

Eagle Net



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EXPERIMENTALISTS ARE KEY

Throughout our various efforts to segment customers and prospects, demographic characteristics have received the most attention with current descriptors like Millennials and past ones such as “golden years”, which is a paradox with reality for most people in that grouping. Psychographics and behavioural features have also attracted proponents but many internal management offices have had a difficult time accepting the associated definitions and engagement strategies.

Our team has worked with customer preference research for over two decades, and have found that people with different demographics do share important common bonds or attract variables against which customer experiences can be constructed. One such interest or behavior is what we will call “the experimental factor” which is also synonymous with other works like exploratory, inquisitive, test or trial etc.

To draw a correlation to one age segment would be misleading although more millennials demonstrate innovative characteristics but it is not monopolized by them. Perhaps our current culture emphasizing technologies has had a profound influence in creating more experimentalists across the various ages even with the plus 65 that are significant Internet users.

Consequently, there are large numbers of technologically literate individuals, which are rapidly expanding the digitization of financial services and looking for exciting, innovative experiences through mobile banking, specialty apps, fintechs and new networks. At the same time they want to be in control of what, when, where and how of their reality relationships. “Myfi” capabilities are enhanced by the selections, test and trials that attract their inner needs to explore and have evolving satisfactions. The messages to the financial industry are clear - build collaborations, enticing innovations and early access to continuous experimental opportunities.

Regular surveys of emerging fintechs, network expansions, app stores, market/technology announcements and most importantly, customer and prospect behaviours should be presented as consolidated intelligence to all management officers from the CEO throughout the organization.

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Secondly, a dynamic team highly technology-literate personnel need to constantly review the feedback and suggest pilots and trials. Finally, the Chief Customer Officer and other key leaders need to periodically hold executive exchanges with critical and emerging suppliers to stay at the leading edge of knowledge, technology and customer engagement.

Our business will, by necessity, be redefined by customer preferences in conjunction with exploratory developments in numerous life experiences, information technologies, collaborations and organization agility across the market landscape and new horizons. Welcome to the experimentalists' world.

MOBILE 2030: SCENARIOS FOR THE ROLE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIETY – BY ALEXANDRA WHITTINGTON AND AMIR BAR

(This is another synopsis of a chapter in the publication, "The Future of Business" by Fast Future CEO Rohit Talwar. Technology, especially mobile technology, is changing our world, businesses and lives, so what could we be dealing with in 2030 – only 14 years away now)

"Mobile technology has become a central feature of people's lives around the world". We are in a mobile-centric environment and the possible directions are thought provoking, to say the least. The authors use a 2 x 2 matrix designed with the help of Global Business Network (GBN) to guide a scenario building process.

The two key uncertainties for Mobile 2030 are:

1. Scarcity or Abundance – what will be the status of resources employed in mobile technology? There are numerous environmental, economic and political consequences to project.
2. Better Half or Frenemy – how will mobile users relate to their personal technological devices – a desirable partner or a friend who is actually an enemy.

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Mobile 2030 presents four scenarios"

- (A) Path to Self-Actualization (mobile is a want; abundant resources). "In 2030 with more than 100 trillion sensors in the world, everything we do can be monitored! Communications between machines have replaced human involvement – the human-machine world". Everyone, business etc. will have their own operating system (OS) and these will be over 100,000 times more powerful than those 20 years earlier.
- (B) Insurance Attachment (mobile is a need; abundant resources). Mobile data programs are only available from the government. Good citizens share their data with government computers. There are many cheap models of mobile devices. The focus is finding an inexpensive and stable data plan.
- (C) Status Symbol (mobile is a want; resources are scarce). Laws put an end to most Wi-Fi in big cities and it is free to users who share data and usage information. So free Wi-Fi is replaced by expensive, high-speed connectivity. Mobile devices are expensive.
- (D) Big Brother (mobile is a need; resources are scarce). Being in the mobile society means you give up many freedoms to government which runs lotteries on devices.

So in 2030 our society and business landscape will be transformed into a different state, which could represent one of the scenarios or a combination thereof!

UNIVERSAL GUARANTEED ANNUAL INCOME

As early as the 1930's in Canada, the concept of basic income versus selected social programs has been on the Canadian radar, starting with William Aberhart in Alberta. But his attempt was thwarted by the Federal Government of the day in the 30's.

A number of proposals have been discussed since the 70's regarding the concept of Guaranteed Minimum Income also called NIT – negative income tax. As at 2014 the Liberal Party of Canada and others have advocated for basic income. Now Liberals are in power and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced that there will be a new trial early this year.

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There are various articles and research studies available on the subject, which are worth the read.

Business leaders need to be well informed and discuss the implications on the country and individual citizens. It appears that Ontario could be the pilot site even though the NDP in Prince Edward Island have offered to be the laboratory.

BLOCKCHAIN EXPLOSION COMING

Blockchain is all about exchanging assets without central intermediaries based on peer to peer trust. Bitcoin is one of the richest blockchain laboratories at present. Generally the architects and promoters find it easier to start implementing blockchain solutions in new segments without internal integrations, which is a great opportunity to expand business in a totally different environment.

The 3 D's of Blockchain are:

- Decentralization
- Disintermediation
- Distributed ledgers

One caution is not to outsource smart contract experiments. Those trying to build hardware wallets with blockchain are surely targeting Western Union.

THE LAST WORD

One concept in my career and during my consulting years that I find too often is complacent management. This is especially true when you analyze the pushback when new waves in products or networks commence. Be it financial planning or mobile banking. Even when CEO's "get religion" towards breakthrough developments, you will still run into pockets or paradigms of complacency which affect a corporation's ability to adjust, be agile, or accelerate profit growth.

There are many reasons for some people's inertia but in most cases they can be overcome with leadership, research and empowerment.

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Notes

I specifically remember significant examples, which recur time and again. One particular area is our distribution businesses starting back in the 90's, when we first introduced telephone/ response channels; followed quickly with Internet and then mobile applications. Concurrently, some were still not listening to consumer preference research and continued to open multi-million dollar branches to support declining manual transaction business. Today, even when the latter revenue flow is being cannibalized, complacent management still lives in the past.

Leaders have to continually push innovation and consumer centricity with all management officers at all levels. Since the 90's, complacency has allowed emerging disintermediation to take hold and erode traditional franchises. The flow is turning into a flood with fintechs and evolving networks. Invest in retreats that challenge management thinking. *"You don't know what you don't know if you don't know what you don't know"*. (Jack Webber).