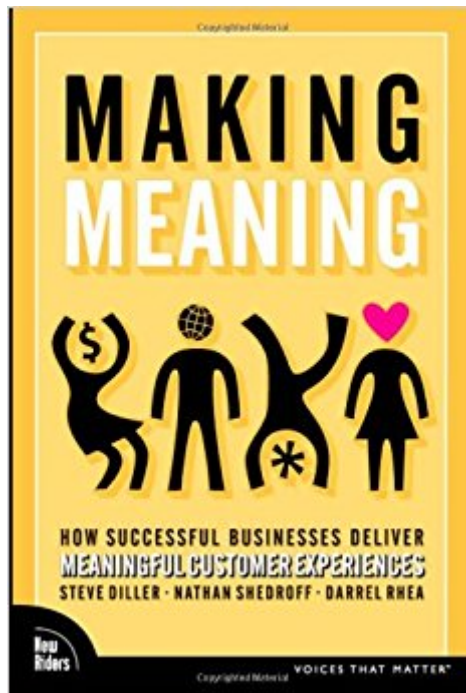


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# Making Meaning: How Successful Businesses Deliver Meaningful Customer Experiences



## Synopsis

“We’re now hip-deep, if not drowning, in the ‘experience economy.’ Here’s the smartest book I’ve read so far that can actually help get your brand to higher ground, fast. And it’s written by people who not only drew the map, but blazed these trails in the first place.”

— Brian Collins, Executive Creative Director, Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide Brand Integration Group

In a market economy characterized by commoditized products and global competition, how do companies gain deep and lasting loyalty from their customers? The key, this book argues, is in providing meaningful customer experiences. Writing in the tradition of Louis Cheskin, one of the founding fathers of market research, the authors of *Making Meaning* observe, define, and describe the meaningful customer experience. By consciously evoking certain deeply valued meanings through their products, services, and multidimensional customer experiences, they argue, companies can create more value and achieve lasting strategic advantages over their competitors. A few businesses are already discovering this approach, but until now no one has articulated it in such a persuasive and practical way. *Making Meaning* not only encourages businesses to adopt an innovation process that’s centered on meaning, it also tells you how. The book outlines a plan of action and describes the attributes of a meaning-centric innovation team. With insightful real-world examples drawn from the Cheskin company’s experience and from the authors’ observations of the contemporary global market, this book outlines a plan of action and describes the attributes of a meaning-centric innovation team. Meaningful experiences “as distinct from trivial ones” reinforce or transform the customer’s sense of purpose and significance. The authors’ vision of a world of meaningful consumption is idealistic, but don’t be fooled: this is a straightforward business book with an eye on the ROI. It shows how to bring R&D, design, and marketing together to create “deeper and richer experiences for your customers.”

*Making Meaning: How Successful Businesses Deliver Meaningful Customer Experiences* is an engaging and practical book for business leaders, explaining how their companies can create more meaningful products and services to better achieve their goals.

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## Customer Reviews

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straightforward business book with an eye on the ROI. It shows how to bring R&D, design, and marketing together to create deeper and richer experiences for your customers. Making Meaning: How Successful Businesses Deliver Meaningful Customer Experiences is an engaging and practical book for business leaders, explaining how their companies can create more meaningful products and services to better achieve their goals.

If you've been following Nathan Shedroff's work to build a conceptual framework for experience design then you will find this book to be his next step, but with an emphasis on meaningful experiences. The book presents the business strategy and design process. It is of little help directly for actually designing anything and that information wouldn't fit into the same book anyway. Such help only exists by studying ethnography, social and environmental psychology, neurology, product design, and so forth. Books that I would recommend along with this one are "The Meaning of Things" by Csikszentmihalyi, "The Cultural Animal" by Baumeister, "Emotional Design" by Norman, and whatever product design literature you can find for your field. If you aren't an ethnographer then you should acquire the basics and there are several books on to help develop your skills. While "Making Meaning" is a fine business book and lays out a basic conceptual framework for business, the framework for applied meaning design is not yet developed. For now you will have to figure this out on your own. Designers have stumbled into decent meaning designs in products or adopted existing designs that already have meaning, but if you want to design for a new meaning then you are on your own. The 15 meanings included in this book will help get you started. If you want an excellent example of meaning design I suggest you check the dash of the 2007 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited. It is thick with meaning; see if you can find it. - jim

I liked that the authors based their strategy in evoking meaning as one of the "few" strategies that could work nowadays. This is really useful in order to offer meaningful experiences for the customers. I also liked many of the ideas from Design Thinking they used throughout the book. What I think is not very useful (due to the constant changes industries and business suffer nowadays) is the lists they offer in the book. They can be useful for the moment the book is launched, but grow old quickly some months later. Nevertheless, if you consider them as a bunch of ideas that can work in some situations, and keep a flexible view on them (instead of considering them the "TO-DO" list), they are OK.

This book has valuable ideas regarding how to drive innovation in today's experience economy. It

was written by a group of experts from the field of experience design who have strong ties to Cheskin, a strategic design consulting and market research firm with a focus on helping companies to develop meaningful innovations. The concepts and framework presented here reflect the thinking and approach that were developed, and are currently used, at this leading design research firm. Many of these ideas have been communicated via blogs and articles published over the past couple of years. The value of the book, in comparison to the content that you will find online and in magazines, is that it has enabled the authors to explore these ideas in greater depth. Here they are able to provide additional background and contextual information in defense of their perspectives, as well as a more in-depth description of the frameworks and methodologies they have developed to help their companies and clients succeed. At only 140 pages, this book is a fast and enjoyable read that is clear and easy to follow. I've put together a more thorough summary of this book on my blog. For those of you who are interested check it out here: [...]

Even though the book has a good aim, and has chosen a very challenging subject that is at most of emerging nature currently, still the authors manage to shoot all over the fence without really delivering anything specific in any of the areas - it feels more like reading a bunch of Introductions. Nice read through as a speed-read, but was disappointed for my money. It seems like the authors have tried to include everything into their book and haven't been able to kill their babies and scope down into one particular area. I'd say best use of the book is of inspirational value for your own workings.

This book makes a minor contribution to the literature on customer experience management. Its raison d'être is that there is potential for "meaning" in customer experience that can be used for competitive advantage. The authors could have demonstrated personal commitment to their theory by better managing the experience of reading their book. It has copious typographical errors and several grammatical errors as well. In addition to that, readers like me who appreciate the visual aspects of a book may be put off by the lack of illustrations. The few included here look like they were drawn on a napkin---not by Picasso. These are not serious obstacles to understanding the "meaning" of this book, but they made me wonder why the authors didn't do a better job of walking their talk. The physical book itself could have been an example of their theory. The ideas in the book are attractive, but could have been helped by a more coherent explanation of key words like "meaning" and "experience." The HOW TO content, which consumes the bulk of the narrative, is not very instructive nor inspiring. On the whole, the same theory is presented more effectively in books

like Corporate Religion, by Jesper Kunde; and The Hero And The Outlaw, by Mark and Pearson.

This is a extraordinary book written by very experienced professionals.I do reccommend for those who wants to know about the real customer values...Carlos GuevaraCaracas, Venezuela

Some times you buy a book because the title seems relevant to you. Unfortunately i was looking about something rare... a book that helps me to understand how to create meaning for customers.

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