SELLING THE DREAM
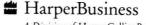
DREAM

How to Promote
Your Product,
Company, or Ideas—
and
Make a Difference—
Using
Everyday Evangelism

Guy Kawasaki

Author of *The Macintosh Way*

Includes
the original
*Macintosh
Product
Introduction Plan*

"I wish we had the benefit of this book when
we started Apple and NeXT. Guy clearly
expresses what it took us years of mistakes to
learn. I would have paid many times the
cover price to read it ten years ago."
—Steve Jobs, president, NeXT Computer, Inc.

Selling the Dream

How to Promote Your Product, Company, or Ideas—and Make a Difference—Using Everyday Evangelism

GUY KAWASAKI

HarperBusiness
A Division of HarperCollins*Publishers*

*To my wife, Beth, without whom
I could have finished
this book in half the time,
but it would have only been
half as good.*

Selling the Dream

Who Should Read This Book

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The superior man understands what is right; the inferior man understands what will sell.

—Confucius

This book is for people who want to make a difference. It is for flames, not embers. It is for people who want to challenge the status quo, the mediocre, or the mundane. It shows you how to change the world.

The purpose of this book is to make you into a raging, inexorable thunder lizard of an evangelist. My message is that to make products, companies, and ideas successful, you must sell the whole hog—not just the sizzle—by getting people to *believe* in your product, company, or idea and to share your dream.

If you are a business person, read this book to learn how to increase the impact and longevity of your product or company. If you are a social activist, read this book to learn how to make the world cleaner, safer, or more fun. If you are part of the status quo, read this book to learn how people are going to defeat you.

One more thing: You are either going to love evangelism or hate it. If you love it, evangelism may lead you to a lifetime of satisfaction. If you hate it, this book may help you gain an appreciation of evangelism, but it will never enter your soul. Read on—you have nothing to lose but indifference.
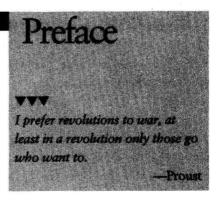
EXERCISE   If you wear a size 8 shoe and you find a shoe that isn't a size 8 but fits you perfectly, would you still buy it?[1]

A Special Note to Readers of *The Macintosh Way*

First, thank you for buying (or at least reading) *The Macintosh Way*. Before you buy *Selling the Dream*, let me tell you I intended it for a broader audience than *The Macintosh Way*. As such, I've toned down the Macintosh-specific humor and swagger. In this book, Macintosh is a desk accessory, not the Finder.[2]

1. This exercise was inspired by Marilyn vos Savant.
2. If you have to ask, you haven't read *The Macintosh Way*.

Preface

Why I Wrote This Book

I wrote this book to help people spread their dreams and make the world a better place to live. My role is that of the "midwife" of evangelism. I wasn't a participant in the conception of evangelism, nor did I experience the joy and pain of its birth. Nevertheless, I hope to deliver it to you as a useful technique for bringing about meaningful change.

A Brief History of Mine

"Why don't you write a book about management?"
"Because I don't know anything about management."
"Then write about something you know."
"I only know evangelism."
"Then write about that."
"Okay."

My personal computer background skews this book toward high technology. I was a software evangelist at Apple Computer, Inc., from 1983 to 1987. My responsibility, as decreed by Steve Jobs, was to get "the best collection of software in the personal computer business."

Now that people have accepted Macintosh as an alternative to the IBM PC, this may not seem like a big deal. It was a big deal back then. Many people thought that Macintosh (and Apple) would not survive, much less succeed.

In 1987, I left Apple to start a Macintosh software company called ACIUS, Inc. (I believed my own evangelism about the great opportunities in the Macintosh market.) ACIUS's product was a Macintosh database called 4th Dimension. Always the evangelist, this time my task was to establish 4th Dimension as the standard in Macintosh databases.

This was a difficult task because people considered Macintosh too wimpy a machine to support a high-end database. Also, Ashton-Tate, a $300-million-and-falling IBM PC software developer, was about to enter the market with a competitive product.

ACIUS provided me with a testing ground for refining and developing evangelism techniques. Conventional wisdom suggests that it takes $3–4 million to start a software company; we did it with $750,000. That experience proved to be invaluable for this book, which would be much weaker if it reflected only what I learned at a Fortune-500 company like Apple.

Late in 1989, I hung up my ACIUS collar to pursue my own bliss. I discovered that my bliss was writing, consulting, speaking, and skiing. This book is a product of the first three activities. Quasi-parallel turns and a sore shoulder are the result of the fourth.

Send Me Your Feedback

Evangelists love feedback. It is a masochistic tendency that we share. I prefer rave reviews, but I'm willing to listen to almost anything. I prefer electronic mail or faxes (they are easier to respond to, and they conserve trees). By the way, if you want your book signed, please send it to me, and I'll sign it and return it.

Guy Kawasaki
P.O. Box 471090
San Francisco, CA 94147-1090

Telephone: 415-921-2478
Fax: 415-921-2479
AppleLink: Kawasaki2
America Online: Mac Way
CompuServe: 76703,3031

The Structure of This Book

Part 1, "An Introduction to Evangelism," defines evangelism and illustrates how it works. Its purpose is to validate the concept of evangelism and provide a foundation for reading the rest of the book.

Part 2, "Becoming an Evangelist," explains how to make you an effective evangelist as quickly as possible.

Part 3, "The Stages of Evangelism," explains the stages in a way that will accelerate the success of your cause.

Part 4, "Advanced Techniques of Evangelism," explains those techniques that you'll need to ensure that your cause remains successful for a long time.

Part 5, "Between You and Me," explains two critical issues: evangelizing the opposite sex and the ethics of evangelism. Its purpose is to make you laugh and to make you think.

