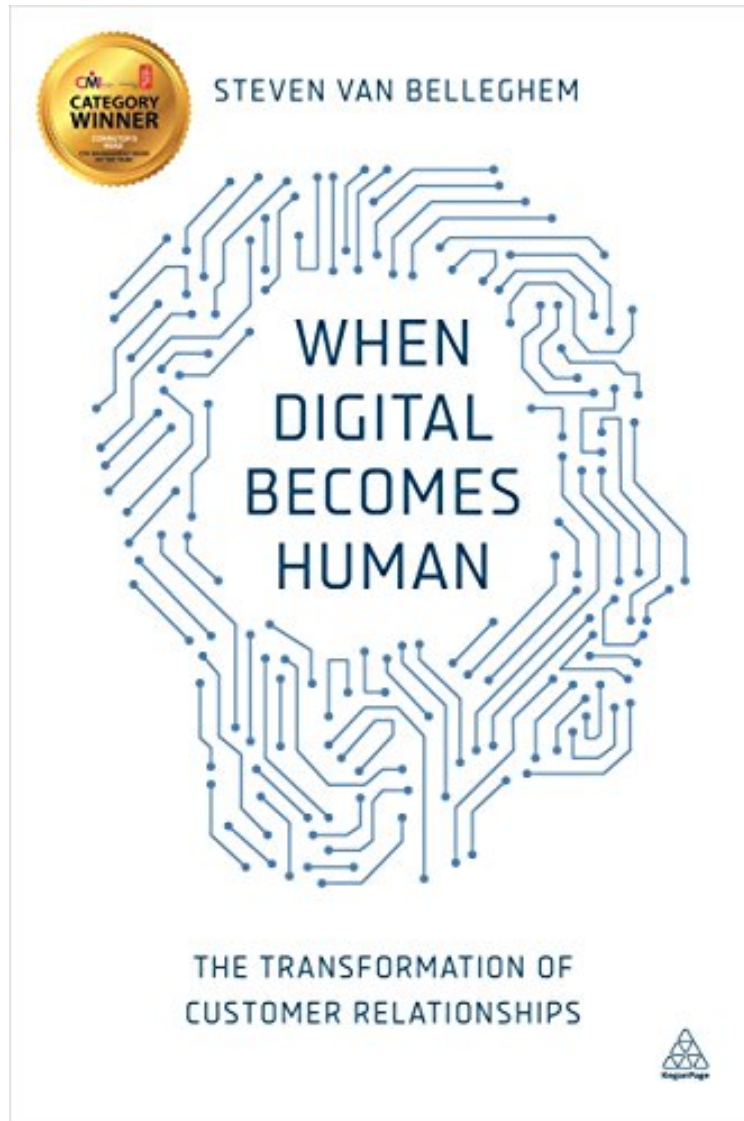


When Digital Becomes Human: The Transformation of Customer Relationships

Steven Van Belleghem

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Steven Van Belleghem : When Digital Becomes Human: The Transformation of Customer Relationships before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When Digital Becomes Human: The Transformation of Customer Relationships:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. InterestingBy DarrenIngram_dot_comDespite it seeming or feeling that everything is online and customers are increasingly vocal and demanding, the human touch is still a desirable feature on many levels. This book looks at the possibly difficult harmonisation of a businessrsquo;s two most

important assets - its employees and its digital channels. Originally published in Dutch last year, this book notes that about three out of four people want "access" to a real person at times, despite preferring to use digital channels when available. Whether it is a comfort factor or something deeper, it goes against the perceived mantra of everything being online, with call centres and human handling being "old hat". Clearly for many tasks, the move to online-focussed handling is preferable and sensible, yet when things go wrong, when uncertainty strikes or whether an inquiry is "simplistically complex"; the human touch can provide a faster, more assuring method of handling. The art might be maintaining the right balance. Adding a human touch to digital marketing channel experiences is the key focus of this book, backed up by real-world case studies and examples from companies such as Nike and Toyota. The book manages to combine a lot of different thoughts around a central theme together with expert ease, providing an interesting, considerate tune to march to. Unfortunately, it can suffer from being a little dry and defocussed at times, although the overall message and content kept this reader on-track and sufficiently interested. In conclusion, an interesting book about a subject that might confound current wisdom or feeling for many, yet it manages to transform thought without being confrontational or overly evangelistic. It lets the subject just speak for itself!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. When digital becomes human
By Clare O'Beara
This is a well-written look at the future of marketing and consumer choices, and how firms have adapted and need to adapt further. The author mentions the five biggest digital marketers, Facebook, , Alibaba, Google and Apple. This is not a guarantee that these names will stay the biggest in the future, but the way they do business is here to stay. He points to taxi firms which protested at the introduction of online managed taxis to their city. The traditional firms went on strike. This left a clear field for the online cabs, and taught customers to prefer the reliable service. When tech-managed firms run into competition they make their service more accessible and drop their prices. This sees off the opposition. If consumers are to be encouraged to buy running shoes that record their steps on a website and track fitness, or toothbrushes that give a daily brushing score and make dental appointments, the firms making these devices will need to market them cleverly. However due to the spread of mobile communication tech we may hear about these goods more quickly and may spread the word more easily. But do we really want to be tracked around by giant computers?

