

# Let Go!

## *Moving from B2C Marketing to C2C Marketing*

By Premanjali Gupta

76%

Don't believe companies tell the truth in advertising!

Source: Yankelovich, 2005

68%

Trust other people like themselves - up from 22% in 2003.

Source: Edelman Trust Barometer, 2006

92%

Cite advice from others as the best source for product ideas - up from 67% in 1977.

Source: GFK/Roper, 2006

84%

Find the advice somewhat credible and 74% somewhat likely to pass the advice to others.

Source: TalkTrack, Keller Fay Group, 2006

"For the first time the consumer is boss, which is fascinatingly frightening, scary and terrifying, because everything we used to do, everything we used to know, will no longer work," Kevin Roberts, CEO, Saatchi & Saatchi

Marketing today is clearly moving from the traditional B2C (business-to-consumer) marketing to C2C (consumer-to-consumer) marketing. "It is the Information Age, and we are inundated with overwhelming quantities of information ... traditional marketing is on the decline. TV networks are losing viewers. Magazines are in trouble. Broadcast and print ads are costing more and producing poorer results. Traditional sales people are almost dinosaurs. People just don't have the time for sorting through information overload."<sup>1</sup> It is clearly more than just advertising, selling and promotion.

However, "orientations, viewpoints, perspectives angles, standpoints and points of view are just places from which to look at things. No particular viewpoint is more valid than the other."<sup>2</sup> The traditional B2C way of looking at marketing is a perspective and C2C way is yet another perspective. "There is nothing inherently right or wrong about looking at things from a particular perspective. There is, however, something profoundly wrong with looking at things from only one viewpoint."<sup>3</sup> It gives a biased and incomplete picture. We have to leverage on both the traditional and the C2C way of

<sup>1</sup> Silverman George, *The Secrets of Word-of-Mouth Marketing*, AMACOM: New York, Pg: 9

<sup>2</sup> Silverman George, *The Secrets of Word-of-Mouth Marketing*, AMACOM: New York, Pg: 7

<sup>3</sup> Silverman George, *The Secrets of Word-of-Mouth Marketing*, AMACOM: New York, Pg: 7

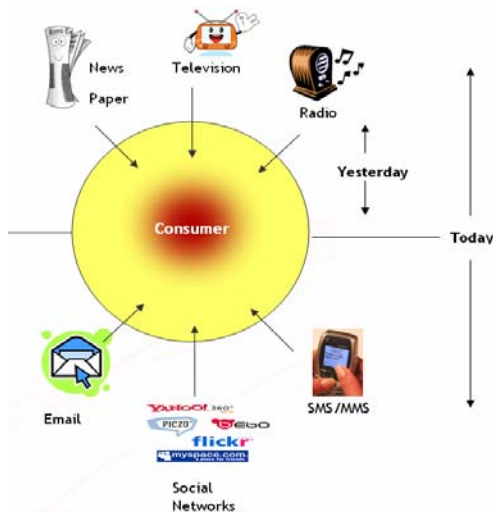


Figure 1: Consumers - Yesterday and Today

marketing to ensure effectiveness in reaching out to this new brand of consumers.

The new generation of internet savvy consumers is passionately connected, contributing to each other and in control of their own experiences. They are no longer limited by time and space; they can talk to many or just to one; and they have access to decision makers and have total freedom of speech. Reputations can be built up or dashed down in a few seconds. They make it their job to be informed and they know how to filter marketing messages.

You can either perceive this evolution of new generation consumers as a threat or can harness it to your benefit and face them head on!

## Ptolemaic Theory in Marketing

According to the Ptolemaic theory, the sun revolved around the earth. It was the most obvious conclusion till Nicolaus Copernicus came up with the Copernican theory stating that all planets revolve around the sun. In the same light, it has been widely accepted that the traditional B2C marketing, which includes advertising, sales, and promotion, is the way to go till C2C marketing was realized.

The challenges faced by the traditional B2C marketing as result of the C2C Revolution are as follows -

- *Cynical Radar of Consumer* - Consumers today trust fellow consumers over businesses.
- *Commoditization of Information and Knowledge* - Economic power has been pushed back to the consumers by the easy accessibility of information. It is increasingly easy for consumers to find more options.

Let's face it! The traditional "top-down-promotion" approach just won't work today!

So what is the new marketing *mantra* that works?

## C2C Revolution - Generation 'C'

C2C interaction is described as "the interaction among customers (of a certain product or service) that affects

The two main challenges faced by the traditional B2C e-commerce are *building traffic* and *sustaining customer loyalty*.

