

imus

*White Paper*

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Numerous case studies and white papers have been published all identifying the Critical Success Factors you need in order to succeed with web e-business. Patricia B Seybold, in addition to other respected e-business experts has outlined specific case studies that document some of these Critical Success Factors. This short paper intends to amalgamate these authors and **imus's** experience in a succinct way in order to highlight the more critical aspects needed to thrive electronically in 2002.

This list is by no means comprehensive, each organisation will have its own Critical Success Factors – these can only (and should be) be identified by investigating the infrastructure in place, the supplier value chain and the customer relationship methods emplaced.

1. Appropriate infrastructure is paramount; if the network protocol used is not TCP/IP then it needs to be implemented. Also if further development to other parts of the organisation (e.g. the development of an Extranet) is required then make sure the necessary infrastructure is in place from the outset.
2. Secure the web site/electronic presence from the start – by getting it right in the beginning, you have the choice of opening your system to both your customers and suppliers.
3. When developing a system make it as simple as possible. Use current technology with a view to newer technology adoption when it becomes stable and if provides added value. Use a good consultancy to advice on this aspect. Get the foundations wrong and the building will topple.
4. Analyse any e-mail that comes into your organisation
5. Re-direct them to the right people in real time
6. Capture the information and add it to the customer profile
7. Customers are willing to pay premium prices for premium product and services. Make the whole experience easy and forthcoming, rather than offering cheap products or services.
8. Target the right customers
9. Identify why customers will contact you, what type of information they will require; what information they need to provide you with to maximize your saving and revenue.
10. Identify your target market and customer

11. Know who your customers and prospects are
12. Find out which customers are profitable
13. Sometimes the most important customer does not buy anything from your organisation – WHY?
14. Identify the key influencers in your customers purchasing chain
15. Offer them information first; then the actual transactions
16. Identify which of your customers generate referrals
17. Don't confuse, customers, partners and stakeholders
18. Provide your customers with easy search/access facilities
19. Reduce customers fear. Make it easy for them – make them feel safe. If they feel safe they will retain your services
20. Reassure your customers at every stage of the business process. Notify them of everything that has happened and make it easy for them to back-track from any point of the process
21. Let them control their history at the site. Show them what they have purchased and information relevant to that. Allow them to receive notifications of new items they may be interested in.
22. Maintain the consistency of available information – for example those appearing on web should be consistent to that of technical support line.
23. Identify customers business drivers, requirements, how benefits are measured and what is currently considered as value added.
24. Provide customers with alternative search facilities
25. Make sure customers receive what they want at the time they want it
26. Track their purchases – Provide them with the necessary information and requirements as quickly as possible
27. Analyse their click trails to see what they cannot find – when you know this provide them with it
28. Allow your customers to track their purchases, in as near real-time as possible
29. If you want to give your customers their own profiles, allow them to change these – link these with the back-end databases and you will have up-to-date information on some of your best customers
30. Update your information as and when it is needed, if the information changes hourly, update it hourly. Failing to do this, your data is of little use to your customers

31. Global companies as much as possible should try to have one view of their customer relationship that is relevant to all geographical regions
32. Make sure that any application that uses any data on your customers gets the same data as your on-line services.
33. As much as possible centralise all your marketing information
34. Make sure your web and other marketing systems provides the same information to your customers
35. Look at your customer facing business processes from their perspective. Find out what they want – how they would ideally like to purchase from your organisation. Start here and continually develop this interface
36. Remember even if you have a great product, a poor process will mean the prospective customer is going somewhere else with an easier customer facing process
37. As well as supplier-customer process, organisations have supplier-supplier process. Make sure these process are consistent and included in your overall process from start, else you will need to process re-engineer again
38. Working with many suppliers means they each have a different view of your organisation, make sure you can give them their own view
39. Consider how you trade, if you are using EDI for your trading and your supplier does not, consider moving to Open EDI or an XML tagged EDI Form system
40. Make it as easy for suppliers to deal with you. Allow them the same ease of use as your customers and they will ensure the quality of service you require at all time.
41. Undertake all of the above for your trading partners. Make trading between organisations as easy as it is with external customers

The future still involves e-business; companies cannot afford to ignore this fact as it will be demanded of you by your customers and suppliers alike. The march forward will continue not via a 100 metre sprint as evidenced during the turn of the millennium but through organisations mixing and matching their technology exposure with their strategic objectives.