

DOING DIGITAL

If we don't transform, we die.

All companies need to rewire their culture and mindset to leverage digital technologies, whether they be artificial intelligence, analytics, APIs, blockchain or others. You can no longer just add these to the organisation.

After writing several books about how to become a digital bank and the implications of the digital revolution, bestselling author Chris Skinner turns his focus to the implementation of digital transformation. Many new firms are doing digital, but it's hard for a large, traditional firm to do digital because so much must change. Everything must be converted from industrial to internet, from physical to remote, from analogue to digital. It demands new behaviours, new cultures, new structures, new systems. This is incredibly challenging for an organisation embedded in the industrial age, with millions of customers and centuries of history.

Some people say that it is not possible to change such an institution. Others say that incumbent banks will be destroyed and disrupted. This book disagrees with those suppositions and seeks to find out how banks are successfully turning their operations into digital structures. Selecting five of the world's leading banks—JPMorgan Chase (USA), BBVA and ING (Europe), and DBS and CMB (Asia)—Chris spent a great deal of time analysing, interviewing and talking with these banks and others to find out what lessons we can all learn about doing digital.

The result is *Doing Digital: Lessons from Leaders*, a detailed guide for large existing institutions on how to approach digital transformation. These lessons are specific to banks but could equally be applied to any large organisation wishing to convert to the internet age.

For businesses that aren't born digital, traditional mindsets and ways of working will always run counter to those needed for today's world.

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CHRIS
SKINNER

DOING
DIGITAL

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DOING DIGITAL

LESSONS FROM LEADERS

CHRIS SKINNER

Author of the bestselling DIGITAL BANK and DIGITAL HUMAN

For Review only

TOUCH

BUILDING YOUR BRAND IN THE
EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

JÖRG DIETZEL

For Review only

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For Klaus Dietzel (1937–2013)

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For Review only

CONTENTS

PREFACE	9
INTRODUCTION	13
CHAPTER 1 THE BESPOKE EXPERIENCE	17
CHAPTER 2 THE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE	29
CHAPTER 3 THE EVENT EXPERIENCE	39
CHAPTER 4 THE BRICK-AND-MORTAR SHOP EXPERIENCE	53
CHAPTER 5 THE HERITAGE EXPERIENCE	71
CHAPTER 6 THE CULTURAL EXPERIENCE	81
CHAPTER 7 THE SERVICE EXPERIENCE	107
CHAPTER 8 THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE	119
CHAPTER 9 THE OVERALL BRAND EXPERIENCE	131
CHAPTER 10 EXPERIENCES AND CULTURAL MOMENTS	145
ABOUT THE AUTHOR	151

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PREFACE

I have always been interested in people, brands and experiences.

From a young age, our house was open for guests from India to Africa, the Americas to Asia; “club friends” from a charitable international organization my parents were volunteers in.

I remember, as soon as I had picked up some English, sitting behind the living room door with my sisters, listening to the conversations, lapping up the tales from faraway lands, of orphans saved and money raised. I knew there was a big, interesting world out there, just waiting to be explored by me.

My journeys began when I was 12. My parents put me on a plane to the UK, on my own, for the summer holidays. A few years later, when I was 16, it was California, USA. I remember landing at LAX (Los Angeles Airport) after a long flight with nobody to pick me up (the dog had scared away the telegram courier informing my hosts of my departure) on the 4th of July 1978, only to spend

literally all of my traveller's cheques that were supposed to last me for six weeks on a single cab ride to Simi Valley.

During my studies in the then German capital city of Bonn, some part-time work in journalism and public relations took me first to Liverpool. There I wrote about the 1983 UK election campaign – my report was called "Watching the elephant die". Then off I went to Bali, accompanying the ballroom dancing world champions on their tour of Asia.

Experiences fascinated me – the more foreign, the better. So I was happy to receive a post-graduate research scholarship to spend a year studying in Durban, South Africa, in 1988. During my year there, I did anything but study – from trips to Stellenbosch to speak at their University, to Swakopmund in Namibia, term breaks spent on farms in Zimbabwe, or daytrips with our local Bible fellowship up-coast to Zululand and the Drakensberg. I created my own experiences.

