

---

# A Primer to Turbocharge your Business

An **i4** WORLDWIDE Publication

---

## Retaining and acquiring customers in a changing market-driven landscape

There has never been a more important time to focus on customer relationships. New economics, coupled with the new tools of the Internet, are recasting how a brand is created, launched, supported and driven.

These new tools and tactics should be embraced because they lead a company to the lifeblood of any business: customers.

i4 Worldwide has gathered research that indicates within today's changing business landscape and estimates as much as 50% of all U.S. businesses do not use either tracking or accountability technologies or personalization tools in their marketing. This means that profound aspects of their company's customers such as their behaviors, preferences and attitudes toward specific loyalty issues are unfamiliar to them.

All of these comprise the motivations of a core customer, which, unmeasured, places the company out of touch with the new customer that is mostly interested in finding the fastest way to success at the lowest cost per point.

To take advantage of these new marketplace dynamics, companies need to refocus their time and resources to realign their overall strategic customer appeal. Strategic planning that is forward thinking requires a thorough plan for driving integration between both traditional and newly emerging technologies.

This approach can meet the changing needs of its customers and targeted new customers who are interested in the same benefits. Digital marketing coupled with traditional marketing will out pull and out push stand-alone media solutions nearly every time.

By tightly integrating and aligning digital and traditional communication tools to attract and retain customers, companies can introduce new ways to build momentum in their key markets and grow their customer base.

i4 Worldwide's best practices have the natural outcome of laying a solid foundation for companies to swiftly streamline their marketing, fine-tune their brand messaging and recast how their company is presented and perceived. Companies are finding themselves in need to move from a product-driven company to a customer-driven company. Companies that seize this moment of change in the new economy will find themselves with opportunities to grow and sustain their enterprise.

During the past five years, lead generation strategies have shifted from a standard 'push' strategy to a 'pull-through' strategy. Based upon i4 Worldwide's research among both consumer and commercial clients, optimal results can be achieved through a comprehensive integration of all appropriate media types that circulate the brand messaging through both print and Internet channels. This orchestrated marketing process uses a pull-through strategy rather than a traditional push strategy. This occurs by providing only the information, content, education, incentives, etc. that match the target customer's needs.



Recently published surveys of U.S. businesses indicate downturns by as much as 41%, lost jobs, lowered customer confidence and corporate cash reserves greatly reduced or depleted. These powerful negative economics have slowed U.S. business growth tremendously in many sectors, meaning there are fewer customers to sell to.

These market dynamics demand a redesigned value proposition that a company can harness to overcome these obstacles and revitalize their business. Waiting for an upswing in the economy without further value revision and redesign is hazardous to any business of any size.

Faced with these realities and the potential for an extended period of economic weakness, it is essential that companies: a) redefine their strategies to meet the needs of their current and prospective customers and b) leverage both traditional and new emerging technologies solutions to selectively achieve the specific goals that will sustain their company. The heart of this strategic initiative is to attract “leader customers” that can influence other companies in their market space. And in doing so lower their cost and increase their return on investment.

## A Strategic Approach

Companies should take an honest look at their current positioning based upon what their customers think and say, starting with addressing questions that expose their strengths and weaknesses in the areas of corporate, product and marketing strategies.

### COMPANY STRATEGY?

#### WHICH BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR COMPANY STRATEGY:

- a. Product excellence
- b. Operational excellence
- c. Customer intimacy

### PRODUCT STRATEGY?

#### WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR NEW PRODUCTS:

- a. Product leader
- b. Fast follower
- c. Business process innovation/supply chain cost reduction
- d. Market disruption

### MARKETING STRATEGY?

#### WHICH OF THE STATEMENTS IS MOST TRUE FOR YOUR COMPANY?

- a. We struggle to find enough new marketing development opportunities
- b. Marketing development projects sometimes take too long and end up being cancelled after we have made significant investments
- c. Once launched, new marketing programs don't always deliver the sales and profits we would like to see

In the old economy a customer's brand trust and loyalty were considered automatic by-products for a job well done. Today, that's not nearly enough to retain a customer's continuing interest in establishing an ongoing exclusive business relationship. There are many other aspects to a relationship that is lasting and ongoing and they may include ongoing education, 24/7 services and support, defined value added services, upgrades, and on-site evaluations, to name a few.

