

The Revolution in Evolution

It is impossible to predict the time and progress of revolution. It is governed by its own more or less mysterious laws, but when it comes, it moves irresistibly.
—V. I. Lenin

Everywhere you look you will find a storm of controversy around the idea of evolution.

Little did old Charlie Darwin know when he sailed off on the Beagle, the level of heated discussion his work would generate over 200 years after his death. I would need an entire book to do

from Attila the Hun's techniques to Z Theory, each claiming dominion on how you should manage, lead or think. There is a constant evolution in THINKING.

Reality TV got its start with MTV's *The Real World*. It has evolved to become a dominant form of entertainment on the boob tube. Music has gone from hard vinyl to floating through the air in digital form in a handful of decades. The iPod you purchased last year is already obsolete. The property insurance industry is being forced to evolve due to four of the

THE ART OF BEING
LUTION into REVOLUTION. When the idea or movement causes a momentous change, evolution morphs into revolution.

E-Business (electronic) is a great example. Can you believe that email, internet transactions and massive information access have really only been a cultural player for about 10 years? The change in the way business is transacted in such a short time shows the power of revolution. Without a presence on the internet, a business becomes about as



Evolution is the natural way of business.

justice to the arguments for and against his ideas when applied to biology, but what I want to talk about will nicely fit into this article. When we switch the discussion to business, evolution is as easy to talk about as the weather.

Everywhere you look things are changing. The cutting edge becomes obsolete and a new way of doing things suddenly becomes the only way. Take a trip to your local Borders and look at the management section. You will find myriad ideas

largest natural disasters in our history hitting within 4 months of each other.

Evolution is the natural way of business. Survival of the fittest weeds out crowded industries. Fryes, Best Buy and Circuit City are winning the super electronic store wars by knocking out such players as Ultimate Electronics and lots of boutique players. Wal-Mart is playing the role of "Planet Killer" to many traditional retail ideas. EVOLUTION.

It doesn't take much to turn EVO-

relevant as a dial on a TV. Americans have developed an almost insatiable desire to transact business on the web.

From 2003 to 2005 internet sales increased from \$3.4 billion to \$27.3 billion. We are talking revolution! This brings me to one of the key problems in times of revolution. No one actually IS. Pace forces such rapid evolution to keep up with the revolution that companies have a hard time BEING. When you are in a constant state of change you never

Don't hurry to the next bell or whistle, instead go to market with a strong product that creates a competitive advantage for your clients and allows the revolution to slow to a natural evolution.

really ARE. The perceived immediacy that drives everything creates a HUGE problem. A product or service requires a period of stability in which it can be defined. The market can't rush to something that can't stabilize long enough to be defined. This basic philosophy is ignored in a lot of technology companies. Their business plans don't allow time for BEING. They change so fast, they rush to find unfilled niches...they want to stand out by having the latest button or the smallest size. Their evolution appears as confusion. When their market is confused, they have no market. When your market is confused, you have no market.

Think of great design, those things that immediately appeal to you. I'll bet that one of the features that drive your emotional connection is a lack of confusion. Clarity, the lack of confusion, is an idea inherent in great design.

Why does this simple idea fall through the cracks? It is the fear of getting left behind. Amazingly, one of my company's most difficult tasks is to get our clients to SLOW DOWN. Don't hurry to the next bell or whistle, instead go to market with a strong product that creates a competitive advantage for your clients and allows the revolution to slow to a natural evolution.



The market needs to know what you are. Customers need to have a sense of familiarity with the product and this is impossible to achieve when the product changes almost daily.

Weird, huh? Slow down your revolution. It is a necessary step in developing a market presence. Are you running all the time, involved in what you believe is a market sprint? There are times when your marketing benefits from thinking like a marathon. Even in Boston and New York there are aid stations where runners can refresh during the race.

Take a break and make sure the market knows who you are and what you do.

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