

Marketing in Customer Technology Environments

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Marketing in Customer Technology Environments: Prospective Customers and Magical Worlds

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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.”