

Inside the Longlist: Marketing & Sales 2018

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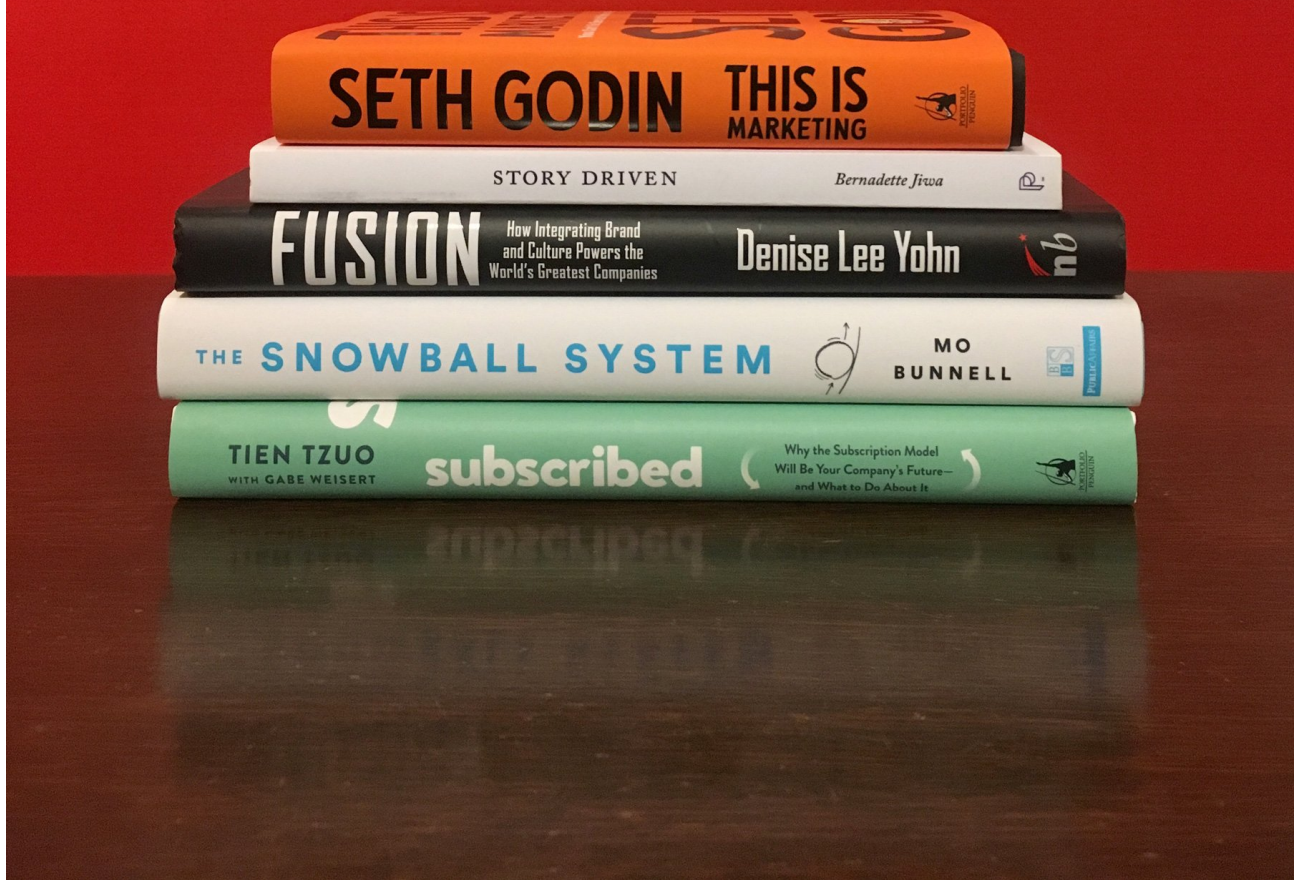
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News & Opinion: Inside the Longlist: Marketing & Sales 2018

Could the professions most known for shady behavior and underhanded tactics help lead the charge toward more honest business? To some degree, there isn't much choice, as the internet has given us all a window into most companies we might do business with, and manipulative marketing or sales techniques, while they may provide short-term gains, will eventually extinguish trust over the long-term. And whether you're in the market of Marrakesh, or buying something on eBay, business is built on trust. Bernadette Jiwa, who has a book in this category for the second straight year, relates the story of the judge sentencing a Volkswagen executive for their emissions cheating scandal telling the courtroom that "This crime ... attacks and destroys the very foundation of our economic system: That is trust." Change is inevitable. Sometimes, it's dramatic. But, in business as in life, relationships depend on trust. They depend, as Seth Godin writes, on your ability to "show up—regularly, consistently, and generously, for years and years." Just as the best marketers and salespeople work to serve others and act as guides rather than glorifying themselves, the best books on the topic act as guides, as well.

(Our sales support specialist Andrew Koenig, himself honest and wise beyond his youthful years, curated the Marketing & Sales category for the second straight year.)