As expected, work then led me from Germany to London, Beijing, Berlin, Singapore, Hong Kong and Korea. In 2019, I returned to Singapore, my home of choice.

The advertising agencies and marketing departments I worked with over the past 25 years or so were in the business of creating experiences for their clients' brands. These ranged from emotional TV commercials to memorable events. Later there were Instagram stories of island trips (for Audi), concerts, exhibitions and an ambitious coffee-table-book magazine.

It was in mid 2019 that the Singapore Management University, where I have taught since 2005, asked me to



Exhibition in Korea showcasing Audi Magazine.





present a talk to their alumni. They wanted something on branding, featuring a business started by an alumnus. I immediately thought of my friend PingPing at Culturally.co, and during discussions we both realised the urgency of the topic. It instinctively felt right, and first a talk and then this book were born.

When selecting the case studies for the different areas of the experience economy I looked at a mix of brands that I was familiar with, with somewhat of a focus on Asia. Because, having lived here since 1998 (with one brief intermezzo at Audi Global HQ), I do believe that the future is Asian in services and tech, travel and political power, healthcare, manufacturing and, yes, experiences.

INTRODUCTION

The Experience Economy is not exactly new. More than 20 years ago, B. Joseph Pine II and James Gilmore coined the phrase in an article in the *Harvard Business Review**.

But the arrival of the internet, and especially of social media, has given the term a new life. These days, we are no longer using expensive brands to impress our peers and neighbours (at least in developed markets) as much as before. Instead we trek through the Kalahari or dive with sharks in Gansbaai, as long as we get to post a video of our experience on Instagram.

Experiences, particularly when shared online, have become the new currency. All around the world, consumers are using social media to share not just the trips they make, but also the food they eat, the fashion they wear and the adorable first steps of their baby.

So how is that important for brands? Brands, which yesterday were still striving to become status symbols to

* Pine, B. Joseph II and Gilmore, James, "Welcome to the Experience Economy," *Harvard Business Review*, July 1, 1998.

command a higher price and encourage word-of-mouth (especially in those hard-to-reach places like messenger apps conversations, now weirdly called “Dark Social”), can use the quest for experiences by turning themselves into Experience Brands. The understanding of some global trends – from the search for individuality to the need for social engagement and the importance of values for millennials – can help brands differentiate and position themselves as the perfect solution for consumers’ needs.

And despite the fact that for the purpose of this book we are looking at experiences and channels in isolation, in reality they are interrelated, and there is a lot of cross-over. A brand like Bynd Artisan, the case for Shop Experience, is also a Bespoke Experience. The Audi Design Challenge (our case for an Event Experience) happened online, in public relations, outdoor posters and books as well as at the event space.

This book wants to be an inspiration for brands, to understand some of the most prevalent global trends in experiences. It also looks at how to use them for your own business, often with just a bit of thinking and little effort. For every trend I show, there is a case study of a brand that does this experience particularly well; I let the brand explain how they do it. This is followed by a short how-to list to help you explore that field. This is because at some companies, despite having the brand and the means, the physical spaces and the budgets, their marketers still like to work like it’s 1999 and the internet never happened.

In the end, everybody wins: brands become more relevant, consumers find the experiences they are looking for, and ideally our world becomes a tiny bit more interesting, more caring and more sustainable.

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CHAPTER 4

THE BRICK-AND-MORTAR SHOP EXPERIENCE

Digital has taken over the shopping experience in many fields, and the likes of Amazon and Shopee make the buying of brands convenient and often cheaper. Comparison is easy, and we can lean on customer reviews to decide if the intended product is right for us. Does that mean shops are dead?

Selling via digital platforms doesn't work for every product. Luxury products want to be experienced, touched and tried, cars need to be driven, clothes tried on (never mind bespoke, which pretty much relies on personal interaction and measurement). And some people miss the actual personal interaction during the shopping experience, the conversation with a knowledgeable sales person, the glass of



The Bynd Artisan atelier at ION Orchard.

champagne in the high-end boutique, the easy browsing of shelves.

