
The Cluetrain Manifesto - Abridged

The **Cluetrain Manifesto** is a book that begins

A powerful global conversation has begun. Through the Internet, people are discovering and inventing new ways to share relevant knowledge with blinding speed. As a direct result, markets are getting smarter—and getting smarter faster than most companies.¹

Ten years on, this paper presents the abridged version.

95 Theses to 10 Principles

As if to tap into the concept of “reformation” the book propounds “95 theses”. That’s an awful lot. When you look at the list it is possible to break them into groups that communicate “the revolution is here” and it is changing markets to conversations, empowering consumers, changing the dynamics within firms and emphasizing the nature of companies as entities within a community.

Building on work by Sandra Davey the 95 theses have been reduced here to 10 Principles.

On this page they are listed as one sentence statements. On the next they are slightly expanded.

1. **Markets are human conversations**
2. **The internet has made the network the dominant form of organization**
3. **People rely on their network not authority**
4. **Principles need to replace positions, and be at the centre of the conversation**
5. **Loyalty is built on honest two-way communication**
6. **Corporations need to belong to a community**
7. **The market and the company are not separate – they are one**
8. **Marketing is not a mediator between the customer and the company**
9. **The customer-centric organization is dead**
10. **The revolution is happening.**

¹ See <http://www.cluetrain.com/>

1. **Markets are human conversations**
Markets are conversations, they consist of humans who sound human. The tone of your voice is as communicative as the words that you speak.
2. **The internet has made the network the dominant form of organization**
The internet is enabling conversations that make the network the dominant form of organization, replacing both markets and hierarchies. The people in these networks are changed fundamentally – they are getting smarter, more informed and more organized than they were in markets or hierarchies.
3. **People rely on their network not authority**
People have figured out they get better information and support from their network than from vendors. There are no secrets, the consumers rapidly know more about the product than the vendors.
4. **Principles need to replace positions, and be at the centre of the conversation**
Corporations' homogenized voice that has been used to "motivate" the staff and "enthuse" the market sounds flat, hollow and unconvincing. Companies need to "lighten up", not with affected humor but by adopting big values, a little humility, straight talk, and a genuine point of view. They need to replace "positioning" with adopting *principles*.
5. **Loyalty is built on honest two-way communication**
Brand loyalty is like a *marriage and we forget that "divorce is always surprising" at our peril. Our partner can leave us before we know what we've done. Companies need to pay attention to all the clues their customers and staff provide. Companies can't afford not to be honest with those they profess to care about.*
6. **Corporations need to belong to a community**
Human communities are based on discourse – the conversation defines the community. Companies need to decide what community they want to be in and engage in the conversation.
7. **The market and the company are not separate – they are one**
There is not an external market and an internal hierarchy, there is one network of people playing multiple roles.
8. **Marketing is not a mediator between the customer and the company**
Customers and workers want to talk to the company that we've kept hidden behind a smokescreen of flacks and hucksters. Both want the same kind of open conversation with a partner they can trust. The customers want to be involved in all the conversations of the company, not just those mediated by "marketing" or market research.
9. **The customer-centric organization is dead**
The customer can't be put at the centre of the organization, they need and want to be at every part of the organization.
10. **The revolution is happening**
Responding to it is not a matter of strategic choice, it is a necessity.

About DigEcon Research

Purpose

DigEcon Research is a stand alone research body. Ultimately, its pursuit is policy research, the focus of which is the meaning and significance of the Digital Economy. This policy research encompasses both economic and social research.

Researching the significance of the Digital Economy

The concept generally referred to as the Digital Economy is frequently discussed but there is little shared meaning in the term. A key definitional issue is whether the Digital Economy is something yet to happen or in which we are now embedded.

DigEcon Research focuses on the analysis of social and economic change rather than an analysis of a notionally static "Digital Economy". Analysis of the change as it occurs should highlight those areas where there is genuine policy choice rather than merely a need to adapt policy to changes that have already occurred.

Before Thomas Kuhn popularised the idea of "paradigms" J.K.Galbraith railed against the "conventional wisdom". There is no denying that what Kuhn called "normal science" or the repeated application of existing theory to new problems results in most practical developments. It is equally true that the application of existing theory to problems they were not designed for results in, at best, vacuous solutions and, at worst, wildly dangerous outcomes.

The Digital Economy challenges the fundamental concepts of neo-classical economics. It also challenges most of the precepts of how societies are organised. In this context policy research needs to focus on what is different, not on what is the same. The Digital Economy is not just a matter of means of production but about the fundamental structures of social organisation.

Work program

This research is designed both to inform policy makers and to assist those who would seek to influence policy makers or to make business decisions. DigEcon Research however does not provide strategy recommendations nor undertake policy advocacy on behalf of any party.

A key element of the research will relate to the direct regulation of the converging industries of telecommunications, media, consumer electronics and information technology. However, the agenda encompasses the wider economic and social policy issues.

The scope of the research agenda will ultimately depend upon the researchers who wish to participate in what is more an idea than an entity.

In the crowded Australian research field there are a number of "bodies" that share some of the objectives of DigEcon Research. DigEcon Research aspires to contribute to the work of these and any other researchers in the field.