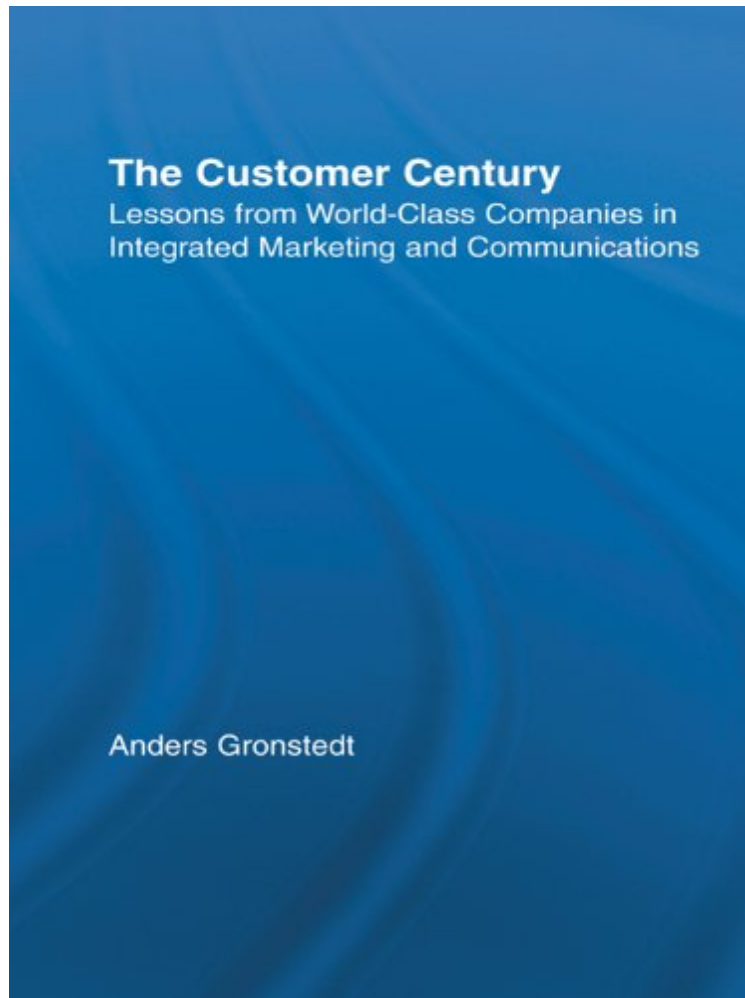


(Free) The Customer Century: Lessons from World Class Companies in Integrated Communications
(Routledge Corporate Communication Series)

The Customer Century: Lessons from World Class Companies in Integrated Communications (Routledge Corporate Communication Series)

Anders Gronstedt

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Anders Gronstedt : The Customer Century: Lessons from World Class Companies in Integrated Communications (Routledge Corporate Communication Series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Customer Century: Lessons from World Class Companies in Integrated Communications (Routledge Corporate Communication Series):

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Lots of good ideas from world-class companiesBy Winter WrightI work as a consultant for a PR agency, so I'm supposed to know what is "best practice" in the realm of communications. This book compiles real-world examples from a dozen European and U.S.-based companies that

seem to be getting it right: FedEx, Hewlett-Packard, GM Saturn, ABB, and others. My principal interest in the book was in finding a source of good ideas that I can adapt for use by clients, and I was not disappointed. Anyone in a communications role, whether in-house or outsourced, can benefit by taking some of these ideas and adapting them to the particular needs of their own organization. The book is especially helpful in getting around a dilemma frequently faced by consultants (internal or external) who are called upon to produce so-called creative ideas, i.e., if you propose something that's really provocative and different---outside the box, as they say---the first thing your client often wants to know is, "Where has this worked before?" Of course, if what you've proposed is truly creative and original, it may not have been tried before---a perfect reason for the client to shoot it down. By drawing liberally from the ideas set forth in this book, you can come up with good creative PR and internal communications programs that have actually been put into practice by well-known companies. For example, when Saturn had to recall some of its cars to fix a defect, it basically turned the event into a party: car owners were invited to a Thai barbecue while mechanics spent 30 minutes fixing their Saturns. They even got a free car wash to boot. This example is a perfect illustration of a basic truth of PR, i.e., that crisis communications is not simply about damage control. Handled properly, a crisis can be an opportunity to get your customer to see your brand in a whole new light. Another nice feature of the book is that much of it focuses on internal communication. Gronstedt uses a three-part model (he's a former academic, so he likes models, but don't worry: there's only one, and his writing is lively and clear) to describe communications, and one part consists of External relations, including media relations. But the other two parts are Vertical and Horizontal communications, both of which take place within the organization ("vertical" referring to communications that go up and down the chain of command and "horizontal" meaning communications that cut across different functions or business groups). This emphasis on internal communications gives an enlightened perspective that gets away from the one-way, press agency model of PR that relies predominantly on placing stories about your company in the newspaper. So read the book, mark the ideas and best practices of these world-class companies, and then adapt them for your own use. It's a great resource for anyone responsible for organizational communications.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The three dimensions of communication

By CustomerIn the past companies could succeed based on how well they were able to produce and sell goods. Now, we are moving from the Production Century to the Customer Century, in which success depends on how well a company is able to satisfy its customers. To satisfy customers, companies must integrate marketing and communications throughout the organization. According to the author, marketing and communications should be integrated along three dimensions.

1. Integrated external communication: this is the process of involving everyone in the company in communication with customers and shareholders.
 - Identify the most profitable customers and track their buying behavior.
 - Use data to concentrate on improving market share among your best customers.
 - Address customer complaints immediately.
2. Integrated vertical communication: this is the process of creating forthright, two-way communication between senior management, middle management and other employees.
 - Create a company vision based on the company's core competencies.
 - Use the vision to coordinate effort and communication from the top-down and the bottom-up.
 - Use the vision to direct employee training towards business goals.
3. Integrated horizontal communication: this is the process of opening up communication among work units, departments and countries.
 - Use customer needs as the core beginning to developing effective teamwork practices.
 - Facilitate "virtual communities of practice" across the organization to benefit from networking among employees.
 - Rotate employees systematically through job assignments to facilitate understanding between work units.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Convincing case for integrated communication

By Gouml;ran ThorstensonI don't know of any other book that makes such a convincing case for integrated communication as "The Customer Century". Almost every thesis from the author is illustrated with examples from the real world of real companies. The messages of this book underline that creating individual relations with stakeholders (such as customers, shareholders, employees or journalists) won't be possible without using the Internet. And at the same time, using the web will only be successful in the long run, when it's part of an integrated communication strategy. I would most certainly recommend this book to colleagues, clients and our employees.

Based on hundreds of hours of in-depth interviews with senior marketing and corporate communications managers from top companies such as Hewlett-Packard, Ericsson, Philips, and Xerox, this book is packed with hands-on advice to ensure business success in the new millennium. Companies must learn to integrate communications three dimensionally; externally with key customers, vertically between senior management and front-line workers, and horizontally across departments. Filled with hints, tips and strategies, this illuminating text shows readers the key to thriving in the upcoming 'customer century'.