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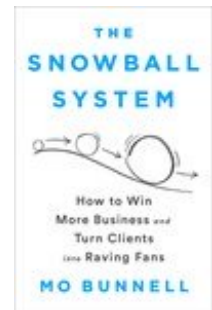
Fusion: How Integrating Brand and Culture Powers the World's Greatest Companies by Denise Lee Yohn | Nicholas Brealey

The importance of company culture has been championed by countless authors and business leaders. And a company's brand is just as central to a company and its identity. What Denise Lee Yohn offers is a guide to fusing these "two atomic nuclei" of business together to align your organization and power growth. When you clearly define your values and purpose, and align "how your organization thinks and acts on the inside and how it is perceived and experienced on the outside," you give customers a clarity they increasingly seek from companies, and empower people within the organization to work with a clarity of purpose. Those core values need not be "warm and fuzzy." The leading example of the book is Amazon. It has a hard-charging, competitive (some may say cut-throat), and stress-filled workplace that has been known to make employees cry at their desks. But it has an equally competitive (some



say cut-throat) attitude and persona in the marketplace that has captured 49 percent of all online retail—and made many cry foul. One can question whether that development is constructive for society, but there is no confusion over their ambition or effectiveness, or the culture-brand fusion that drives it.

The Snowball System: How to Win More Business and Turn Clients into Raving Fans by Mo Bunnell | PublicAffairs



“Believe it or not, *you* are a salesperson.” Mo Bunnell isn’t the first person to express this view, but for professional salespeople looking for a proven system to “sell their services—without selling their souls,” 2018 offered no better guide than his. For those just entering the field, he offers the guidance he wished he had. An actuary by training, Bunnell eventually landed in the role of management consultant, in which he had to sell his firm’s services. He dissected the sales process, studying the psychology of why people buy, poring over peer-reviewed research papers to “break the relationship-building process down into small steps.” Bunnell leaves the traditional notions of selling behind and focuses on one thing: being helpful—*strategically* helpful. It’s about thinking about “success in terms of relationships,” and keeping the client’s best interests above even your own. It is about building expertise and trust, building a reputation, and building long-term relationships. It is also about building good sales habits and ongoing business development through deliberate practice. What Bunnell demonstrates, through his own story and the proven and practiced tools he offers, is that you don’t have to be a natural. Sales skills *can* be taught and learned, and integrated into an everyday routine that continually develops business.

Story Driven: You Don't Need to Compete When You Know Who You Are by Bernadette Jiwa | Perceptive Press



Bernadette Jiwa, like the others here so far, focuses on honesty and authenticity, on being true to who you are. She believes there are two kinds of companies—those that are competition-driven and those that are story-driven. Those driven by competition are driven to win—often at any cost, which can undermine the very success they seek. Those driven by story are driven to matter, and make themselves meaningful in doing so. Jiwa’s book is a guide, ultimately, to life’s big questions and the small choices we make every day as an answer to them. It is about the need to “choose carefully what we will measure each day,” and more fundamentally about how we measure success. It is about where change comes from. It is about identity and understanding. And yes, it is through the lens of leading a business and branding, but it is fundamentally about leading a good life and being true to ourselves. As our general manager Sally Haldorson wrote in her review of the book, “We differentiate ourselves by focusing on who we are, on our values and reason for being, and focused on telling that story, not on our competition.”

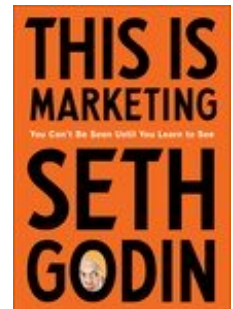
[Subscribed: Why the Subscription Model Will Be Your Company's Future—and What to Do About It](#) by Tien Tzuo with Gabe Weisert | Portfolio

Tien Tzuo believes “we’re in a pivotal moment in business history,” in which the focus is moving from products to services, and from ownership to access. He has already built a subscription billing and finance business based upon this premise, and has added *the* guide on the topic to his vitae with his book Subscribed. Tzuo and his coauthor open with a broad overview of the landscape discussing how different industries are being affected, before offering tactical and operational ideas and details to help you transform your own business. Like so many recent developments, Silicon Valley has led the way in subscription business models, but you will find that it is not confined to technology businesses. It is a business model that puts any business closer to their customers, increasing understanding of and responsiveness to individuals, while creating recurring revenue from that relationship with and service to them.



[This Is Marketing: You Can't Be Seen Until You Learn to See](#) by Seth Godin | Portfolio

Seth opens the final chapter of his latest book asking "Is marketing evil?" The answer is the same as if you'd asked if a hammer is evil. You can use it to build a home, or to hit someone over the head. While marketing has been used to nefarious ends in the past, Godin advocates for aligning the positive change you want to see with your desires as a marketer. He defines the profession as “the act of making change happen.” When we strive to be and do better, our company benefits—as does society as a whole. Seeking the perfect end can leave us inactive, but striving for better always leaves the door open to action and improvement. Every one of us is a marketer in some way. We should work to make marketing better by promoting that which makes the world better. The knowledge and perspective Seth offers are a guide to help us do that. Rather than marketing *being* the problem, “If you see a way to make things better,” writes Seth, “you now have a marketing problem.”



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About Dylan Schleicher

Dylan Schleicher has been a part of the 800-CEO-READ claque since 2003. Even though he's stayed on at the company, he has not stayed put. After beginning in shipping & receiving, he joined customer service and accounting before moving into his current, highly elliptical orbit of duties overseeing the ChangeThis and In the Books websites, the company's annual review of books, and in-house design. He lives with his wife and two children in the Washington Heights neighborhood on Milwaukee's West Side.



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Our 2018 business book awards longlist rewards 40 books from diverse authors and publishers highlighting the humanity in the genre.