

## **On Value Acceleration – An Interview with the Authors**

**Q: How is this book relevant to almost industry and why should people read it?**

**Goozé:** Every industry, with the exception of governments, has the need to create customers. The process for creating and keeping those customers is what marketing and sales are all about. Learning to outperform the competition in the area of marketing and sales is one of the last areas of competitive advantage. Using this ability to out perform can build an unbeatable position for any company.

**Q: How does this book address the integration of marketing and sales and give companies tools to significantly accelerate their marketing management?**

**Mroz:** This book takes the position that marketing is a process. As such it considers how that process interlinks with other aspects of the company including strategy, new product/service selection, development and introduction, and, of course, sales. Using the “manufacturing” metaphor, the book gives the reader a framework to apply proven management principles to marketing and its interlinked activities. By finally managing marketing and its inter-linked activities as a true process, companies can accelerate their ability to provide value to their customers. Further, using proven process management principles, the company can improve their performance in this area, thus raising the competitive bar ... continuously.

**Q: What is the Customer Manufacturing<sup>®</sup> System? And its four elements?**

**Goozé:** The Customer Manufacturing<sup>®</sup> System is methodology developed by the authors and their co-workers to model the marketing/sales process in a useful way. Recognizing that the purpose of marketing/sales was to produce loyal, profitable customers, and the realization that proven management for “production” of anything existed, led them to create the Customer Manufacturing<sup>®</sup> System. This model can be used by any company to create their own unique System to Manufacture Customers<sup>®</sup>. Its four elements are Environmental Influences, Value Specification, Solution Development, and Customer Development.

**Q: If you could give one piece of marketing advice that would apply equally to any company in any field what would it be?**

**Mroz:** Marketing is the last area where you can gain an unbeatable competitive advantage. The tools to do that exist. The risk of adopting them is very low as they have been proven to work. The risk of not adopting them is could be financially fatal.

**Q: Can you briefly describe what Value Acceleration means?**

**Goozé:** Value acceleration is the process by which the value that the firm provides to its customers not only increases, but increases at a faster rate than the competition. This is the source of sustainable competitive advantage. And of course, by so doing the other value of the firm — its market value — also increases. Providing increased value to customers at the same rate as the competition results in competitive stasis, and is not what management is paid to do. Pulling away from the pack is what matters.

**Q: Why is it important, now more than ever that companies apply an integrated model approach for managing the marketing/sales functions?**

**Mroz:** Achieving value acceleration is now dependent on creating a true marketing/sales process in the firm that’s as well understood, well implemented and as well managed as world-class manufacturing processes are. With every other function in the firm now process based — manufacturing, finance, product development, and so on — marketing/sales is the only remaining

area of the firm to still be mostly ad-hoc organized and managed. Also, almost every other function can now be outsourced: manufacturing, product development, sales, finance, etc. Marketing is the one irreducible function of the firm that cannot be outsourced, and firms that do it better and repeatably will emerge as the winners in the next decade.

**Q: What are the “front-end” marketing skills and why are those important to understand and apply in the marketing/sales process?**

**Goozé:** Most people mistakenly think “marketing” and “promotion” are synonyms. Promotion (branding, merchandising, advertising, etc.) is the back-end of marketing — it comes last in the product development-introduction process. The front end of marketing — on which the success of the entire product development and promotional effort depends — consists of a deep understanding of your market and customers, a rigorous resource allocation process, and a strong link to the product development function.

**Q: What are the two most common misconceptions that marketing suffers from?**

**Mroz:** The first is the almost ubiquitous confusion of marketing with promotion. Promotion — advertising, publicity, branding, sales support, and so on — is but one area of marketing. Promotion is the “back-end” task of the larger marketing function — the one that is done last in a product’s development and introduction cycle. The second universal misconception about marketing is that it’s not a science — that it’s not something amenable to an organized, structured approach. It is wrongly regarded as an art, as something that is dependent solely on the insight of gifted people for its success.

**Q: How are product manufacturing and marketing/sales similar? And why is it important to understand that in a marketing/sales context?**

**Goozé:** Both are processes that take raw material, transform it, and output a desired good. Specifically, marketing/sales takes suspects (raw material), provides value-added goods or services (the transformation), and produces loyal, profitable customers. Marketing/Sales is further like manufacturing in that each of these functions can be managed as a set of work cells with raw material as input to the cell, work-in-progress (WIP) within each cell, and finished goods as output of the cell. Like a series of manufacturing work cells, each marketing/sales work cell has scrap rates, yields, quality measures, and latencies. Viewing marketing/sales in an integrated, work cell-like fashion allows time-proven process management principles to be applied to the management of the system.

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