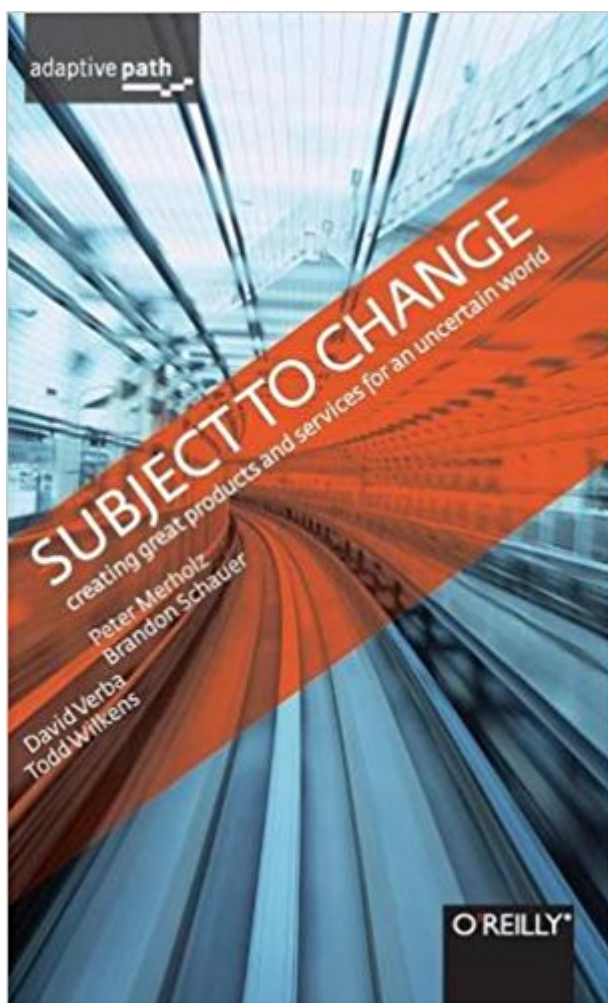


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Subject To Change: Creating Great Products & Services For An Uncertain World: Adaptive Path On Design



Synopsis

To achieve success in today's ever-changing and unpredictable markets, competitive businesses need to rethink and reframe their strategies across the board. Instead of approaching new product development from the inside out, companies have to begin by looking at the process from the outside in, beginning with the customer experience. It's a new way of thinking-and working-that can transform companies struggling to adapt to today's environment into innovative, agile, and commercially successful organizations. Companies must develop a new set of organizational competencies: qualitative customer research to better understand customer behaviors and motivations; an open design process to reframe possibilities and translate new ideas into great customer experiences; and agile technological implementation to quickly prototype ideas, getting them from the whiteboard out into the world where people can respond to them. In *Subject to Change: Creating Great Products and Services for an Uncertain World*, Adaptive Path, a leading experience strategy and design company, demonstrates how successful businesses can-and should-use customer experiences to inform and shape the product development process, from start to finish.

Book Information

Series: Adaptive Path

Hardcover: 202 pages

Publisher: O'Reilly Media; 1 edition (March 26, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0596516835

ISBN-13: 978-0596516833

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #474,328 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #72 in Books > Science & Math > Technology > Nanotechnology #107 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Industrial, Manufacturing & Operational Systems > Industrial Design > Products #107 in Books > Computers & Technology > Web Development & Design > Web Services

Customer Reviews

The world in which we live and work is subject to change without notice, and succeeding amidst that uncertainty requires continuous improvement. The key to creating successful products and services

in a rapidly changing world is not resistance to unexpected change, but the flexibility to adapt to it. With that in mind, Subject to Change presents ideas that will help you improve your work designing products and services that provide great experiences for your customers. Praise "Short, but powerful. Easy to read, yet profound. I've been searching for just this book: the one perfect book that summarizes the essence of modern product design. This is it. The lessons are as powerful as they are simple: The product is NOT the goal. Successful products are systems. Focus on the experience. This requires empathy, agile product management, real understanding of the target audience. This book practices what it preaches. I will use it in my courses for MBA students. You should use it for, well, for everyone. Short, simple, persuasive, and powerful." Don Norman Author of Emotional Design and Design of Future Things Co-Founder Nielsen Norman group "Customers don't care about how innovative you are. They just want to be happy and satisfied. Learn from Adaptive Path a passion for finding and solving the problems that will matter to customers no matter what the future brings." Scott Berkun Author, The Myths of Innovation "Wake up. The future of business isn't about flying cars and robot butlers. Creating the future is really about changing the way your company connects with its customers. Use this book as your guide." Jeffrey Veen Design Manager, Google "Subject to Change presents complex, challenging ideas in simple, compelling language, with illuminating examples and no shortage of memorable phrases. At once authoritative and nimble, the book itself is an example of the kind of experience the authors admire. No matter who you are, it will change the way you think about design." Michael Bierut Partner, Pentagram Author, 79 Short Essays on Design "The principles set out in Subject to Change are essential for the design of any product, but especially relevant for the fast-moving world of web software. It used to be the case that a software product was designed once, and refreshed every couple of years. Software is no longer a product. It is a process, a dynamic service that evolves as it responds to constant interaction with its users. The essence of Web 2.0 design is to create a dynamic framework that harnesses the collective intelligence of customers in such a way that the software becomes almost alive. This terrific book teaches the mindset required for this new kind of design." Tim O'Reilly Founder and Publisher, O'Reilly Media

