



Customer-Focused Innovation

Tom Reynolds, Vice President, Worldwide Marketing of **Johnson & Johnson Wound Management** was committed to bringing innovation to the process of creating and enhancing products to meet the real needs of J&J's customers. The **customer immersion** market research process he created is a unique and major commitment to do this on a global scale.

Customer Immersion

A multi-disciplinary team was charged with walking in their customers shoes, observing what they do, understanding their problems, and beginning to think like them. They traveled around the world to visit physicians, medical facilities and patients -- with video cameras in tow -- to scrutinize customers' procedures, environments, products and interactions.

The team observed the variety of problems, solutions, and real conditions that their various medical community customers and their patients encountered. Then, a serious analysis was conducted to understand customer needs in the context of the environmental conditions they live and work in across culture and location.

Thinking outside the Bandaid™.

Then, Tom sought experts from industries outside of health care for their expertise who had developed materials and devices that have relevance to healing and repairing wounds. Product and treatment challenges in Wound Management include work with soft tissue that is malleable, but with limits, and other procedures that involve connecting disparate spaces or requirements for flexibility across varying weights and materials. Hence, marketers and engineers recruited included tent manufacturers, and bridge designers and builders.

Devising and executing such dynamic market research was only the beginning of J&J's product and marketing innovation strategy. Tom summarizes the talents and skills that enable marketers to differentiate and catapult their business.

Characteristics of great innovators:

1. Driven by the passion for a problem that defies logic
2. Finds threads or links to solutions with possible relevance in other industries
3. Able to collaborate across functional expertise and department
4. Dedication exemplified by focus, passion and time commitment

Hospitable Marketing

As a 3rd generation hotelier, Jonathan Tisch, CEO of Loews Hotels markets his hotels based on an understanding that "people are leaving the safety and security of their homes and coming to your hotel where they need to feel welcome and safe." Tisch finds many hospitality upgrades to be standard among high-end hotels, so, customer service has become the essential ingredient for differentiation.

Loews senior management focuses on the relationship and interaction between the guest (aka customer) and those who work at the property. Managers spend time in the lobby speaking with customers to be sure that their needs are met. Customer feedback is also solicited online thru guest comment cards. These are taken very seriously, as the total compensation package of middle and senior management at a property is tied to positive customer feedback.

Service-Driven Differentiation

Loews Loves Kids and *Loews Loves Pets* programs were trendsetting programs when they came out.

"Loews knows that children -- and parents -- need special treatment when traveling. Each Loews Hotel offers a variety of unique programs..., including lending libraries of games, special children's menus which include healthy options, tours, Fisher Price welcome gifts, supervised recreational programs and much more."

"Loews Loves Pets. Special treatment for both pets and their owners begins with a personal note from the general manager with information on hotel pet services, local dog-walking routes, and area pet service..."

All pets receive their own gifts including a bowl and a special treat to start their vacation. Additional items available for guests with pets include dog and cat beds, leashes and collars, rawhide bones, catnip, scratch pole, pet video, litter boxes and litter, pooper scoopers. We pay special attention to our guest rooms, which accommodate pets. Therefore, a \$25 charge may be assessed to guests traveling with pets."

Marketing Tisch's Book

Jonathan Tisch recently authored "Chocolates on the Pillow Aren't Enough". He found that the idea of enhancing customer service resonated with the media. They conducted a satellite radio tour and outreach to bloggers, resulting in interviews with 3 top cable channels, 45 radio stations and about 15 blogs. Book signings and talks at book stores and business organizations rounded out the promotion.