

Recommended Reference Books for Technology Marketers

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Excerpt

There are a lot of technology and marketing books out there. As experienced technology marketers, here are 12 of our favourite picks from our own library, and how they have helped improve our marketing and business capabilities. If your favourite book is not listed here, highlight it by dropping a note to cheen.tan@genii-group.com.

Title	Crossing the Chasm <i>Marketing and Selling Disruptive Products to Mainstream Customers</i>
Author	Geoffrey A. Moore
Why we like it	Technology is complex and there are barriers to adoption. The concept of chasms (due to such barriers) existing throughout the adoption cycle is being presented here. Mr. Moore argues that marketing technology is different from marketing other consumer products. For example, early adopters buy for very different reasons than the market majority. The book suggests several ideas to cross each chasm successfully, so that technology companies grow their businesses and make serious money.

Title	Permission Marketing <i>Turning Strangers Into Friends And Friends Into Customers</i>
Author	Seth Godin
Why we like it	The opposite of permission marketing is interruption marketing – something that we as marketers are familiar with (such as advertising, DMs, telemarketing). However, as the marketplace becomes noisier, with more products being introduced, what we're fighting for is not just mindshare but share of attention. The book centres around how you can gain permission from a customer, and to expand on that to continually seek business opportunities.

Title	The Long Tail <i>Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More</i>
Author	Chris Anderson
Why we like it	The concept of the long tail is how technology is surfacing niche products in an otherwise mass market. We read this book with selling IT products in mind. Even if you only have an anchor product in say the crowded ERP category, this book explores how you can use technology to play up your niche and attract customers around the world. Examples of salesforce.com and Google drive home the point of doing business by making it easier for prospects to find you.

Title	The New Positioning
Author	Jack Trout with Steve Rivkin
Why we like it	As Jack Trout says, "The ultimate marketing battleground is in the mind". This book walks through how the buying mind works, and how as marketers, we can bookmark our company/products into the pages of that mind. As this is an update from his earlier book " <i>Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind</i> ", we enjoyed his updated list of <i>practical</i> tricks of the trade he picked up from repositioning projects around the world.

Title	The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing <i>Violate Them at Your Own Risk!</i>
Author	Al Ries and Jack Trout
Why we like it	Logical, concise, instructional. Enough said! Even after 15 years since we had read this book, the laws are still very relevant today!

Title	Relationship Marketing
Author	Regis McKenna
Why we like it	While business books are expounding on customer-led strategies, this book goes one step further and asks you to let your customer guide your decision making: from product to market, to corporate positioning and strategies. Daring and something we strongly believe in. In the near future when it gets really noisy in the marketplace, only technology providers who are attuned to their customers' needs get on the purchasing shortlist. This book sets the tone for it.

Title	How to Drive Your Competition Crazy <i>Creating Disruption for Fun and Profit</i>
Author	Guy Kawasaki
Why we like it	First, Guy Kawasaki is one of our favourite all-time technology authors. His experiences, conversational writing style and snippets of humour never fail to provide an entertaining read. Peppered with lots of how-tos, the book goes through a checklist of knowing yourself, your customers and competitors. With that information in hand, Mr. Kawasaki then explores how to be relevant to customers, ignore conventions and build an army of evangelists to be your virtual sales team. Evangelists are important in forming that human bridge between your technical product and a potential customer.

Title	All I Really Need to Know in Business I Learned at Microsoft <i>Insider Strategies to Help You Succeed</i>
Author	Julie Bick
Why we like it	Curious about what it's like to work as a marketer at Microsoft? Want to learn how the magic works? Well, some consultants in the Genii Group have worked at Microsoft, and can vouch for the insights of this book. "All I Really Need to Know" is a fabulous handbook of tips and stories. Arranged in short lessons, the book offers corporate gems from starting a business to being a good boss, to managing your career. One of our favourite was "Discuss the analysis, don't present the data", about taking advantage of the brainpower at a meeting to discuss, solve or brainstorm – instead of going through details that everyone can read himself or herself.



Title	Marketing Genius
Author	Peter Fisk and Birgit Schobitz
Why we like it	What drew us was the title, since it's related to our company name ("genii" is the plural for "genius" and also "genie"). The book turns out to be a mental gym for marketers – it broaches and guides you to think through the issues, from customers to strategies to performance. The author admits that he wants "to inspire you to think differently, and to do great marketing". The pages are peppered with ICT examples like Apple, Dell, Microsoft, Google, RIM, Nokia and more. Packed with lots of how-to's, these are easily organised into sections like "inspiration", "concepts", "application" and "insights". Get a pen and lots of paper ready – you'll be jotting down lots of new thoughts and ideas!

Title	Lateral Marketing <i>New Techniques for Finding Breakthrough Ideas</i>
Author	Philip Kotler and Fernando Trias de Bes
Why we like it	A refreshing read, especially looking through technology marketing lenses. The book points out how traditional marketers take a vertical approach to product development – drilling into sub-categories to attract more customers (think lite, small business, professional and enterprise editions of software). Kotler and Trias de Bes propose lateral marketing to create an entirely new market! How? By creating a gap through substitution, inverting, combining, exaggerating, eliminating or reordering. More details on each technique within the book.

Title	Execution <i>The Discipline of Getting Things Done</i>
Author	Larry Bossidy, Ram Charan, and Charles Burck
Why we like it	We feel that we have found our soul-book with "Execution". Many tech marketers we have met in the last decade spend more time on the creative and strategy aspects of marketing. Nevertheless, it is only through execution, seeing your plans through, that you are able to get your results, confirm your marketing hypothesis or to refine your next marketing campaign. The book seeks to link people, strategy, and operations in order to differentiate the winning team from those who never seem to be able to get a breakthrough.

Title	Commonsense Direct Marketing
Author	Drayton Bird
Why we like it	How-to marketing books are great ways to learn from other marketers: their ideas, execution modes and results. While no two business situations are exactly the same, the process of learning and distilling from these books are invaluable. That is what we found in this classic book. Since this is very textbook-like and if you're in hurry, jump straight to the chapters on "How to get started", "How to plan clearly" and "How to test – and evaluate your results". Written from a practitioner's view, the book draws from the author's long career in the agency world.

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Crossing the Chasm, where buyers are "pragmatists in pain," stuck with a problem business process and willing to take a chance on something new, provided it is directly focused on solving their specific use case. Inside the Tornado, where buyers are pragmatists going with the herd, the technology now being proven, its value substantially superior to the status quo, and the forcing function being fear of getting left behind.