OK book on the subject.

I was disappointed when I got my pre-order of this book. At a scant 160 pages, I was skeptical that it could offer very much insight. On reading it, I was proven correct. Much of the book was nothing more than an extended advertisement for Adaptive Path. Case studies were too short to learn much

from. The only case study really discussed in depth was of Target's new prescription bottles, which have been discussed more in depth and more usefully in too many other books. The book's eight chapters are full of short sections; many of them read as though they are blog entries. They're strung together with little regard for content or context. The seventh chapter, a flawed discussion of agile development, is completely worthless. The book could have been so much better if the authors had taken the time and effort to better consider their arguments and write a more cohesive work. If you can look past the book's many shortcomings, there are some interesting nuggets in there. Sadly, the useful bits comprise less than 10% of the book, but they're good enough to earn this book two stars.

This book makes a point, that no longer are we designing products, but we are designing experiences, with Apple as a case in point. If our experience is a cohesive one, and keeps us as a customer we will buy into the whole enchilada. All of the products in this system don't have to be the best in their class, but the experience of using this system must be best in its class to win. This ability to understand the "experience" is provided by knowing your customer or understanding the real end usage of the product. Working in Human Factors and having been exposed to Contextual Inquiry this was kind of a "Duh" moment. Yes, you must understand and emphasize with the users of the products, we have known that for years. The struggle has always been to get management on the same avenue. On top of that many companies are very siloed. Hardware and Software are different divisions and only talk when they have to. HOW to get them to chat would be more helpful here. This might be easier for a consultant (like Adaptive Path) brought in to help (acknowledging you need help is half of the solution) than an embedded member of an organization...isn't that ironic? Finally the design method of generating loads of ideas and then picking and choosing and prototyping to quickly eliminate ones that will or won't work, is a great idea if you have management support and a staff to do this. Many people are also working pretty lean. It is great to have ideas generated throughout the company, but I have find sometimes the ones that get picked have more to do with the status of the person that generated it than the quality of the idea. If a democratic method and one driven by skilled designers in the trade were to manage this, this would be ideal. Also sometimes pieces of many ideas may work and a skilled UI engineer/designer would understand how to put this together and user testing would help to understand how well this worked. The Agile method is a great one, if implemented by a closely working team and with the expectations of iterations built in. Geography does not matter so much as long as there is communication. Sometimes however this can get really muddy if groups get siloed and iterations

are not encouraged. Sometimes managers attempt to expedite things by actively discouraging communication and iterations. This serves no one well. I enjoyed reading this book as these principles are sound. But, I don't think anything new is covered here.

I got this book about product marketing because I wanted to gain insight on the marketing of my own product [...] so I was a little frustrated by the overall direction and focus of the book which is to motivate the reader into hiring Adaptive Path. All four authors either currently work for or have recently worked for that marketing company. According to the on-line edition of the book, there are twenty eight references to Adaptive Path in the content. While light on theory, the book does give good advice. This advice is mostly in the form of what not to do. This most probably reflects Adaptive Path's pain points in earlier engagements with customers. Don't use competition as your main driver. Don't depend on novelty. Don't get stuck on research or reporting. Don't get stuck on product design. Don't over-engineer. Don't get too confident about what you think your customers want. If there is only one important take away from this book, then I believe that it would be this. It's all about the user experience. What you should be focusing your design efforts on is the user experience. What you should be focusing your strategy on is the user experience. The only thing you do that your customers care about is their experience of your product or service. They heavily advocate using an Agile methodology. They agree with early prototyping, failing fast, and continuous customer involvement. They are lukewarm on the SPARC model.

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