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E–Volve–or–Die.com:

Thriving in the Internet Age
Through E–Commerce Management

– Book Review –

Written by Mitchell Levy
Reviewed by James Alexander

This is a must have book. I have rarely raved about a book or business seminar as I have about this book. If you are a CEO, CIO, owner with Internet dreams, consultant, web site designer, or upper management; you must study this book. The material is the most current business textbook I have found, with full integration to the general technology of the Internet and e–commerce. The targeted reader is the business executive who needs to be aware of how business fits into the Internet and succeed. The technologist also needs to read in order to become aware that if the business objectives are not met, there will be no commerce to pay for the Internet.

If a business has no customers or clients, what is it? DEAD. In the Internet Age, failure to change with and for customers will provide the same answer. The title E–Volve–or–Die.com, is a clear statement about how the world of business is being changed by the very dynamics that customers see and want daily on the Internet. True, the vast majority of the world's people do not use the Internet, however, the most affluent portion of the world's population does use the Internet, and with the trends today in the world, in twenty years, there will be a vast

majority who have Internet access. It is this trend that Levy's insightful and challenging book addresses. There are three ideas that are repeated throughout: ECM – E–Commerce Management driven by customers; CRM – Customer Relations Management; and Customer Satisfaction for Lifelong relationships.

COMDEX Fall 2000, pure huckster advertising drew me to a seminar on the future state of the Internet in the year 2025. Shiny metallic space clothing and curious references to multiple e–type personas were the props used by Mitchell Levy to preview his book E–Volve–or–Die.com. Using ideas and concepts found in chapter 14 of the book, Levy demonstrated how the concepts in his book combined with the trends of the Internet culture of today would create a fantastic and plausible future.

Mitchell Levy comes to this work with excellent credentials and work history. Presently, he is the founder and program coordinator for San Jose State University's Professional Development Electronic Commerce Management Certificate Program (http://ecmtraining.com/sjsu). He also has a consulting business which can be examined at (http://www.ECnow.com). Previously he had worked at Sun Microsystems managing the e–commerce component of Sun's supply chain.

The book is organized in a near normal book format. The introductions, notes, and prefaces are normal, but exceptionally there are twelve Forewords. Each of the Forwards were authored by business leaders who have had some involvement with the book's creation. In some respects each foreword is a short lesson or strong advice on how the reader would benefit the most from E–Volve–or–Die.com.

The book is made up of five parts containing unequally fourteen chapters plus appendixes & a glossary. Each chapter in the book, can stand on its own, which does get a little boring if you read all of the chapters in full. (Repetition of good ideas is worthwhile.) Additionally, each chapter has a summary or checklist of the main concepts at the end of the chapter serving as a review for the reader.

Part I, Identifies the author's perspective on what constitutes the Internet age and how the new E–Conomy is developing. I take exception with the author's jump from Industrial Age to an Internet Age, without giving credit to the Information Age which gave us data processing and individualization of the microcomputer which were essential to develop the Internet Age. However, I agree hardily about how the Internet Age has made changes in society and in the nature of doing business; and the influence of consumer needs, wants, and demands. One phrase that was vivid for myself, was that for most customers on the Internet, your competition is only a click away.

Part II, Explains how to start–up new an Internet business, or how to convert part or all of a brick & mortar business into a brick & click business. Customer service and satisfaction are major issues through all of the book, but in this Part you will be introduced to the term customer touch points which is part of how your business needs to design and build customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Part III, Addresses how to maintain and improve the technical issues of E–Commerce, without losing sight of the first two parts.

Part IV, Addresses the role of regular and sudden changes both in technology and in customer relations. This is of course where Levy has lead the reader, to take a view of the future, working to meet future customer needs, and working to maintain quality in future customer relations.

Part V, The appendixes, case studies and glossaries are how the reader can obtain more in–depth review of how Levy's book has been used to solve management and leadership issues for now and the future of Internet commerce and customer relations.

Levy's book is not a secret recipe, nor a guide to sudden success. There is no magic tree or wand. The book prescribes hard work, critical self examination, and planning to be able to meet the basics of this book. I am convinced, if you want to be a success in E–Commerce, whether as a business, web designer, or even a presence on the Internet; you need E–Volve–or–Die.com. This is the essential tool and guide to Internet success. Be warned, reading this book can cause changes of mind and acceptance of totally new concepts. Even customers can get a lot from this book. The BackPorch article for this month with a checklist on using WEB help sites was developed using E–Volve–or–Die.com concepts and ideas.