



## Competing on Value: Bridging the gap between brand and customer value (Financial Times Series)

By Simon.Dr. Knox, Stan. Maklan

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Where brands have traditionally been associated with individual product lines, the authors assert that the concept of the brand needs to both reflect and be carried by the whole organization. Today, customer value is created in a context of long term partnerships formed to achieve customized solutions, process reengineering, risk sharing, and supply chain optimization.

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## **Editorial Review**

From the Back Cover

There has been a fundamental change in the purchasing motivation and behavior of customers and the methods by which companies meet these new customer expectations. Companies are re-examining their fundamental assumptions about the way in which they define and deliver value to their customers.

Marketing and brand strategies successfully deployed in the 1980's and 1990's are no longer sufficient to ensure continued profitable growth, customer loyalty and competitive advantage. Today, global competition offers everyone a meaningful choice of equally competent suppliers. The sharp-end of creating customer value lies with the organization's ability to:

- Customize products and services
- Direct complex supply chains on behalf of customers
- Provide pre-sales advice and post-sales service
- Maximize customer convenience
- Work effectively within alliances on behalf of customers.

The UOVP—Unique Organization Value Proposition™—is an important new methodology providing a practical approach, which enables senior management to define and deliver customer value in a world where traditional products and brands often fail to do so.

The UOVP integrates an organization's value-adding processes into a powerful combination of reputation, performance, customer and product portfolio and a network of third-party relationships. Creating this differentiated combination, on the basis of delivering real value, enables an organization to:

- Create profitable long-term customer relationships
- Integrate and direct the organization towards customer value
- Lead unbeatable alliances
- Generate breakthrough innovation.

*"The authors vividly understand the key components of customer behavior today. Their voices are clear, powerful and compelling. The richness of their insights will add value for years to come."*

—Larry Hochman, Director of People & Culture, Air Miles

*"As companies focus more and more on their core competencies, the need for reliable strategic suppliers and partners is paramount. The UOVP principle embraces very elegantly today's approach to differentiation in the marketplace. Competing on Value is an enlightening and informative read, a must for all marketers."*

—Matthew Wallis, General Manager Europe, Motorola Computer Group

## About the Author

**Steve Maklan** is a Principal Consultant with CSC Computer Sciences, one of the world's largest IT and management consulting firms, and is a regular contributor to international conferences and seminars.

He has been a director at operating companies for Unilever and Burson-Marsteller, international leaders in consumer goods and public relations respectively, as well as a marketing manager for Cable & Wireless (telecommunications). Stan has line management experience in North America, Britain and Sweden as well as experience running his own consultancy specializing in business-to-business marketing.

He was awarded honors for academic excellence when he obtained a Masters of Business Administration from the University of Western Ontario (Canada) and has a Bachelor of Science (Economics) from the University of Montreal.

**Dr. Simon Knox** is a Professor of Brand Marketing at the Cranfield School of Management, a leading European business school. Dr. Knox is also a consultant to a number of multinational companies, including McDonald's, Levi Strauss, DiverseyLever, and the Ocean Group. Prior to joining Cranfield, Simon worked for Unilever in a number of senior marketing roles in both detergents and foods. He publishes extensively on brand equity issues and customer purchasing styles.

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## Foreword

Why did Andy Grove, CEO of a company that had maybe 50 important customers worldwide (Intel), decide to spend upwards of \$150 million in television advertising for a product that few can buy directly? Why does a brand name that is synonymous with computing (IBM) find it so difficult to win favor with buyers in the personal computing market when it launched its Ambra product? And how did the first technology brand to become one of the world's top brands (Apple), an icon to marketers everywhere, fall to the point where its very survival is in question?

All these are examples from the world of technology, but that is where I have spent most of the last 25 years as a director or consultant to some of the industry's best known companies. For years this particular industry grew at staggering rates of up to 100 percent a year on the back of product-based strategies—new technologies for short periods providing a genuine unique selling proposition (USP) to their marketing focus. However, as the industry matures and product lifecycles fall to as little as 4 to 6 months, the reality of the marketing need has become clear—only having the right product is insufficient to provide a positioning and strategy which deliver sustainable, long-term competitive advantage.

Customer value, once thought to be delivered by a great product, perhaps with some acceptable support from a company whose basic brand values felt right, has moved on. No longer can product brand values succeed alone. Today, companies must recognize the need to shift from the concept of the consumer, to the understanding of the customer.

