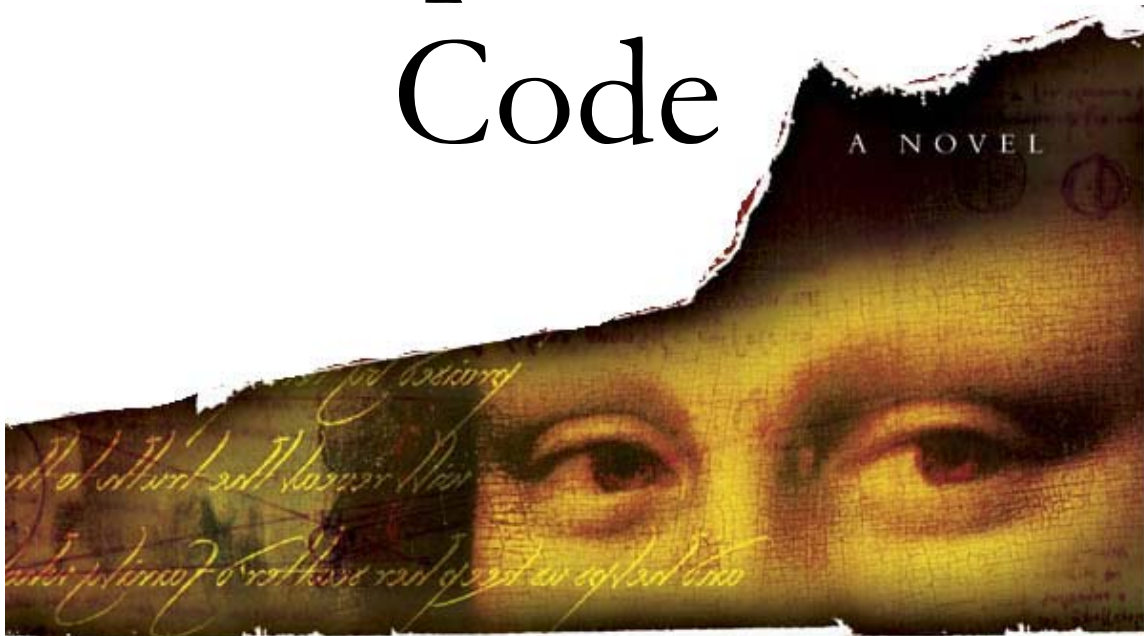



The Entrepreneurial Code



LIBBY BAGLEY
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The visceral bond with the consumer: A map of emotions

The Entrepreneurial Code



The Holy Grail of Entrepreneurial Marketing lies encased in a handmade marble crux, held still by vials of vinegar, written on ancient and dissolvable papyrus. This information, if revealed, could change the business world as we know it. The crux is encoded, so that only the most highly creative, passionate, persistent, committed, and involved entrepreneurs can decode it. He or she must possess an exquisite genius in order to decipher this hidden code, one not found in any other entrepreneur.

The code, however, is not written or nor spoken, making it quite a difficult conquest; instead, this code is felt. It is an undeterminable and unique amount and mix of emotion and cognition that unlocks this crux. Furthermore, this code cannot be broken or revealed by one single person...you must bring someone with you in order to succeed. Lastly, this code changes with respect to its seekers, and will present you with a daily challenge. Good luck, and remember, just FEEL your way through!



The First Code: CUST~O~  + RELATION~ 

Hint: The objective of an entrepreneurial marketer.

The goal of the entrepreneur, in his quest for the Holy Grail is achieving the ultimate customer relationship. This relationship can yield innovation, creativity, and better market understanding.

The First Lesson: The Grateful Dead

The Grateful Dead were known for getting “face to face” with their customers, and allowing fans to tape their shows and participate in spreading the fan base for the band. The band played four hour concerts nearly eighty times per year, a workload that is unheard of in the rock world (Hill 41). The band disregarded Billboard standings, and performed purely for their fans.



The Second Code:     (-)S

Hint: “You must bring _____ with you in order to succeed!”

In the search for the Holy Grail, the entrepreneurial marketer must have someone with him or her at every step of the quest, and the customer is that someone! The teamwork and partnership is necessary for quest completion and working together is the only way you can decipher the Holy Grail’s meaning. The customer is the means to success.

The Second Lesson:

The Iams Company redefined the customer, with respect to the dog food industry. Cute ads that got Mom off the couch to the store to buy the food, was not in Iam’s marketing plan. Instead, the company decided to go after the experts in the field of animal care: the breeders, pet store owners, and veterinarians. This customer provided valuable testimony to pet owners, relaying the health benefits for the dog onto the customer. Using his new customer, as a partner for success and as a marketing outlet, Clay Mathile, revolutionized the dog food industry (Hill 100-101).

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The Third Code:



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Hint: Teamwork means never leaving one another's side. Knowing one another well, helps you _____!

