

**Blogging: What's All the Fuss?      4**

*Blogs have come a long way since their debut in 1994, and it was only a matter of time before they expanded from a forum for like-minded individuals to businesses—especially business-to-business (B2B) marketers. Their growth reflects low barriers to entry, the more favorable economics of owning your marketing media, and the desire for two-way engagement with customers. Businesses hoping to enhance their brands through blogs should check out the five “best practices” detailed here and also consider the future outlook for blogs: Will usage grow? Have they peaked? What does a blog need to compete successfully?*

**Jacqueline A. Gilbert, Dorie Clark, and Donald P. Roy**

**Blending Tribes: Leadership      16  
 Challenges in Mergers and Acquisitions**

*Increasing profits, achieving economies, gaining new products or research—these possibilities often drive organizational combinations. Too often potential culture clashes among the people involved are not considered until problems have already appeared. Paying attention to each organization's past narratives, traditions, and subsequent interpretations could help smooth the transition. Promises made before a merger should be kept; organizational traditions should be respected and retained where feasible; and prospects for cultural integration should be a primary consideration, not an after-thought.*

**Susan Duvall-Dickson**

**The Impact of Customer      23  
 Motivation on the Customer-Salesperson Relationship**

*While much research examines effective sales techniques, the same cannot be said of customer motivation. And how do customer reasons for buying interact with the salesperson's particular efforts? Amid the many moving parts of the customer-salesperson relationship is the customer's intrinsic motivation—wanting rather than having to engage with a particular salesperson. Hypotheses regarding influence, trust, loyalty, and intrinsic motivation were tested in a study of retail store managers (“customers”) who work with a single manufacturer's sales force. Sales managers will be interested in knowing not only that the customer's motivation definitely affects the sales relationship, but the type of motivation also matters.*

**William J. Rowe, Cody Logan Chullen, and Jon F. Kirchoff**

**Sensemaking Corporate Brand      37  
 Values in the Smart-Phone Industry**

*Remember the excitement of the Palm? And before that Motorola's first cell phone? Since the mid-'80s, smart-phone developments have moved like lightning as major players—Nokia, RIM (Blackberry), Apple, Google, and Samsung—took turns as top dog. What explains the dramatic shifts in their brand values? A hybrid approach using conventional theories plus case studies explains some but not all. To advance the analysis and help managements meet competitive challenges, a new sensemaking framework is suggested, to wit, a value-innovation network using three concentric value-generating orbitals. Value-capture (value-added) is on the inside as orbital-A; value-potential is orbital-B; and value-innovation is the outermost orbital-C—encompassing entities and strategies possibly not yet connected or even visible.*

**R. Ray Gehani**

**Competition or Cooperation: 47**  
**Cultural Perspectives on**  
**N-Effect and Proximity-to-a-**  
**Standard**

*More than one multinational business venture has struggled or perhaps failed because of “cultural blindness.” Business environments and practices are definitely affected by the degrees of a culture’s horizontal and vertical individualism or collectivism and by the size or number of employment groups and companies in question. These influences, in turn, relate to a country’s degree of economic advancement. The authors undertook a multi-level study of cultural and business practices in the U.S., Korea, China, and Sri Lanka—a range of individual/collectivist orientations—to focus on the N-effect theory (more competitors = less competitive motivation) and the proximity-to-a-standard theory (performing well against a standard = more competitive motivation). Results reflect the complexities of managing and decision-making to achieve positive outcomes in varied cultures.*

**M. A. Y. D. Madurapperuma, Kim Kyung-min, and P. Dharmadasa**

**SAM 2017 INTERNATIONAL  
BUSINESS CONFERENCE**

**“Advancing Management: Leadership  
and Change”**

Rosen Plaza Hotel  
Orlando, Florida

For more information call: 361.825.3045

E-mail: [sam@samnational.org](mailto:sam@samnational.org)

Web site: [www.samnational.org](http://www.samnational.org)

---

Moustafa H. Abdelsamad, *Editor-in-Chief*  
Dina M. Abdelsamad, *Database Advisor*  
Angie Dick, *Assistant-to-the-Editor*

Jane B. Fant, *Manuscript Editor*  
Elwin Myers, *Assistant-to-the-Editor*

*SAM Advanced Management Journal*, ISSN 0749-7075 is published quarterly by the Society for Advancement of Management, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, College of Business, Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5808, USA. Subscriptions: \$84.00/one year, \$160.00/two years, \$230.00/three years. Single copies: \$25.00 (\$22.00 SAM members). Foreign: Add \$20.00 per subscription for surface mail and \$30.00 for Air Mail for each year to the above subscription rates.

Subscriber claims for nonreceipt of the *Journal* will be honored up to six months from date of publication. Requests for subscriptions, changes of address (submitted eight weeks in advance), additional copies and all manuscripts and correspondence relating to editorial or other matters should be addressed to Dr. M. H. Abdelsamad, SAM President and Professor of Finance, College of Business, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, 6300 Ocean Drive, Corpus Christi, TX 78412-5808, USA.

Printed quarterly in U.S.A. 2017 by the Society for Advancement of Management®. All rights reserved.