

Marketing in Customer Technology Environments

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Marketing in Customer Technology Environments: Prospective Customers and Magical Worlds

DEVANATHAN SUDHARSHAN

University of Kentucky, USA



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

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Table of Contents

List of Figures	<i>vii</i>
Preface/Acknowledgments/Dedication	<i>xi</i>
Chapter 1 Introduction	<i>1</i>
Chapter 2 Customer Information Processing and Decision-making in CTEs	<i>17</i>
Chapter 3 Wonderment and Magic	<i>49</i>
Chapter 4 Virtual Reality (VR)	<i>79</i>
Chapter 5 Augmented Reality	<i>97</i>
Chapter 6 Mixed Reality	<i>141</i>
Chapter 7 Internet of Everything (IoE)	<i>161</i>
Chapter 8 Enabling Technologies	<i>209</i>
Chapter 9 Conclusion for the Magical Worlds in Which Customers Will Lead Artinatural Lives	<i>249</i>
Index	<i>253</i>

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List of Figures

Exhibit 1.1	Virtuality Continuum of Environments.	3
Exhibit 1.2	Devices Placed on Virtuality Spectrum.	3
Exhibit 1.3	Experiences on Virtuality Spectrum.	3
Exhibit 1.4	Sketch of Customer Technology Environment (CTE)–Customer Interaction.	5
Exhibit 1.5	Abstraction of Marketing Management.	6
Exhibit 1.6	Sketch of CTE–Customer Interaction Process.	8
Exhibit 1.7	System–Customer–Social Processes.	11
Exhibit 1.8	Everett Rogers’ Characteristics of Innovations that Impact their Adoption.	12
Exhibit 2.1	Adapted Homo Prospectus Model.	22
Exhibit 2.2	Cognitive Appraisal Models.	23
Exhibit 2.3	OCC Model.	29
Exhibit 2.4	Circumplex PANA Model of Emotions.	29
Exhibit 2.5	Emotions Resulting from Value Comparisons.	31
Exhibit 2.6	Belief–Goals–Expectations–Actions Process (Appraisal Not Emotion Process).	32
Exhibit 2.7	Dynamic LTM.	35
Exhibit 2.8	Imagination, Prospection, Originality, Creativity, and Innovation as Nested Terms.	36
Exhibit 2.9	Normal Reality.	38
Exhibit 2.10	Normal Reality.	38
Exhibit 2.11	Virtual Reality.	39
Exhibit 2.12	Augmented Reality.	39
Exhibit 2.13	Mixed Reality.	39
Exhibit 2.14	Affordance Formation and Appraisal.	40
Exhibit 3.1	Four Elements of Magic.	53
Exhibit 3.2	Schematic Description of Bruno’s (1978) Taxonomy.	56

Exhibit 3.3	Schematic Diagram of Sharpe's (1988) Taxonomy.	57
Exhibit 3.4	Schematic Diagram of Lamont and Wiseman's (1999) Taxonomy.	57
Exhibit 3.5	Schematic Diagram of the Physiologically based Taxonomy, Showing Its Highest Levels.	58
Exhibit 3.6	Schematic Diagram of the Attentional Misdirection.	59
Exhibit 3.7	Schematic Diagram of Nonattentional Misdirection.	59
Exhibit 3.8	Schematic Diagram of Memory Misdirection.	59
Exhibit 3.9	Schematic Diagram of Memory Misdirection.	60
Exhibit 3.10	2018 Best Illusion of the Year Contest First Place Winner Kokichi Sugihara's Entry, "Triply Ambiguous Object."	61
Exhibit 3.11	Method–Effect Sequences.	66
Exhibit 3.12	Classification of the Effects of Magic based on Nature of Transition and of End State.	67
Exhibit 3.13	Wonder as the End State of the Gap between a Sequence of Effects and Beliefs.	69
Exhibit 3.14	Integrative Model of Magic.	70
Exhibit 3.15	New Magic Design Flow.	71
Exhibit 3.16	Magic Innovation.	71
Exhibit 4.1	Global Size of VR Market.	81
Exhibit 4.2	Interactivity and Immersion along a Dimension from Low to High with Example Technologies.	84
Exhibit 4.3	VR Technology Layers.	89
Exhibit 4.4	Checklist for Identifying Potential VR Applications.	93
Exhibit 5.1	Global AR Market Forecast.	98
Exhibit 5.2	Market Predictions of AR Adoptions NewGenApps/Blog.	98
Exhibit 5.3	Forecast Shipment of Smart AR Glasses.	99
Exhibit 5.4	Morton Heilig's Telesphere Mask, Patented in 1960.	100
Exhibit 5.5	Coexistence of 2G, 3G, and 4G: 5G to Ramp up Similar to 4G.	102
Exhibit 5.6	An Early Version of Map-based AR.	106
Exhibit 5.7	Example of a Marker on Packaging.	106