The ability to predict the customer's needs and to be ready and anticipating their next move, and helping them develop their own business. Working as a team, you must unveil the mysteries of the Holy Grail together, and the better the relationship you have, the more you understand one another, when you can predict your partner's needs, and access them at any time, you will be well on your way to finding the Grail.

The Third Lesson:

Snap-On tool company is a master at getting to their customer in the time of need, and having a tools on-site and in their dealer trucks to predict their customer's need. Snap-On introduces us to one of their best dealers who says, "I'm a tool junkie myself." Pino is known to just show up at customer's garages and workshops, watch them work for a while, and then sell them a tool that would have saved them an hour (Hill 156).

The Fourth Code:



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Hint: Why would someone be your partner? What do you give them or sell them?

Trust or faith in the investment in a partner is the selling point of a relationship. Once you know you can trust your partner or customer, and vice-versa, with the secrets of the Holy Grail, and that he or she has invested significantly in the quest, a feeling of security sets in. You are more willing to take risks for your partner at this point, and more willing to go the extra mile to further secure their companionship. If you are as immersed and committed to your product, so much so that it is an extension of yourself, you are ready to be a good partner for your customer.

The Fourth Lesson:

Harley-Davidson created a lifestyle with their product. The executives of the company rode to work on bikes, lived bikes, and knew that a bike was one of the only legal things that could make you feel free. The creation, in 1983, of the Harley Owners Group, or HOG, brought together Harley employees and executives with Harley customers, in a bike rally setting. Sharing their passion for riding together, made customers realize the commitment level of Harley's staff and that they shared similar feeling about their bikes and lifestyles. These occasions created lifetime customers (Hill 91).

The Fifth Code:



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Hint: What role does the customer play?

You are the key to the partnership, and your customer is the lock. You must be sensitive to which key is right for the lock and the combinations of turns that will unlock the bolt. As an entrepreneur you must know all of your customer's twits and turns, because they decide the success and

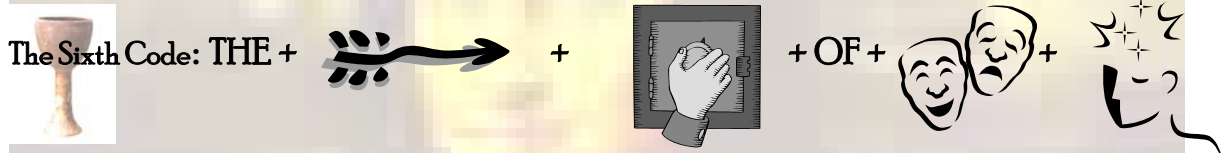


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fit of the product or service just as much as you do. On the quest, and in order to decipher the Grail, the customer must participate in your service or product offerings as much as you do.

The Fifth Lesson:

The Starbucks Corporation has reinvented the coffee house industry with its customer service and atmosphere offering. However, in order to stay ahead of local and franchising coffee houses, Starbucks needs to stay on the cutting edge. Starbucks uses unedited, blank customer comment cards that have little or no prompting. The customer can literally write whatever is on their mind at the time. The customer cards are sent to the corporate office and reviewed weekly by managers. This partnership with the customer provides Starbucks with a wealth of information about their customer and about their customers' desires (Gulati 8).



Hint: What are the key characteristics an entrepreneurial marketer requires?

As the entrepreneur in the pair, you must deploy the right combination of emotions and genius to reveal the mystery of the Holy Grail. You are the flexible and malleable part of the relationship, and your customer represents the life of your business and determines your success. A profit yielding, long-term relationship that is necessary to complete the quest is based on your ability to be interactive, reactive, and proactive in this relationship at all times! This is the most difficult Code yet, but master it, and the Grail is in your hands!

The Sixth Lesson:

Richard Branson, the chairman and CEO of Virgin Atlantic Airways, is a man who developed products and services for himself, he merely put his passions, or peeves, into action to help himself, and assumed the world would appreciate his opinion and product. He has succeeded fabulously. Richard Branson's combination of emotions and genius were summarized in Radical Marketing: charismatic, image wizard, razor-sharp business sense, rebellious, passion and agility, unafraid of failure, "screw-it, lets do it", surgically precise, regular bloke point of view, direct connection with the consumer...(Hill 159-178)." Branson's customer is a rebellious and demanding consumer, just like him.

REVEAL THE HOLY GRAIL:

In the Epilogue of Radical Marketing, Sam Hill and Glen Rifkin write, "...because marketing, at its best, is a dialogue with consumers, filled with creativity and passion, that makes a lasting and visceral connection (Hill 264)." You have completed the quest of the six codes, have attained sought after entrepreneurial skills, and have communed with your customer in a unique and innovative way. You were an apprentice to masters of the craft, and now it is your turn to decipher the Entrepreneurial Code, and possess the secret of the Holy Grail.

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