Steven Van Belleghem predicts that five waves of tech coming together are going to make radical transformations in the near future; this book focuses on the next five to ten years. Mobile computers; net-connected items; robots; three-D printers; and artificial intelligence. Other predictions include the vanishing of cash and credit cards, the drone photo, the collapse of companies which do not have an online presence and the importance of the human relationship in customer care. After all, the digital firms are still marketing to people. I do not agree with all of the author's predictions, which he has assured me are mainly based on surveys and studies. For instance, he tells us that we look at our phones 150 times a day on average. Well, I seldom turn mine on. I also believe that despite the best efforts of banks and governments, we will still use cash at times, because we like it and we do not trust banks. The author tells us that 10,000 companies closed in Europe last year, implying that this occurred because they were not using web presence or did not employ digital tools. Living in Europe, I have seen that since the economic collapse, many companies large and small have found that their customers no longer have money for either discretionary spending or necessities. The bulk of manufacturing work has moved to China (which has now discovered that we can't keep buying) and garment manufacture to Bangladesh, some work to East Europe, and to a torrent of complaint, call centres and computer work have moved to India. Small farms and small businesses have been put out of business by EU regulations, bank payments and customers unable to pay. Ordinary people are giving up healthcare insurance - they do not have the money to employ architects, solicitors and decorators, nor to go out clubbing and buy new cars and watches. Whether a firm has a website has nothing to do with this economic situation. I agree that firms like are making inroads into physical shop sales. In the future, yes, all firms will have websites, if only because it is cheaper than paper advertising. Personally, I buy or use products that make sense for me such as LED lightbulbs and e-books. I agree that our future gadgetry is getting smaller, faster, lighter, smarter. More firms are going to want to track their customers' habits, from insurance firms to booksellers. Steven advises that firms need to keep the human touch even as more jobs are being done by robots and fewer people have work.

My feedback on WHEN DIGITAL BECOMES HUMAN included that some of the easily-understandable graphics appear overly masculine, showing a gun, clenched fist and thumb's down as (not recommended) business models; Steven assures me that he had not seen it that way and will look again at graphics in future books. Thanks; there are many women in business who will enjoy reading this book about the digital future.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Easy Read, Great Reference
By Janet I
found this to be a fascinating glimpse into cyber customer service and the future of business/customer relationships. It is well laid out and easy to read, though the subject matter can be a bit dry at times. The writing is quite conversational, and I did not feel lectured or talked down to at all. Steven Van Belleghem has obviously done his research, and the case studies/anecdotes are interesting and relevant. I could easily see this as a great business reference piece, and as a business book discussion opportunity.*I received my copy from NetGalley.com in exchange for an honest review.

In an age when customers have access to vast amounts of data about a company, its product and its competitors,

customer experience becomes increasingly important as a sustainable source of competitive advantage. But success doesn't just rely on digital engagement and excellence, but also on combining a digital-first attitude with a human touch. In *When Digital Becomes Human*, Steven Van Belleghem explores and explains the new digital relationships. Packed with global examples from organizations that have successfully transformed their customer relationships, such as Amazon, Toyota, ING, Coolblue, Nike and Starbucks, *When Digital Becomes Human* presents a clear model that companies can easily implement to integrate an emotional layer into their digital strategy. This guide to combining two of a business's most important assets - its people and its digital strengths - covers the latest issues in digital marketing and customer experience management, including omnichannel and multichannel experiences, big data and predictive analytics, privacy concerns, customer collaboration (ie crowdsourcing) and more.

"Do you think customer relationships are important? Do you believe you are running a customer-focused company? Then read this book. Using a wide range of case studies and inspiring stories, it will show you how to really put the customer at the heart of everything. You will learn how to combine the digital and human dimensions to create emotional, productive customer relationships."