



Donald Cooper, MBA, HoF

**Donald** is respected by clients in over 40 industries throughout the world as a “thought leader” and passionate visionary in the key areas of management, marketing, and service excellence.

Drawing from his experience as a world-class manufacturer, award-winning retailer, business speaker and coach, he has helped thousands of businesses to sell more, manage smarter and grow their bottom line.

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## An article by Donald Cooper, MBA...

### Are you embracing all the ways that technology can help grow your business?

Managing any business today, large or small, is tough...and getting tougher. If we do not embrace the latest software, tools and technologies available to proactively manage our business, we will likely not survive.

I’m constantly amazed at how many of my clients are not taking advantage of the powerful, simple and affordable technology that’s available to them. More incredibly, I’ve worked with a few franchise and buying group organizations where head office is still trying to convince some of their members to make the leap to email. This is totally goofy....but true.

Even worse are all the companies that invest in the latest technology, but never quite get around to using it to move forward. They have all of the cost and none of the benefit.

In the “good old days”, when I was a manufacturer, we had 11,000 different products and over 9,000 customers. Inventory control was done on manually recapped bin cards, costing was by “guesstimate”, the customer database was a Rolodex and quarterly Financial Statements were fairy tales at best. There were no computers in those days and everything was done manually, slowly and very approximately. The only thing that saved us was that our competitors were no better off. We were all “flying blind”.

But nowadays your competitors may be using relatively simple and affordable technology to make better decisions than you, to be more efficient than you, or to proactively communicate with and promote to customers, better than you.

Here are just a few examples of what’s possible:

- a) Rexall Drug Stores in Canada use technology to proactively call customers to advise them that their current prescription will run out in a few days and it’s time to renew.
- b) A client of ours in E-Commerce uses software that gives them sales and gross margin numbers, by product, every day.
- c) Caterpillar Corporation uses sensors, onboard computers and satellite technology to know, in advance, when an earth mover requires service and where the machine is. A mechanic shows up, on the jobsite, to service the machine before the operator even knows that a problem is about to occur.



By the way, the same technology enables Caterpillar to remotely shut a machine down if the monthly lease payment is not made on time. Very cool.



**d)** Halliburton Corporation of Houston, Texas drills oil wells for large oil companies all over the world. Rather than have engineers, geologists and decision makers at each drill site, Halliburton has created a Centralized Decision Centre in Houston where data is collected, by satellite, from hundreds of rigs, worldwide, so that a small team of specialists can make real-time decisions as to how to best proceed with each well, every step of the way.

This results in better decisions, industry-leading efficiency and delighted clients...and has made Halliburton the clear industry leader.

**e)** Technology isn't just for the "big boys". The award-winning North Restaurant in tiny Gravenhurst, Ontario uses a simple database program to proactively advise customers of upcoming special events, theme dinners, cooking classes, promotions and specials. They use technology to proactively market themselves to customers who already know and love them...and it costs nothing.

So, what will you do in your business to embrace the latest technologies that will help you to:

- make better business decisions,
- operate more efficiently,
- control costs,
- have up-to-date financial information... and,
- proactively serve and communicate with your target customers?

Or, will you just let your competitors pass you by?

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