

## Wlcm t th wrld n which n n sys vwls ny mr\*

Last week I had a meeting at the Toppled Bollard with our deputy head of personnel (a young fella-me-lad named Hugh Manre-Zaus) who told me that we now lived in a world of hyper-change. “Every time something is invented,” he told me, “it is quite obvious that it is only going to be new and cool for about half an hour. After that it is boring. Thirty minutes later it is old fashioned, and within two hours of being released it is pathetic.

“However, all is not lost because by three hours after launch it has become quaint, which neatly leads into it being retro after about 3 hours 30 minutes. From here it is but a step to being fun. By the next day there are very few examples left, so we can start calling it (inaccurately) unique and thus highly valuable, and then finally it becomes the subject of an ITV documentary, which naturally makes it rather boring, and we invent something new.”

It is from this exposition that I evolved the theory that, if you are not in tune with the way in which your potential customers see the world, then your marketing will fail.

Of course Mr Manre-Zaus was speaking a week ago – a time when the word “cool” was itself quite fashionable. “Cool” however is now so thoroughly not a word that you would ever wish use while talking to the chairman, that I called on my colleague Hiram Fiream and he gave young Hugh his marching orders. That’s shown him.

So how is one supposed to cope? One way is to re-think the way in which you communicate with your customers and potential customers. I used to joke about the hopelessness of brochures that are sent out with the chairman’s letter that says, “I am delighted to enclose a copy of the catalogue”. But are my sales letters now so 2006 that no one takes them seriously? Have I become a tedious old chairman of whom others now make fun?

I really do think it is important to write to your customers and prospective customers in an appropriate language and style, and indeed I would add that customers and prospects each need a different approach. I’d also say that you need to mix the media you use, for the sales letter, the email, and the blog all have an important part to play in the contemporary marketing mix.

But you still need something to say and a voice in which to say it. It’s tough, but when you get it right, it really can work. (If you catch my drift.)



Tony Attwood

PS: I’ve written a report on ways of communicating with customers and potential customers. If you’d like to read it, please do drop me an email at [Tony@hamilton-house.com](mailto:Tony@hamilton-house.com) And I’ll also explain that odd message at the top, and why Hugh Manre-Zaus is so funny.