Exhibit 5.8	Examples of Markers from Vuforia's VuMark.	107
Exhibit 5.9	Multisensory AR. (a) Pömpeii Multisensory Space with Multitouch Video, Audio, Smell, Wind, and Lights at Helsinki Airport. (b) Vibrotactile Sensation Using a Bracelet.	107
Exhibit 5.10	An Early Version of Markerless or Mobile AR.	109
Exhibit 5.11	Example of Projection-based AR.	109
Exhibit 5.12	Example of Superposition-based AR.	110
Exhibit 5.13	Example of Superposition-based AR in Neurosurgery.	110
Exhibit 5.14	Examples of Holographic Projection.	111
Exhibit 5.15	Process of Augmented Reality in Mobile Application Using Vuforia.	113
Exhibit 5.16	Isolated Level, Social Level, and Live Level Architectures.	114
Exhibit 5.17	Adding a Host.	118
Exhibit 5.18	Fnac in Situ Placement Example.	118
Exhibit 5.19	Ecosystem of Mobile AR Segments.	125
Exhibit 5.20	A Version of the Virtual Recreation of Schipor and Vatavu's (2018, p. 78) Physical Space.	132
Exhibit 6.1	Demonstration of ThirdEye's Mixed Reality Glasses at Verizon's 5G Lab in New York City-First Responder View from Drone.	142
Exhibit 6.2	Demonstration of ThirdEye's Mixed Reality Glasses at Verizon's 5G Lab in New York City-Auto Repair.	142
Exhibit 6.3	High-level Comparison of VR, AR, and MR.	144
Exhibit 6.4	Global Forecast of MR Hardware and Software in Millions of USD.	146
Exhibit 6.5	Example of an Enhanced Environment.	147
Exhibit 6.6	Example of a Blended Environment.	148
Exhibit 6.7	Example of an Immersive Environment App class of TF.	149
Exhibit 7.1	Growth of IoE.	162
Exhibit 7.2	Expected IoT Spending and Applications.	162
Exhibit 7.3	Connected Autos.	165
Exhibit 7.4	IoT Technology Stacks – Microsoft.	169
Exhibit 7.5	Sensors.	170
Exhibit 7.6	Eight Components of IoE Platforms.	172

Exhibit 7.7	Intel IoT Connected Vending Machine.	173
Exhibit 7.8	Market Size by Component.	175
Exhibit 7.9	Cisco's View of IoE.	180
Exhibit 7.10	IoE Framework.	184
Exhibit 7.11	Possibility → Enablement → Consequence.	186
Exhibit 7.12	Structuration Elements.	192
Exhibit 7.13	Strategies for Applying Structuration Theory.	194
Exhibit 8.1	Needed Infrastructure Technologies.	209
Exhibit 8.2	Global Mobile Traffic (ExaBytes per Month)- Ericsson.	216
Exhibit 8.3	Global Mobile Traffic Data by Region and Device.	217
Exhibit 8.4	Mobile Traffic by Usage Category 2016–2022.	217
Exhibit 8.5	International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) in the Future.	219
Exhibit 8.6	5G on a Card.	219
Exhibit 8.7	First Order Benefits of 5G in Europe.	220
Exhibit 8.8	5G for Europe: IMT 2020 Technical Feature Goals.	220
Exhibit 8.9	A Roadmap for SOC.	224
Exhibit 8.10	Service-oriented Architecture with Multiple Objects Tracking on a Mobile AR System.	225
Exhibit 8.11	Needs by Industries for mM2M Communications.	226
Exhibit 8.12	Forces on Edge Computing Evolution.	227
Exhibit 8.13	Cloud-Edge-User Connectivity.	228
Exhibit 8.14	Simple Artificial Neural Network.	235

Preface/Acknowledgments/Dedication

Preface

I was motivated to write this book by my own experience which, given that these CTEs are rather recent and are still emerging, is albeit somewhat limited. My experience with the various new forms of technology-based environments were magical, to say the least. I could see how my life as a customer would not be the same again in these new technology environments and that Marketing Managers and budding Managers would benefit from a book devoted to Marketing in these new environments. I felt that readers would benefit from knowledge regarding the new environments and the technologies whose development and deployment will help shape the diffusion and utilization of the emerging environments. In addition, I felt that the new customer environments called for providing knowledge on customer behavior supplemental to what is traditionally available in books on Marketing Management. After the first chapter that introduces the book, the next chapters intend to set the customer context for the discussion of specific customer technology environments (CTEs) that follow.

