greater efficiency. Companies that depend heavily on computer systems to conduct business can come to a virtual standstill if the system breaks down. There is typically a learning curve that accompanies the introduction of a new process, which can lead to a loss in productivity and disgruntled employees. For employees who telecommute and experience computer problems, a service like Talk Fusion with a competent support staff can work on that computer with a direct connection. I conduct training many times by working on computers in Kenya, Liberia, South Africa or other countries on my clients computer using TeamViewer . It makes it easier to train them when I can actually show them on their computer.

"The internet will collapse in 1996." Bob Metcalf, Ehternet inventor and 3Com founder, 1995.

Drawback: Need to Upgrade

Some technologies contain features that need to be upgraded regularly, which can result in an additional expense for the company. Talk Fusion provides all upgrades at no cost to affiliates.

The New Webolution

The Industrial Revolutions's capital-cost business model is being smashed to bits by the new Webolution where intangible assets create more value than physical ones. In the Web economy, the greatest value is created by a combination of

- Intellectual capital in the form of creativity and innovation.
- Contextual information and knowledge or content.
- Customization and personalization.
- Customer knowledge and service,
- Brand equity and Web site popularity.
- Lifelong customer relationships.

Effects on Customers

Technology can have both a positive and negative effect on your customers. Most clients are more frustrated when they cannot reach a live person to help them with a problem. Image providing not only a live person, but also a live video feed chat.

Yet why does it seem like most of those small businesses never even get a chance to take advantage of new and innovative technology?

The breakout success of Uber and the promise of other new hyperlocal concepts have recently sparked my own thinking on the difference between success and failure in the local market. That led to addressing a few lessons learned while talking to many of you in the last few months. I touched on my own experience walking into many local businesses — like discovering why local merchants are difficult to get a hold of, why they have frustrations about being constantly sold by strange new companies, and how they are out of touch with newer technology mostly due to the busyness of their own business. So I will just provide you with a few points to discuss.

Cost: The economics of software deployed and used in the physical world is a lot different than the economics of operating a website or mobile app with no relevance or requirement to a specific location.

Discussion: What are your plans to control long term cost in your business?

Critical Mass: Certain critical mass is required to reach breakaway velocity — both in a specific city and globally.

Discussion: What are your plans to expand your reach in the city & globally?

Time: Simply put, it usually takes so much capital and so much time for a company to successfully deploy a new customer in the local market that the world has already moved onto the next big thing before a critical mass of customers is ever achieved.

Discussion: Is your total market expanding or shrinking?

Webpreneurs: The key to being a successful Webpreneur is to offer content so compelling that surfers not only visit your site but are willing to click through it to buy related products..

Discussion: Is your web presence compelling customer to buy?

INTERNET USAGE STATISTICS

The Internet Big Picture

World Internet Users and 2015 Population Stats

WORLD INTERNET USAGE AND POPULATION STATISTICS DEC 31, 2014 - Mid-Year Update

World Regions	Population (2015 Est.)	Internet Users Dec. 31, 2000	Internet Users Latest Data	Penetration (% Population)	Growth 2000-2015	Users % of Table
<u>Africa</u>	1,158,353,014	4,514,400	318,633,889	27.5 %	6,958.2 %	10.3 %
<u>Asia</u>	4,032,654,624	114,304,000	1,405,121,036	34.8 %	1,129.3 %	45.6 %
<u>Europe</u>	827,566,464	105,096,093	582,441,059	70.4 %	454.2 %	18.9 %
<u>Middle East</u>	236,137,235	3,284,800	113,609,510	48.1 %	3,358.6 %	3.7 %
<u>North America</u>	357,172,209	108,096,800	310,322,257	86.9 %	187.1 %	10.1 %
<u>Latin America / Caribbean</u>	615,583,127	18,068,919	322,422,164	52.4 %	1,684.4 %	10.5 %
<u>Oceania / Australia</u>	37,157,120	7,620,480	26,789,942	72.1 %	251.6 %	0.9 %
<u>WORLD TOTAL</u>	7,264,623,793	360,985,492	3,079,339,857	42.4 %	753.0 %	100.0 %

NOTES: (1) Internet Usage and World Population Statistics are preliminary for Dec 31, 2014. (2) CLICK on each world region name for detailed regional usage information. (3) Demographic (Population) numbers are based on data from the [US Census Bureau](#) and local census agencies. (4) Internet usage information comes from data published by [Nielsen Online](#), by the [International Telecommunications Union](#), by [GfK](#), local ICT Regulators and other reliable sources. (5) For definitions, disclaimers, navigation help and methodology, please refer to the [Site Surfing Guide](#). (6) Information in this site may be cited, giving the due credit to www.internetworldstats.com. Copyright © 2001 - 2015, Miniwatts Marketing Group. All rights reserved worldwide.