



BY DUNCAN MAXWELL ANDERSON

Your Own Dream

WHY NETWORK MARKETERS WILL INHERIT THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS

Are you obvious-impaired? That is, do you have trouble seeing the straight forward, simple, "nose-on-your-face" aspects of life?

Thousands of sophisticated business types-consultants, economists, executives, and business journalists-do suffer from this syndrome. So they still don't get why network marketing works.

You and I are on the trend to the trend of the 21st Century: we know that people today basically don't want to leave the house, and no longer see why they should.

Oh, sure, they want to go out for lunch and to the beach. They want to play golf, surf marlin fish, and hunt for grouse in Scotland and buy antiques in Italy. But they don't want to commute two hours (or more) every day to work in a gray, ventilated cubicle for Dilbert's boss. They want to work from home, for themselves. Each week, according to Link Resource in New York City, 8,000 more Americans put an office in their house. Around 60 million of us already earn some money from home.

You'd think a movement that mighty would intrigue and obsess American business. Sixty million people - that's nearly the size of the entire Baby Boom generation. You would expect -if you aren't obvious-impaired-to see expensive billboards, magazine ads, and TV campaigns aimed at this explosive new market.

I don't know about you, but

all I see are rain-spattered hand-bills that read "WORK FROM HOME," stapled to telephone poles by network marketers-the only group that has learned to exploit this trend.

Why is it? Most enterprises large enough to sponsor major advertising are too big and bloated to deal with change. When the small company that later became Xerox Corporation was formed in 1955, marketing experts all agreed that there was no

A network marketing company is adaptable. Its identity is not in its product, but in a network of distributors. It's a business where you can get big without getting stupid.

future in making copy machines. After all, there already existed a good system for making copies, sold by some of the richest corporations of the day, with two percent market penetration. It was called carbon paper. (Remember carbon paper?)

You might think this suggests that when companies get big, they and the experts who follow them get stupid together. Unfortunately, you'd be right. Xerox proved the experts wrong and made paper airplanes out of the carbon paper industry. The guys at Xerox even went onto invent the technology for the mouse-and-icon-driven personal computer. Unfortunately, Xerox was a big company by

then, so it, too, had become stupid. It let the PC project languish, finally "handing" it to Steven Jobs, who founded Apple Computer and made billions. pretty soon, though, Apple got the big-and-bloated problem, too, and started thinking that no one but Apple would ever be able to build a user-friendly PC-so it refused to license the Pac operating system to anyone else. Shockingly other companies built their own operating systems and computers, and Microsoft became the big fish in the

computer market. The editors and the designers at NML and about 10,000 graphics geeks across the country have Macs. We 10,012 people are good customers, but it probably would have made more business sense for Apple to license their stuff and get a check every time a computer is made anywhere in the world.

Why does "big" so often equal "stupid?" In the Innovator's Dilemma, Clayton M Christensen explains that most companies stop learning after they reach a certain size. They get so heavily invested in the marketing opportunity for which they were founded that they lose interest in spotting the next one. Internal intrigues drown out the voices of customers. Customers

become the people out there, some where whose job it is to "buy or stuff." Now you know why one third of the Fortune 500 vanishes from the list every five years.

A conventional company commits its brand identity to blue jeans and hope jeans will always be in fashion. Network marketing companies are built smarter; they answer trends instantly. They may, sell jeans, but its real identity is a network of leaders, distributors, and customers. Their relationships create the marketing power of the company, a power that potentially can drive any sort of product or service and easily adapt to any new market opportunity. It's a form of business where you can get big without getting stupid.

You could even picture a network marketing company selling carbon paper while introducing copiers in the same catalog. It could happen as fast as you can say, "Did you hear all about the new promotion?"

You, who are not obvious-impaired, have a mission-not to just sign people up, but to wake them up. At least, you'll encourage more people to think of working at home and having a healthy family life as ...normal. Remember, to many people, network marketing sounds too good to be true. Show them the possibility of reading about Dilbert instead of living like him-while making more Money in a month than they now do in a year. What a concept.