For centuries, brands have thought about ways of making the brick-and-mortar experience more interesting or just different. The glass of champagne plays a part, but so does the look and feel and smell of the shop. Shanghai Tang was amongst the first to develop a signature scent, known as "Ginger Flower", for their shops, and Abercrombie and Fitch created a whole new experience – the shop as a club – complete with dim lighting, loud music and their own signature scent.

As the competition increases, not just from digital platforms, brands are now thinking of offering an unusual but also educational shopping experience. Bynd Artisan, a young Singaporean brand, is one of the leaders in this field. In its shops customers can select their own choice of paper, cover materials and binding for notebooks and diaries (a good example of a bespoke experience). They can also watch the artisans in the shop putting it all together and applying names or initials. This makes it both an Instagram-worthy event and also makes people spend more time in the shop and leave with something truly unique.

If your brand already has a brick-and-mortar presence, think about how you can make it more interesting. Years ago, during a brief for my students on a communication project for Page One, the bookstore, Kelley Cheng said about ideas for shop windows which were part of the brief: "Don't think books. Think fashion." Or car brands – they already have those huge, expensive showrooms that many people find cold and somewhat intimidating. What an opportunity to re-invent this space and use it not just for the display of cars but for a 360° experience from materials to the fun of driving via virtual reality (VR)!

Some are already doing this: my students recently presented the Decathlon sports brand. In their "lab" shops they are creating surfaces to test running shoes and even a hiking path with gravel. Consumers can test-ride the bicycles and experience the brand hands-on.

Japan's Marui department store takes the in-store experience one step further. In its space shoppers can

have their measurements taken, test digital equipment or trade anime collectibles – but there is no pressure to buy.

The *Nikkei Asian Review* describes the experience as follows: “At some of its department stores in prime locations, perhaps those near a major train station, Marui is leasing floor space to internet companies so web shoppers can try on or get a feel for something that caught their fancy online.”

One day in late August at Shibuya Modi, a sales assistant at a made-to-order suit shop was helping a male visitor. “You don’t need to buy here, sir,” the salesperson said. “Please take your time to consider.”

This picks up on a behaviour that consumers are already showing: checking out the merchandise in physical stores, then completing the purchase online.

Interview with James Quan & Winnie Chan, Founders, Bynd Artisan

How would you describe, in one line, what your brand stands for?

It is difficult to express what Bynd Artisan stands for in one line but we believe therein lies the beauty of the brand we have built. It is multi-faceted, has a soul and communicates the vision and ideals that we want to stand for in a sentimental way.

In four sentences, this is what we do. Born from a rich heritage of craftsmanship, Bynd Artisan offers customised and personalised leather and paper gifts for everyone, for

any occasion. Bynd Artisan encourages its audience to immerse themselves in the process of creating the perfect gift and offers workshops to share the joy of craft. The brand also provides a platform for talents and creatives to



James Quan and Winnie Chan, founders of Bynd Artisan.

celebrate innovation and design through collaborations. This passion for design extends to corporate gifting with bespoke creations and custom personalisation, enabling clients to share the perfect gift from the heart.

In four points, this is what we stand for:

Business Innovation. Rekindling of traditional craftsmanship in a digital age through job redesign.

Design Thinking. Placing emphasis on the return on experience. Celebrating the spirit of artisanal excellence through customer engagement in storytelling and sincere customer service. We are committed in creating positive and meaningful interactions with our audiences.

Respect. Paying tribute to our craftsmen who have spent their whole lifetimes honing their craft, mindful of using environmentally friendly and sustainable materials.

Changemaker. Nurturing entrepreneurship, championing equality and diversity, and promoting passion in the arts and design. We hope to inspire those who feel trapped in traditional sunset industries, those who feel they are too old to go into a new field having invested years in their current career, and to encourage active aging.

When and how was your brand started?

Bynd Artisan was founded in 2014, as a modern interpretation of Winnie's traditional family bookbinding business. In the 1940s, Winnie's grandfather founded the Goy Liang Book-Making Company, the first bookbindery



One of the original Heidelberg printing presses used by the company.

in Singapore. Drawing from this rich heritage, we sought to revitalise the bookbinding industry and reach out to the younger generations amidst this digital age, whilst preserving the artisanal spirit.