How to Read This Book

This book is intended to be a practical blueprint for action. I suggest that you quickly read it straight through the first time and then read it again to focus on the portions that are most relevant to you. Once

you are familiar with the whole book, you will get much more value out of its details.

Also, read the book aggressively: underline passages, write in it, dog ear pages, photocopy pages, and stick in Post-it notes. Do whatever you need to do to get the most out of it.

Contents

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Evangelism Defined

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*If you deliberately set out to be
less than you are capable,
you'll be unhappy for the rest
of your life.*

— Abraham Maslow

Evangelism is the process of convincing people to believe in your product or idea as much as you do. It means selling your dream by using fervor, zeal, guts, and cunning.

In contrast with the old-fashioned concept of closing a deal, evangelism means showing others why they should dream your dream. This chapter further defines evangelism and then contrasts it with traditional sales to illustrate its effectiveness.

Selling Dreams

You can be rich, you can be powerful, and you can be famous, but you won't amount to much of anything until you change the world. If you have always wanted to be somebody, it's time to get more specific. People who are changing the world understand the techniques of evangelism that I am about to explain.

If you look up *evangelism*[1] in Webster's dictionary, you'll find "Any zealous effort in propagandizing for a cause." The notion of

1. Recently, a few television evangelists (the professional wrestlers of Christianity) have given the term a bad name. Somehow they confused *causes* with *coitus*. (Many men have difficulty thinking while turned on—it has to do with limited blood supply.) Please suspend your skepticism for a little while.

3

any effort understates the commitment necessary to become an evangelist, and because the word "propagandizing" has acquired negative connotations, a better definition is

Evangelism is the process of spreading a cause.

This definition is adequate, but it still doesn't convey the passion of evangelism. I rejected a few other possibilities along the way: "Evangelism is getting anyone to do anything at any time at any cost," and "Evangelism is sticking your hand into the chest of your enemy and ripping his heart out." Finally I settled on

Evangelism is the process of selling a dream.

Selling a dream means transforming a *vision*—that is, an insight that is not yet perceptible to most people—into a cause and getting people to share that cause. Thus, evangelism is the purest form of selling because it involves sharing ideas, insights, and hope in contrast to exchanging goods or services for money.

Evangelism is more potent than traditional sales because the goal of evangelism is sharing more than personal gain:

▶ *Evangelism yields long-lasting and dramatic changes.* Sharing ideas, insights, and hopes fundamentally changes relationships, while making a quick sale, getting on an approved-vendor list, or increasing membership does not.

▶ *Evangelism sustains itself.* When people believe in your cause, they sustain it during difficult times and against all comers. Evangelists huddle together, regroup, and attack again.

▶ *Evangelism grows.* Evangelism makes a cause snowball as more people adopt the same beliefs. These newly converted evangelists find and train more believers.

EXERCISE Free associate with the following concepts. Compare your responses to the phrases in each column: traditional sales versus evangelism.

Concept	Traditional Sales	Evangelism
Motivation	Make money	Make history
Philosophy	Sell to	Convert
Method	Impose	Expose
Goal	Quota	Change the world
Sex	During work	After work
10 percent	Commission	Tithing
When	8 A.M.–5 P.M.	Anytime
Where	Clubhouse	Anywhere

To the luckiest of people, a time comes when they join or launch a cause that forever changes their lives and the lives of others. Losing yourself in a cause is delicious and intoxicating. The best word to describe the sensation is "crusade." Let me illustrate by telling you about my crusade.

The Macintosh Crusade

Get me the best collection of software in the personal computer business.

—Steve Jobs

Cupertino, California. September 1983. When Steve Jobs, the chairman and founder of Apple Computer and general manager of the Macintosh Division, issued the edict above, we didn't have a finished

prototype.[2] We didn't have documentation. We didn't have technical support. We did, however, have a dream to increase the productivity and creativity of people, and we did believe in the power of evangelism to get software for Macintosh,[3] Apple's soon-to-be-announced personal computer.

On January 24, 1984, Apple introduced Macintosh and declared war on the status quo of personal computing. On a superficial level, Macintosh was merely another personal computer. Like any other personal computer, it was an assembly of plastic, metal, rubber, glass, and silicon.

Initially, many people condemned Macintosh and Apple as losers. Macintosh didn't have software. It was cute and easy to use but flaccid. It was a joke computer from a joke company. Apple's primary competition, IBM, was potent: thirty-five times larger, decades older, and embraced by business people.

Unlike most other personal computers, however, Macintosh ignited a wave of fervor and zeal in early adopters, hobbyists, and college students who didn't care about "standards," in third-party software developers,[4] and in Apple employees. Why? Because Macintosh made its users feel more effective. They could do old things better; they could do things they could not do before; and they could do things they never dreamed of.

Mike Murray, the Macintosh Division director of marketing, first applied evangelism to Macintosh in mid-1983 when he created jobs for people he called "software evangelists." They were Apple's kamikazes who used fervor, zeal, and anything else[5] to convince software developers to create Macintosh products. I should know. I was one.[6]

2. Finished prototype: another fine oxymoron from the computer business. A prototype is a version of a product that is almost finished, so that it's ready to show to people. Prototypes tend to get built just as either your venture capitalists are getting upset or your competition is about to slaughter you.

3. Cool people never refer to Macintosh as "the Macintosh." It is just "Macintosh."

4. Developers are the companies that create software and hardware products. The first party is the computer manufacturer; the second party is the customer; and the third party is the developer.

5. Beware of geeks bearing gifts.

6. Apple had three generations of Macintosh software evangelists: Mike Boich, Alain Rossmann, and me. Mike started software evangelism; Alain did the work; and I took the credit.