

WHY YOU NEED TO BE A CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MACHINE

Basel , March. The watch-making industry, above all Swiss, meets at the most important trade fair in the world. Once again an enormous success. The Swiss watch-making industry always turns out new models with more sophisticated complications and cutting-edge designs and discusses new ways to sell watches...more selective distribution, a better experience for the consumer. **How can I sell more? How can I increase the desire for our watches? Is this what the manufacturers ask themselves?**

Cupertino, September. Apple presents the Apple watch. It let you do (almost) everything...manage your phone but not only, keep tabs on your health, make payments without using your credit card or cash and communicate in a different way. Apple launched a product that we don't just want, we will soon, bit by bit, need?...just as happened for the mobile phone or the tablet?

Are we in the watch-maker's shop faced with a clear cut case of marketing myopia, just like the music industry or the camera industry?

How many of us remember each and every day that we must always think about reinventing our business, and that our business as we know it might disappear in the space of a few years?

We are dealing with a “myopic” company from the marketing point of view when people mostly focus on the goods and services that they want to sell, but they have a much vaguer idea about WHO the customers are that they want to sell these services to and more especially what these customers’ needs are and how they are changing.

Theodore Levitt first introduced this concept in the HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW in 1960. He in fact stated that a company is not a goods producing process, but **a customer satisfaction “machine”**.

Wow, what a great concept!

In a market that is changing so fast, with such global markets and ever more innovative methods of distribution the biggest mistake that we can make is to focus ourselves on and simply repeat what has brought us to success TODAY.

It’s not enough to have a company that does everything to know its customers and satisfy their needs; this cannot be our only objective. We must strive to have a company that is able to adapt continuously to the changing market, to new consumers, to new desires and so to new products.

Flexible people, flexible organisations, adaptable processes and a true love for change; these should be our goals.

The “company life-cycle curve” (introduction, growth, maturity, decline) shows us in an unequivocal way that it is precisely at the time of greatest success (the highest point on the curve, the phase of

maturity) that we have to be able to re-invent ourselves to make the leap onto a new growth curve.

For sure, if we look back from the highest point of the curve, we only see growth, so why not wallow in our success and go on in the same way?

That's what the coach builders did, who with the advent of the car said that it would be enough to add more horses...or the sailing ship builders, who with the advent of the steam ship thought that it would have been enough to add more sails...

The underlying mistake is therefore always asking yourself ONLY “how can I sell more of the same product?”...

Even though it is counter-intuitive, it is exactly when things are going well that we have to be able to rethink our business “from the foundations”, always trying, every day, to understand who our current but also future consumers are.

Not forgetting, as Steve Jobs used to say, that the customer doesn't always know what he wants, especially if he has never seen anything like it!

Simone Gibertoni, 2015 from ["High Performance Company Manifesto"](#)