For these early chapters, I searched for and found new perspectives on human behavior that would enrich the discourse that traditionally fills our customer/consumer behavior textbooks. The Homo Prospectus approach seemed to fill that need effectively. It incorporates a view of human decisions and actions as being the result of a mental preparedness to act, and in focusing on mental simulations as mental preparation it provides a significant role for new customer technology environments or CTEs. The feeling of wonderment I felt in CTEs, naturally, led me to search for work on wonderment and to the work on it in the emerging field of Magic Science. Both Homo Prospectus and Magic Science play significant roles in this book. I thank the scholars who are making this knowledge available to us.

The next chapters focus on CTEs themselves. We as customers are seeing the impact of tremendous discoveries, innovations, and inventions in computing, communications, manufacturing, miniaturization, and other technologies. Marketing Managers are in the midst of managing changes brought about due to the availability of “big data”, its analysis, and the subsequent ability to personalize/customize customer relationships and offerings. In this book, I have deliberately chosen to focus on the emerging technology environments that customers will increasingly have access to and use and not on big data and its analysis. Several

books are now available on the use of big data in Marketing, Ecommerce, and Digital Marketing from which the interested reader will benefit. There, however, is a gap in the book space for books on the emerging CTEs. For managers and budding managers to be able to develop Marketing Strategies and practices for CTEs, I felt, that they needed to understand not only the CTEs but also some of the key enabling technologies for the CTEs. The book therefore focuses on the four exciting CTEs that are emerging as the key CTEs, namely, Virtual Reality (VR), Mixed reality (MR), Augmented Reality (AR), and Internet of everything (IoE). The rate of development and diffusion of these CTE books will depend on speed with which computing and communications infrastructures will embrace the four key enabling technologies: 5G, Edge Computing, Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA), and Artificial Intelligence (AI)/Machine Learning (ML). Therefore, this book also provides brief introductions to these enabling technologies.

I hope that this book will encourage Marketing Managers and students to take full advantage of the possibilities afforded by these new CTEs and seek to serve customers in the more fulfilling ways that the CTEs enable.

Acknowledgments/Dedication

I wish to dedicate this book to my family. I express my thanks and love to my wife Nalini who has been my constant companion in our journeys through space and time. To my wonderful parents Rajam and Kasturi Devanathan, who not only gave me life but also taught me to live and contribute positively to society, I offer my eternal gratitude. To our children Venkat, Amit, Sangita, Megan, and Adam who brought a greater purpose to my life – thank you and I wish you the best throughout your lives. To our grandchildren who will create their own realities and wonderment, I wish that your lives be fulfilling and full of productive creativity. I would also like to dedicate this work to the very many individuals who have played enormous roles in my professional life. They are, to name a few: My high school teachers Ms. Parvathi and Ms. Indira Jaganathan, and my class fellows at DTEA Lodhi Road, New Delhi. My Professors V.G.K. Murthy and Yegyanarayanan, and my class fellows at IIT, Madras. My Professors Bill King, Jerry May, Allan Shocker, and Gerry Zaltman, and my PhD student colleagues at the University of Pittsburgh. My Professor colleagues Ananth Negandhi, Lou Pondy, Jagdish Sheth, Seymour Sudman, Howard Thomas, and Rick Winter at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. My coauthors Olivier Furrer, Ravi Kumar, Ben Liu, and R. Venkatesh, and many other wonderful colleagues. I wish to extend a special thanks to the many executives with whom I have had the privilege to interact with, and who have taught me so much and to my many students who have shared their learning journeys with me. To the many others who have shaped me – a big thank you and I request your forgiveness for not naming you individually. I would be remiss if I did not thank Charlotte Maiorana at Emerald for captaining this book, as well as acknowledging the careful editing support provided by Emerald and Mohamed Imrankhan and his team at TNQ Technologies.

In closing, I offer a brief salutation to Saraswati for bestowing upon me the best of knowledge and learning ability; and to thank nature for allowing me to be its imperfect scribe on the topics covered in this book. In Sanskrit the salutation is:

“Saraswati Mahabhage Vidye Kamalalochane
Vishwaroope Vishaalaakshi Vidyam dehi namosthute.”