B4B: How Technology And Big Data Are Reinventing The Customer-Supplier Relationship

Synopsis

Industry after industry is becoming technology driven as software rapidly eats the world. As it spreads, so do complexity and opportunity. There are clear signs that the traditional B2B business model designed 125 years ago as a simple make, sell, ship approach for early manufacturing companies is no longer capable of delivering the full potential of high-tech and near-tech solutions. B4B seeks to frame what is possible in an age where suppliers are connected to their customers in real time. The traditional world of B2B was designed to sell things to customers, whereas the new B4B model will be about delivering outcomes for customers. It's a whole new ballgame. Using powerful models and specific examples, B4B envisions a next-generation tech industry where suppliers play an active, ongoing role in helping business customers achieve unparalleled value from their technology investments.

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Customer Reviews

For more than a century, at least back to 1884 when founder and CEO of National Cash Register, James Patterson, devised it, the B2B (i.e. business to business) model has been dominant. In recent years, a B2B2C model was developed. B1's focus was shifted to doing as much as it could to help to strengthen B2's relationship with its customers. To what does this book's title refer? According to J.B. Wood, Todd Hewlin, and Thomas Lah, "B4B seeks to frame what is possible in an age where suppliers are connected to their customers in real time. The traditional world of B2B was designed to sell things to customers, whereas the new B4B model will be about delivering outcomes

for customers. It's a whole new ballgame. Using powerful models and specific examples, B4B envisions a next-generation tech industry where suppliers play an active, ongoing role in helping business customers achieve unparalleled value from their technology investments."As I worked my way through this book, I was again reminded of the title of one of Marshall Goldsmith's recent books in which he explains why "what got you here won't get you there." In fact, I presume to add that "what got you here won't even keep you here," wherever and whatever "here" may be. Patterson's B2B served NCR and countless other companies well for decades but it should be noted that this model, albeit fundamentally sound, still required frequent tweaking from time to accommodate changes in the given marketplace. The same will be true of B4B, only I doubt if it will remain dominant for more than a decade, if that.All this and much more are thoroughly explained in this book.

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