**Communication efforts lacking these “new economy” services, a series of predictable behavior is likely to occur:**

- ◆ A trend toward institutionalizing a corporation's marketing communications to accommodate reduced staffing levels from those left in charge
- ◆ Lack of understanding of newly emerging technologies and how to integrate them with more traditional and time-proven print-based solutions
- ◆ Lack of integration across the brand enterprise including planning, marketing distribution, tracking results and determining the ROI of brand programs.

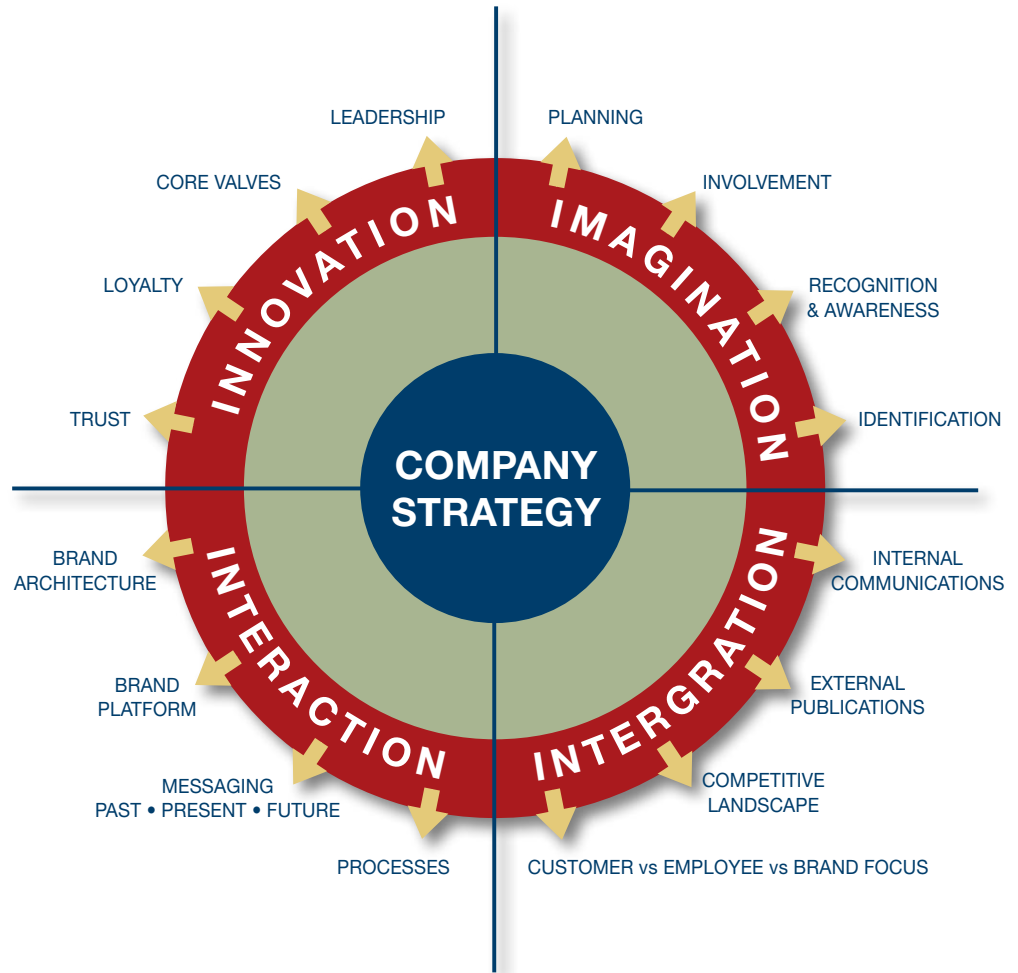
As a result of these conditions, there is a significant need to bring a new level of strategic analysis to restore an organization's top-line results and to remain competitive and grow in today's difficult marketplace. i4 Worldwide solutions bring those results using diagnostic strategy-based tools to determine optimum positioning and integration of the brand. i4 Worldwide can drive a company's development of new customers using both traditional marketing and new media tools by integrating them based upon the customer's unique needs.

