



Read_Think_Learn_Laugh



Hi Dennis

I know it is March and not January, but I want to introduce some NEW stuff. (If you know me you will know being different is my middle name.)

But, to make it up to you, I am giving away something really valuable.

A newish website

Actually, I just changed the header and it now also sports our new logo. I have also added a button to invite you to SHARE the site, and when you click on the button you get a direct link to a free eBook on Visual Merchandising.

Have a look. Tell me what you think. And click the button... that will be nice.

A new newsletter

And, if you haven't noticed, I have switched to a new software provider for our newsletter. So this epistle is also serving the purpose of making sure it works - AND IMPORTANTLY - I may need to apologise in advance.

If you have previously unsubscribed from my newsletter and you miraculously receive this one, then you can blame human error. We DID cross-check the database against the 'do not mail' list, but in transferring everything across, we may have missed you. Please don't be upset. Just 'unsubscribe' again - or send me an email to tell me to take you off.

It is still called ReadThinkLearnLaugh [RTLL] and it will remain irregular.



A new way of doing business

It's a buzz: S-Commerce and you have heard about it, right?

It's not just eCommerce or internet retailing; it is now about **social commerce**. (Meaning it's all happening at the social networks - probably Facebook if you want to be realistic.)

The so-called gurus are mostly talking rubbish, to be straightforward. They claim that:

- Internet shopping is growing at such a rate that traditional retail will be redundant soon
- Customers can always find the lowest price on the net, and they are now trained to look for the lowest price
- There is no way a traditional store can compete
- The market is changing and it is irrevocable
- Traditional media is not effective at reaching new customers.
- Customers do not want to be interrupted, they now want to be treated with respect, and you must be prepared to have a conversation with them.

There is more, but when I have explained these, you will get the point.

Internet shopping is growing at such a rate that traditional retail will be redundant soon

ECommerce makes up about 4% of total retail sales.

The internet is changing the way we are shopping, but not THAT we shop. As long as people still buy stuff, retailers can come up with a strategy to succeed.

Customers can always find the lowest price on the net, and they are now trained to look for the lowest price

Customers have always (and still do) want to get value for money. Nobody has ever wanted to be ripped off. The internet makes it easier, sure, but it does not change the fundamentals. If you have not figured out how to provide value for money, then you should. But it is not new; maybe just a bit more urgent.

There is no way a traditional store can compete

Of course they would say that. They want your money.

The market is changing and it is irrevocable

What's new? Change is the only constant as the cliché goes.

Traditional media is not effective at reaching new customers.

When was the last time YOU clicked on a Facebook Ad - or even on Google Adwords?

- 99.9% of people who are served an online display ad do not click on it.
- TV viewership is now at its highest point ever

Customers do not want to be interrupted, they now want to be treated with respect, and you must be prepared to have a conversation with them.

Hey, next they will tell us customers are people with real feelings. Whoopeedoo. They mean that the conversation you must have with the customers should happen via whatever channel (read website) they happen to masters of.

SO what to do?

Don't get me wrong. I am not a Luddite.

I was on Twitter Feb 2009 - 2 years ago, and on Facebook July 2007. (How does that compare with your resident guru?)

As a centre manager in 1999, I argued that we should be planning our retail mix to assume that Sanity won't be around. (Sanity being a chain of music stores for international readers.)

I launched my first internet start-up in 1997, an online tool allowing brokers to market office space when realestate.com.au was a twinkle in someone's eye.

I am currently involved in another internet start-up with a [friend and colleague](#) who, if you don't use his

services, you should.

I say this so that you will believe what I tell you.

The internet is just technology. We change behaviours to adapt to it. (Just like video technology changes how meetings are held.)

But it does not change the fundamental needs or attributes of humans. It does not change what people value.

The rules of a successful commercial enterprise are not different.

Just like we had to learn to accept EFTPOS at the cash desk, we have to learn about all the new channels and technologies. But the rules are no different, even if the technology is.

We still have to go to where our customers are. You still have to be respectful, you still have to add value, you still have to figure out what the customers want and provide that at a profit.

NO CHANGE.

So there is nothing to fear.

Don't get left behind as technology is being introduced - make time to experiment and try a few things.

Here are three sites you can try.

- [SHOPTAB](#) starting from \$10 per month
- [STORENVY](#) which is free
- [PAYVMENT](#) - apparently the hottest start-up in this space, also free

I am NOT offering my services to help you with this. You don't need help. You don't need a guru/consultant.

What you **do** need is a kick up the arse to just **go and do it**.

In the meantime, back at the ranch...

You still have to know how to merchandise and how to price and generally run your business.

[Here is a link](#) to two eBooks. Both are extracted from eBooks that have been sold commercially, so there is actual value.

But more importantly, by actually doing something with the tips and techniques contained in those books, the value is immeasurable.

We can help of course, if you need it.

Sure we gallivant at conferences, and we have puff pieces written in the media ([Article](#) in Newsagent Magazine) and appear in trade magazines. But that does not mean we are not approachable or real. We have customers (actually most become friends) who need us and we need them.

Neither of us is special in any way and if I ever acted that way you have permission to kick my butt. I say this because occasionally someone writes/comments on something and I sense that they don't feel confident in doing it as if our opinions somehow carry more weight.

Don't think that; you deserve better.

And if you think you may want to ask about something you may need assistance with, don't hesitate.

I caught up with another friend the other day - if you sell gifts, and you don't [stock his stuff](#) you are missing out - and he said: I had a look at your website and I have no idea what you do. (That was a wake-up call, I tell you.)

In case you don't know either:

Ganador helps organisations implement their brands in a retail environment.

We develop strategies, systems and people to perform in a retail environment and we do that by measuring the performance, designing appropriate strategies and equipping the people to implement those strategies. Typical products are:

- Mystery Shopping
- Retail Audits
- Retail Ready Brand Assessments
- Customer Experience Design
- Knowledge Management
- Internal Communications
- Customer Communications
- Training (online and offline) - our favourite because it empowers YOU

OK, all that shameless self-promotion is out of the way for some time now. (Actually, that was the first time I think?)

What's next?

- Visit the [website](#) and SHARE the site (click the button)
- Subscribe to the [blog](#) in a READER - and if you don't know how to do that, figure it out - it is important
- Collect your [two free eBooks](#) if you have not already done so
- [Write back](#) to me and tell me something/ anything
- Join me on [Twitter](#)
- **Implement** something that you have learned
- **Sign-up** for one of those new websites and give it a go
- Call me for a chat about your business (0411 030 436)

OK, that will do - for a month or two...

Just saying...

Take care & God bless.

From Team Ganador

PS

Every year I do some Pro Bono work in the industry - that is for FREE. This year I am running a 1-day workshop: **Jump the Curve**. It is aimed at business owners (any type, any size) who want to take their business to the next level.

Robert @InsideRetailing kindly offered their offices in SurryHills and it is on the 13th April 2011. If you are quick, there are **2 spots** left. CONTACT ME.

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