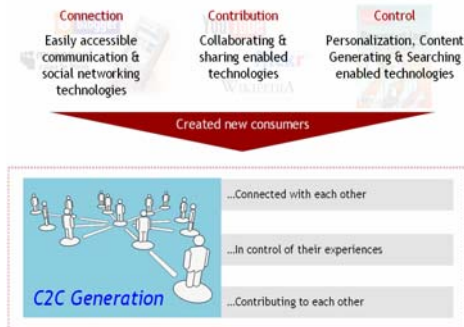


Figure 2: C2C Generation

Source:  
*Business Week, Times, WSG, NYT*

the purchase, the value, and/or the conceived satisfaction towards the product or service. Today, C2C interaction leverages on [web 2.0](#) and can be defined as the “interaction among agents in a poly-agent system”<sup>4</sup> that are networked by computer networks and standardized interface.

Consumers are actively using the internet and mobile technology. They are well *connected* as a result of easy accessibility of advanced communication and social networking. IP technology and online communities is enabling consumers to communicate globally at virtually no costs.

Online communities also provide consumers with a platform to manage their social networks as well as to satisfy their intrinsic need of having to “belong” to a group. The various collaborating and sharing enabled technologies are being used by consumers to effectively *contribute* to each other.

As a result, we have a generation of consumers who are in *control* of their experiences. Personalization, content generation and searching enabled technology contributes to enhance this control.

## RedPill Razzmatazz

Now that we have outlined the benefits of C2C Marketing, it is also important to note that C2C Marketing does not happen automatically. It requires a platform for communication that fulfills the premises for successful communication among partners. RedPill provides ‘Idea-to-Implementation’ C2C strategies that harness the power of social networking and user generated content phenomena through the use of web and mobile interactive platforms.

[RedPill Mobility](#) offers the following services:

- Research and Analysis
- C2C Strategy Consulting
- Platforms and Solutions
  - [Gimmedaball](#) - *Sports C2C Platform* - Web and mobile C2C platform for sports-themed personalization and social networking that extends and enhances companies’ sports marketing through an engaging social environment for customers.

RedPill Mobility was incorporated in early January 2007 and is a spin off of RedPill Solutions

<sup>4</sup> Takagi et. al (1995)

- LaunchPAD Enterprise Service & Solution - Fixed and Mobile C2C marketing solution and services that harness the power of influential customers for New Services trial, experience sharing, leading to C2C acquisition, C2C activation and customer social networking to enable companies with a long term customer engagement and loyalty management platform.
  - MyMobShop User Generated Trading Platform - Fixed and mobile C2C business solution and services that enable companies to create new revenue sources by leveraging on Mobile, User Generated Content and Communities.
- Go-To-Market Services
  - Aggregated C2C Properties

For more information, do write in to:

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## Last Word

"We live in a 'let-go' world now, marketers are most likely to succeed and be 'in touch' when they let consumers be in control. Consumers are more participative and selective and the trend from push to pull is accelerating, the consumer is truly boss now," A.G. Lafley, CEO, Procter & Gamble

Access, communications and communities have created a new C2C generation i.e. generation 'C' that defies conventional marketing, decides how and what they want to consume and can create unprecedented successes for those who can operate and harness their value contribution. The empowerment of connection, creation and contribution has changed the way consumers live and that in turn has led to change the way businesses operate today. Adjusting business to this new consumer reality is not an option, it is now the new business imperative.

"We are Digital Immigrants in this world increasingly in the hands of Digital Natives. Realizing this is our biggest challenge," Rupert Murdoch, CEO, Times Corp.



## Interesting Related Readings

### Definition and Practice of Web and Mobile 2.0 Technologies

- [Oreilly - Web 2.0 Research Report](#)
- [The machine is US/ing us](#)
- [What is Mobile 2.0](#)

### Change in Consumer, Culture, and Society from Social Anthropologist Geek perspective

- [Danah Boyd](#)
- [The high priestess of internet friendship](#)

### Change in Consumer, Culture, and Society from Strategy Consultant perspective

- [Community 2.0](#)
- [How businesses are using Web 2.0: A McKinsey Global Survey](#)
- [Social Networks and Urbanization](#)
- [Thriving in a world of Consumer Control](#)

### Change in Consumer, Culture, and Society from Media Agency perspective

- [Social Media - Power to the people](#)
- [The New "Digital Divide"](#)
- [The Social Butterfly Effect](#)
- ["We are all Media Owners now"](#)

### C2C Business Approach after 2.0 Era

- [Community Management and Marketing Council](#)
- Dave Balter and John Butman, *Grapevine - The New Art of Word-of-Mouth Marketing*, Portfolio: New York
- Geoffrey A. Moore, *Crossing the Chasm*, Harper Business Essentials
- Justin Kirby and Paul Marsden, *Connected Marketing - The viral, buzz and word of mouth revolution*, Butterworth-Heinemann

- [Outside Innovation - Blogs](#)
- Patricia B. Seybold, *Outside Innovation*, HarperCollins
- Patricia B. Seybold, *The Customer Revolution*, HarperCollins
- Silverman George, *The Secrets of Word-of-Mouth Marketing*, AMACOM: New York

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