Yet so many organizations still plough millions of dollars into advertising, even into what is considered "brand" advertising without realizing that this alone, however brilliant and targeted, cannot create or deliver customer value. Advertising has its place, of course, but IBM and Apple both used to spend significant sums of money and had two of the strongest and best recognized brands in the world.

Even strong brands can be vulnerable. As the authors observe in their text, although the principle of the USP

was extremely powerful and exploited mercilessly by consumer marketers such as P&G and Unilever, the augmented brand is no longer enough. Competition can now largely copy any brand innovation whether it be product or service function or even the associated emotional "hooks." Suddenly, what was "arguably the single most important component in modern marketing practice" is becoming less effective.

At Hewlett-Packard we succeeded in extending from a company which makes products for engineers to the second largest information technology provider in the world, and the world's largest printer company with a high degree of general awareness in our target marketplaces. We have good perceived core values and competencies and yet, like many companies today, our range of businesses and corporate structure means that we do not really leverage the huge potential of our brand across all our businesses. Further, competitors can, and do, attack our markets at the product level, sometimes with more success than we would like! This despite having one of the acknowledged best quality, process-based management systems in the world. The problem is that our competitors also have values, quality products and increasingly effective business processes.

My daily challenge, therefore, is how to create preference for our products and services and ensure delivery of the broader need for customer value. Over two-thirds of all customer defections occur because of an attitude of indifference on the part of an employee, not because of a product deficiency or competitor action. Customer loyalty is today's universal business imperative, however it is defined. My own model in Hewlett-Packard defines customer loyalty as coming from moments of truth delivering brand values through people. This critical relationship requires all the people in an organization to understand what the company core brand values are, what moments of truth they are personally involved in delivering and how they relate to the overall satisfaction and retention of customers. We are not talking just about complaints handling, customer service desks or product design. We are creating an organizational corporate planning system that will, and should, be developed to incorporate the brand management benefits which will accrue from a fully integrated customer feedback system.

However, you first have to arrive at exactly what your organization's core brand proposition should be, and determine how it will be delivered. This is where you will need UOVP—the Unique Organization Value Proposition™ toolset, which I believe will really help. The UOVP is the first attempt I have seen to address the next step from just image or product branding. It is based on the premise that the business processes governing all company operations have to be aligned in order to deliver customer value, and many of these processes were not even apparent in the days when the traditional marketing tools were being developed. This work will provide as much a foundation for management thinking over the next five years as USP did in its time and, more importantly, is more directly impactful on business management systems and processes.

At Hewlett-Packard we were extremely fortunate to have the core values and influence of Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard (the HP Way) which still pervade the organization today. Our success stems from a real commitment to providing customers with value based on excellent products and services, being delivered through a quality-based organization, utilizing internal and external relationships all driven by our core values-based reputation. However, customer value is more and more going to be delivered through the myriad business processes within organizations which, up until now, have never been considered, nor considered themselves, to be part of brand management

Companies need to create the imperative that forms the backbone of their corporate brand—the UOVP It can only be delivered through the alignment of the core processes within the organization and the understanding, motivation and commitment of all the employees to manage their contribution to the customer's moments of truth. It has to be on the board agenda in order to ensure the development of that hard-to-find, differentiated positioning from which comes happy customers, staff, shareholders, communities and, last but not least, profitable growth.

*Ian Ryder*  
*Director, Brand Management and Communications*  
*Hewlett-Packard Company*  
*October 1997*

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### **From reader reviews:**

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As people who live in the modest era should be up-date about what going on or facts even knowledge to make all of them keep up with the era that is certainly always change and move forward. Some of you maybe will probably update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice for you but the problems coming to you is you don't know which you should start with. This *Competing on Value: Bridging the gap between brand and customer value (Financial Times Series)* is our recommendation to help you keep up with the world. Why, since this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

#### **Henry Taylor:**

Reading a reserve tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With studying you can get a lot of information that could give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world may share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their reader with their story or even their experience. Not only the story that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the data about something that you need instance. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your young ones, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their proficiency in writing, they also doing some investigation before they write for their book. One of them is this *Competing on Value: Bridging the gap between brand and customer value (Financial Times Series)*.

#### **Richard Powe:**

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always try to and must have the spare time or they will get lots of stress from both daily life and work. So , whenever we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely of course. People is human not just a robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer will unlimited right. Then do you ever try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative with spending your spare time, the actual book you have read is definitely *Competing on Value: Bridging the gap between brand and customer value (Financial Times Series)*.

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