

USERS

NOT CUSTOMERS

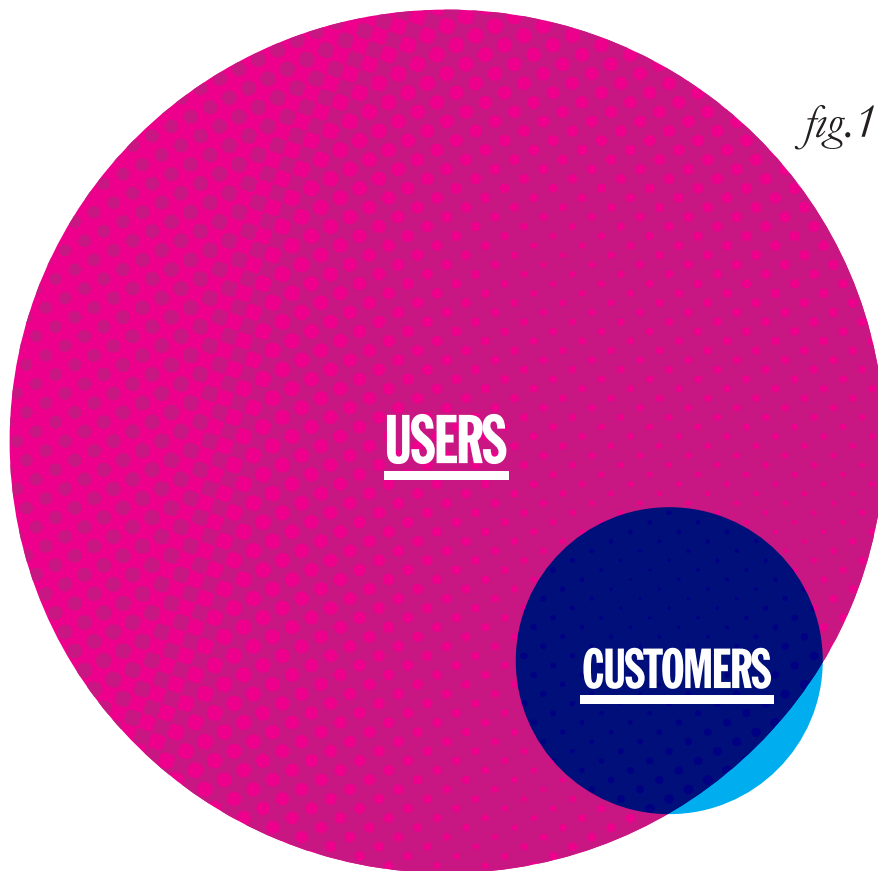


fig.1

*^{1.} Who really determines the success
of your business*

AARON SHAPIRO

CEO OF HUGE

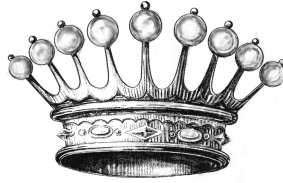
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Who Really Determines the Success of Your Business

AARON SHAPIRO

PORTFOLIO/PENGUIN



— USERS FIRST —

If you still think “the customer is king,” you’re probably falling behind. Today’s most powerful growth engine is users—people who interact with a company through digital media and technology even if they have never spent a dime. Become indispensable to users and the profits will follow.

By next year, the Internet will drive the majority of all consumer purchases in the United States—a figure that will only grow as young people who have never lived without the Internet increase their spending power. The result: there’s no longer such a thing as an offline business; every company must have an effective digital strategy to survive.

As CEO of the digital marketing agency HUGE, Aaron Shapiro goes inside blue-chip companies to advise them on how to thrive in this new business reality. To explore the subject further, he led an extensive

study of the Fortune 1000. He has found that the most successful companies focus on users first, and look at customers as just one subset of this immense and influential group. Look at Facebook and Google. They built their businesses before they even figured out what they were selling, let alone who their customers were.

Shapiro argues that every business needs to stop obsessing about customers and start creating powerful user experiences. Rather than just trying to get people to buy stuff, the companies that

truly excel home in on the user experience at every level:

- **They focus on their users' true needs:** Mint.com made the easiest and most effective interface for controlling your personal finances, and once there, you can follow ads that let you improve your financial performance even more.

- **They make their technology disposable:** Netflix took down Blockbuster by treating its

subscribers as users, not customers. It continually changed and improved its technology to create the best possible experience instead of maximizing rental fees and late fees.

- **They market themselves in a way that truly inspires their users.** Pepsi redirected its Super Bowl advertising budget to the “Pepsi Refresh Project,” a non-profit, grant-giving program that generated massive free publicity and goodwill.



Aaron Shapiro is CEO of HUGE a digital agency that helps companies reimagine how they interact with their customers and manage their business in the online economy. He is the author of Users Not Customers, you can learn more about Aaron and his book at usersnotcustomers.com.