**i4 Worldwide tools are predicated on solving its customers' toughest challenges:**

- ◆ Companies continue to face an extremely difficult economic downturn
- ◆ The downturn makes branding ever more important
- ◆ i4 Worldwide uses its analytical strategic solution of Imagination, Integration, and Interaction to produce Innovation
- ◆ The results can be found in case studies that follows companies that deployed i4 Worldwide solutions and achieved significant revenue gains

i4 Worldwide helps clients retain their best customers while helping them get new ones by implementing our proprietary strategic services. These services are wrapped around the i4 Worldwide Scan™ that has four primary phases:

- 1. IMAGINATION**
- 2. INTEGRATION**
- 3. INTERACTION**
- 4. INNOVATION**



**STRATEGY / BRAND:** Research, Architecture, Hierarchy, Org Naming, Product/ Services/Division Naming, External and Internal view of Organization. Based upon Research, Strategy, Naming and Identity.

**BRAND PLATFORM:** Mission, Values, Promises, Personality, Positioning, Culture driver, Unique approach, Tone, Message foundation

**BRAND MESSAGING:** Corporate mission, positioning statement, key business messages, key consumer messages, correlation of corporate value to customer benefits. Repeating text messages and visual brand signals.

**VISUAL BRAND:** Corporate identity, Visual design, Brand signals, Repeating visuals, Repeating text messaging, Look and feel

**ANALYTICS:** brand retention analysis, brand sales analysis, cost of sales analysis, promotion costing, customer segmentation, customer churn analysis, customer profitability analysis, dynamic/real-time modeling of channels and marketing spending, simulations/scenario planning

**FINANCIALS:** financial projection and ROI analysis of marketing spending, brand valuation/equity analysis, channel financial analysis

A guiding principle of i4 Worldwide is to focus on profitable customers' loyalty and identify the most profitable customers and understand the true drivers of their loyalty.

- ❖ Companies need to recognize, grow and manage more than one kind of customer loyalty. Loyalty is a result of varying factors based upon their specific market sector. Consumer / Customer Dimensions concern the top half of the chart including Brand Commitment, Category Involvement, and Re-evaluation Frequency based upon the company's perceptions of itself.
- ❖ Company business modeling and dimensions include the bottom half of the chart based upon the perceptions of the company's customers' perceptions.

**Customer loyalty is a natural outgrowth of changing marketplace dynamics that can impact a company based on a variety of factors:**

- ◆ A strong customer orientation toward a specific brand category
- ◆ Competing brands in the market given their inherent position to the primary brand category leader, or lack thereof
- ◆ The preferential customer decision-making that guides what brands are chosen or ignored
- ◆ The type of transactional methods used to finance business deals and if they are static or changing

A company needs to determine which customers are truly the best to target when considering product changes or additions. The most desirable are the "value leaders" who hold the most influence in their key markets.

Are they running a profitable business? Are they in the middle-tier or in the upper-tier of their category? Customers in the upper-tier have greater influence on smaller companies in their market space. However, in uncertain times they may not make the best target customers due to the surrounding factors mentioned. Their brand loyalty may quickly dissipate due to their specific financial constraints and therefore require a reassessment of their current market value to the company. Or a smaller more innovative company may emerge as a market leader.

As a result, when planning product changes or additions it is important to determine if direct marketing to the "value leaders" is the optimal method to assess whether they remain the most profitable target customers. In most cases this is the preferred method.

Although much of the discussion of social media, branding, and marketing may appear soft to financially-oriented managers, the new technologies discussed above allow measurement of marketing investments and returns as never before. Thus, a company can test out several different approaches to targeting and reaching customers, see how they perform, and choose the one that generates the best ROI — and do it quickly and, because of the flexibility of new media, do it dynamically.

### RE-BRANDING YOUR BRANDING

Countless companies are battling for their very existence. Many business executives and analysts report that 2009 was the toughest year in 60 years since the Great Depression. They need to move to new and powerful strategies that will turn things right side up and get strong growth going in their key markets and associated brand-line extensions. These income lines have traditionally brought in upwards of 25% of income through licensing, co-branding, sponsorships, and sales promotions using non-competitive products to push theirs and many other marketing techniques. Today, in this tight economy, these same branding partners may be reluctant to engage in ancillary promotions, particularly with mid-tier companies with lesser-known brands.

Now that much of the marketplace has been put in a tight economic positioning it takes daring and insight to integrate an enterprise into profitable operations.

What can we learn from past experience? Companies that are run on defensive posturing are not taking the opportunity to change what has been broken for some time. Smart companies recognize their positioning may not be aligned with their truest customers and do something about it boldly and quickly. They realize that not doing so may be at their peril.

[For additional information](#)

**i4 WORLDWIDE** | 20 West 55th St. | 6th Floor | New York, NY 10019  
info@i4worldwide.com | www.i4worldwide.com

