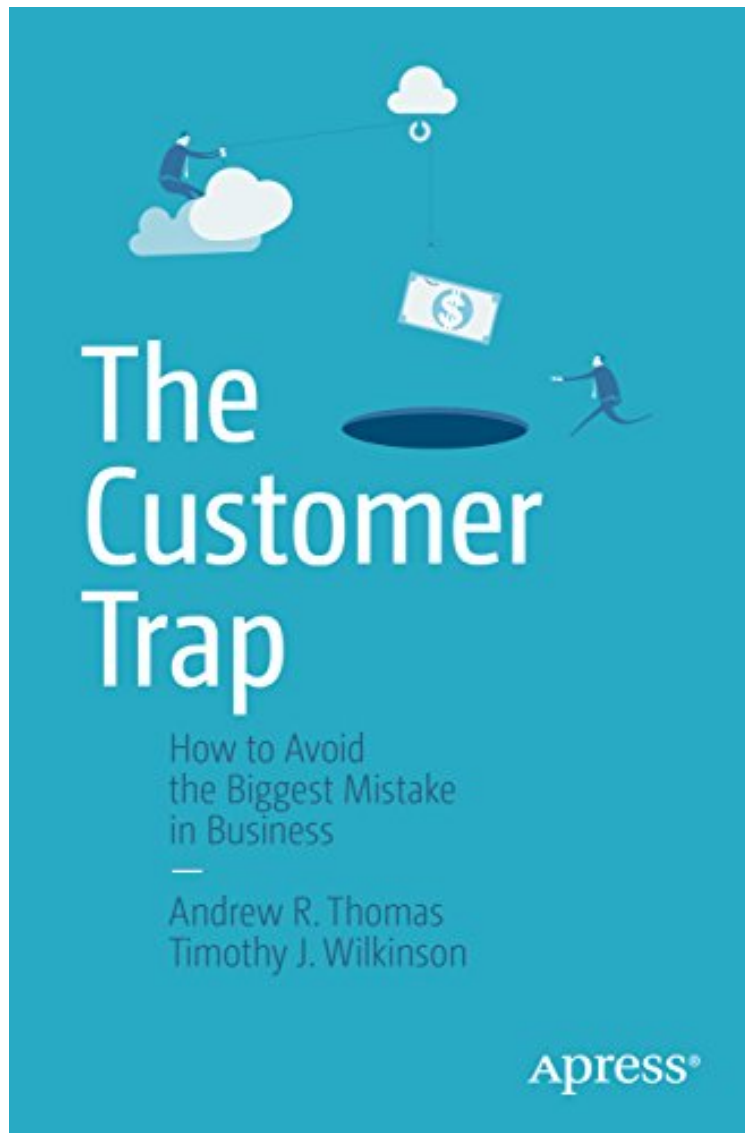


[FREE] The Customer Trap: How to Avoid the Biggest Mistake in Business

The Customer Trap: How to Avoid the Biggest Mistake in Business

Andrew R. Thomas, Timothy J. Wilkinson
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Andrew R. Thomas, Timothy J. Wilkinson : The Customer Trap: How to Avoid the Biggest Mistake in Business before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Customer Trap: How to Avoid the Biggest Mistake in Business:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Business Book By Veil_Lord I wasn't expecting much having purchased this in a package of books. However, it ended up being one of the more enjoyable ones out of that set. The basic synopsis is that companies that deal with the big retailers, even the site where you're reading this review, are often destined to fail as they over extend themselves to one (or several) big customers and then lose control as the

customer is able to enforce price reductions and push much of their expenses onto the business. I found it to be a really entertaining read going over the history of many big companies and how things worked out when they gave up control of distribution. I'm not sure I agree with every conclusion, but they do attempt to support claims and give solutions which is a lot better for learning and critical thinking than a laundry list of complaints about how big corporations are destroying the world. I didn't have any points where I was bored and it's a credit to the author that the stories were sometimes humanized with actual people as well from time to time. Basically, sometimes it's about the company and sometimes it's about the man (don't recall any women mentioned) so there was variety. Definitely a good read if you're a business owner and considering how you want to market your product. For someone like me who was just looking at it more as a general learning/entertainment device it succeeded on that level too. I enjoyed it. Just in case anybody reading this is into this type, I'd also highly recommend *The Master Switch: The Rise and Fall of Information Empires*. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Buy Local, Shop Smart, and read this book! By Bryan Fathauer "The Customer Trap" by Messrs. Thomas and Wilkinson is a great read. I've historically shunned the "How to succeed in business..." books available on the market but was delighted at the in-depth, reasoned, and experienced approach given to their research. Having fallen prey to this "Customer Trap" before, I certainly saw a bit of my own experience within the many stories which well-articulate the pit-falls of sheer focus on size/scale offered by Mega customers. Several times while reading this I had a "yeah but" moment and almost without fail they covered that thought in a further chapter! I was especially pleased not only with the cautionary tales but with several key suggestions and reminders in the latter chapters. Finally, the focus on 'typologies' of customers was an excellent refresher on maintaining what's important within your own business environment whilst focusing on what the differentiators are with your own organization. Really enjoyed this - anyone who watches "Shark Tank" and agrees with the 'contestants' that getting into a big box will solve all their problems will be interested to read why that's not the case! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must read for all suppliers before they consider dealing with a Mega-customer. By Allen M. Lucarelli Every supplier's dream is to have innovative products, the ability to focus on their core competencies, and to sell a lot of products to the Mega customers (i.e., Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Target, etc.). What follows is success and wealth, right? ... WRONG! ... "The Customer Trap" is an excellent book which takes the reader through the pitfalls of dealing with Mega customers and how that path has led to many business failures, outsourcing, lower quality, and the loss of innovation. How do you deal with Mega customers as they demand lower prices every year? What do you do when they pit your product against your competitors, with a lower price? "The Customer Trap" also shows how to effectively and efficiently market and sell your product in the environment of the Mega customers. The book is packed full of examples of both successes and failures. Be prepared for an amazing journey because "The Customer Trap" is counter-intuitive to most of what you believe you know. When you finish the book, you'll be happy to have a blueprint on how to navigate through this dynamic economy. "The Customer Trap" is a must-read for everyone. I highly recommend you get a copy today. You can thank me later.

