1. Creating WoW products: How to master value-based product development

A WoW product stands out, is loved by customers, and is envied by competitors. It disrupts market dynamics by offering something extraordinary and fostering a loyal customer community. This community amplifies the WoW product's success and drives exceptional prosperity for the company behind it. Creating a WoW product is the ultimate strategy for achieving sustained growth, profitability, and market dominance.

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1.1 Defining a WoW Product

A WoW product often establishes the company as the market leader, making it difficult for competitors to catch up. In extreme cases, the brand name becomes the common term for this type of product. People use the brand name in everyday language to refer to any similar product, regardless of the manufacturer. It signifies that the brand is the leader and pioneer in its category, which customers often associate with quality and innovativeness. Here are a few examples:

- Tetra Pak, carton packaging for liquids made by the Swedish company Tetra Pak
- Kleenex, facial tissues made by the American company Kimberly-Clark.
- Wago, electrical connectors made by the German company WAGO GmbH

These are all successful products that created exceptional prosperity for the companies. You can find WoW products in any product category or field of engineering.

A WoW product is a game-changing solution that solves a significant customer need with an elegant and simple product. It's never enough to master just one dimension. In such cases, we could instead talk about:

- Cool Gadgets: These are innovations without purpose. Think of them as a shiny new, expensive paperweight with Bluetooth capabilities.

- Respected Clonkers: To be fair, they solve a clear customer need, but complexity seems to have been a deliberate design goal.
- Ignored Flops: Neither useful nor user-friendly, leaving everyone wondering how they escaped the drawing board.

1.2 Common Mistakes in Product Development

Common sense is not common practice, as it is not uncommon for common people to make common mistakes. If you want to avoid the most common mistakes, you must learn and master all eight chapters on this site. However, common people don't bother doing that. They are not interested in going the extra mile. That is why those mistakes are and probably will remain common. Here is a list of nine common mistakes people make when trying to create a WoW product:

- It is not about treating customer value as a cliché without meaning. Instead, customer value has been transformed into a practical tool that guides every activity within R&D.
- It is not about pushing many products through the development pipeline. Instead, it is about concentrating development efforts on the products with the highest potential.
- It is not about rigidly following a development process. Instead, it is about using a philosophy

of combining art and science. Attention to rigorous methods and detail and adapting the process to fit each development project.

- It is not about copying trends or competitors. Instead, it is about creating something authentic that reflects your brand and resonates with your audience.
- It is not about creating the most advanced product. Instead, it is about designing simple, easy-to-use products that deliver unrivaled customer value.
- It is not about creating an exclusive or futuristic look. Instead, it is about crafting a product that aligns with your customers' beliefs and preferences.
- It is not about cramming your product with fancy features. Instead, it is about focusing on the essentials that truly matter to your customers.
- It is not about creating a product that everybody likes. Instead, it is about defining clear market segments and focusing on these customers' needs and resource concerns.
- It is never about luck. Instead, it's always about hard work, doing the upfront homework correctly, and understanding that the "magic" is in getting the details right.

1.3 Summary

This site will not describe the ten steps of making a WoW product because I believe there are no such steps. There is no secret recipe that will work for everyone in all cases. It is not that simple.

Instead, this site will describe the mindset and skills required. These mindset and skills are accessible to anyone with an open mind and the willingness to put in the persistent effort to master the content on this site. You need to create your own recipe for success. Because success can never be copied, as it is a unique combination of your company's culture, values, and experiences.

Like any great and secret sauce, "the magic" lies in meticulous attention to detail and exceptional skills—qualities that distinguish the makers of me-too products from the creators of WoW products.