American business is dysfunctional. Companies of all sizes follow the mistaken belief that their products and services are best sold through mega-customers with pervasive market reach, such as Amazon and Walmart. Far too many business leaders fail to realize until it is too late that the relentless pursuit of volume at all cost is not the key to long-term profits and success. *The Customer Trap: How to Avoid the Biggest Mistake in Business* is Thomas and Wilkinson's sequel to *The Distribution Trap: Keeping Your Innovations from Becoming Commodities*, which won the Berry-American Marketing Association Prize for the best marketing book of 2010. *The Distribution Trap* contended that cracking the big-box channel is not necessarily the Holy Grail that many marketers assume it is. *The Customer Trap* takes this thesis to the next level by arguing that all companies, regardless of the industry there are in, should maintain control over their sales and distribution channels. Volume forgone by avoiding the mass market is more than offset by higher margins and stronger brand equity. *The Customer Trap* shows that giving power to a customer who violates "the ten percent rule" sets a company up for ruin. Yet, when presented with the opportunity to push more sales through large customers, most decision-makers jump at the chance. As a result, marketing has come to resemble a relentless quest for efficiency and scale. Demands from mega-customers in the form of discounts, deals, and incentives erode the integrity of the brand and what it originally stood for. Lower margins become the norm and cost-saving compromises on quality take over. In time, the brand suffers and, in some cases, fails outright. Stark examples from Oreck Vacuum Cleaners, Rubbermaid, Goodyear, Levirs, and others illustrate the perils of falling into the "customer trap." This book demonstrates in vivid detail how to thrive by controlling your sales and distribution. The authors show how many firms, such as STIHL Inc., eTailz, Apple, Red Ant Pants, and Columbia Paints Coatings, have prospered by avoiding the "customer trap" and how your company can have similar success. What you'll learn Why making a deal with a mega-retailer is often a bad idea How innovators allow mega-customers to dilute the value of their products and services, while letting them impose costs and force changes in strategic direction and operational control How to take back control of your sales and distribution, using the newest direct marketing techniques and the most innovative electronic platforms How innovators can avoid the distribution

trap, build a sustainable business, and maintain the brand equity and margins of the products and services they worked so hard to create Who this book is for Leaders of businesses of all sizes.

From the authors of *The Distribution Trap: Keeping Your Innovations from Becoming Commodities*, winner of the 2010 Berry-American Marketing Association Book Award for the Best Marketing Book of the Year. About the Author Andrew R. Thomas' books have sold widely around the world, been translated into more than a dozen languages, been short-listed for several literary prizes, and won several awards. A successful entrepreneur, he has traveled to and conducted business in more than 120 countries on all seven continents. Andrew is contributing editor to *Industry Week* magazine; and, is Founding-Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Transportation Security*. He is a regularly featured commentator for media outlets such as FOX NEWS, CNBC, BBC, and the *Wall Street Journal*. He is currently Associate Professor of Marketing International Business at the University of Akron. Timothy J. Wilkinson is a Professor and the Charles L. Boppell Dean of the School of Global Commerce Management at Whitworth University. He earned a Ph.D. from the University of Utah, with a doctoral dissertation that examined subnational export promotion policy. Before coming to Whitworth, Professor Wilkinson taught at Montana State University Billings, The University of Akron, and Boise State University. Wilkinson's has published seven books or edited volumes and 35 research studies, including *Strategic Management in the 21st Century* and *International Business in the 21st Century*. Articles for business people have been published in *Business Horizons*, *MIT Sloan Management*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.