Born from a strong legacy of makers in traditional bookmaking and leather craftsmanship, the brand melds 100 years of shared experience from its band of veteran craftsmen who have spent their lives seeking to hone their skills to perfection.



The traditional method of bookbinding is done by hand.

When your brand was launched, what was the spark (as far as you know)? What were the consumer and market insights?

The driving force behind the inception of Bynd Artisan was a strong passion for well-made paper and leather goods, combined with a need to survive and thrive in a seemingly sunset industry. At the time, the traditional bookbinding industry was largely made of mass-produced stationery, catering to students and offices; this itself was under threat from increasing digitalisation. To stay relevant and thrive, we were aware of the need to revitalise the industry and cater to new audiences with innovative products.

By creating lifestyle products and offering customisation and personalisation options, we added the element of uniqueness into our products and made paper products chic and sexy. Our range of products also cater to a wide variety of consumers. In the beginning our target audience were the young working adults, but over time we noticed that our customers range from teenagers to mature customers.

What were some of the challenges the brand faced over time?

One of the hurdles we faced in the early days was trying to gain traction in the retail scene and for consumers to get to know of the brand. Initially, it was difficult to find malls or retail spaces which would feature paper and leather stationery, as most were uncertain about whether a small homegrown brand would be well-received. The turning point occurred when a prominent department

store along Orchard Road invited Bynd Artisan to set up a shop-in-shop.

Another early challenge was for the senior staff, previously from the production floor, to adapt to the retail environment. The senior staff were initially apprehensive about working in the frontline and interacting with customers daily. This was overcome by conducting training sessions to upskill them and encouraging them constantly, adding on to what we envisioned in small steps. It was not long before our senior staff saw the respect and felt the love from our customers and went on to embrace their new roles as brand ambassadors.

How has the brand changed over time? What prompted these changes, and were they proactive or reactive?

Recognizing the importance of e-commerce, Bynd Artisan has a webstore on our site that allows customers to customise and/or personalize our products. The webstore gives consumers added convenience to browse and shop our products online and allows the brand to reach overseas customers. The offline/online concept was something we had hoped to achieve from the beginning.

To stay relevant, Bynd Artisan continuously innovates in product design to offer the best in stationery and leather goods. As part of this, we work with homegrown talents across various industries to create exclusive products and capsule collections. In the process, Bynd Artisan seeks to enhance the vibrancy of the local design scene and promote collaboration amongst local creatives. This principle of collaborative innovation has



Workshop for participants to add a personal touch to their items at the Holland Village atelier.

been implemented proactively since the early days of the company.

What's the one brand story you have been telling over and over?

One story which we tell often is that of our Master Craftsman Mr Chong Beng Cheng, who has over five decades of experience. Mr Chong started out working in Winnie's family business, and later joined Bynd Artisan



The Bynd Artisan atelier at Raffles City.

as our Master Craftsman. He is an example of how the brand's senior staff have upskilled and adapted to the changing times of the industry. From a stern and quiet man who mostly kept to himself, Mr Chong has become the brand's iconic poster boy, learned to relax and even crack jokes to engage workshop participants. We daresay

that Mr Chong (at 77 years old this year) has finally found his purpose in life (sharing his knowledge and experience in craft) and truly enjoys his work knowing what he stands for – a healthy active ager still contributing to society.

Did you set out to create an experience in the field of bespoke/shop experience? How did you do that?

A holistic retail experience has always been at the core of Bynd Artisan. One of the key goals when launching Bynd Artisan was to create an experiential retail concept that collaborates with artistic talents, personalises paper and leather accessories, and runs crafting workshops. As part of this, we involve consumers in the process of handcrafting gifts or items for their own use. This model has proven to be successful, as Bynd Artisan was awarded Best Shopping Experience at the 2017 Singapore Tourism Awards.

To curate such an immersive experience, our ateliers feature a craftsman's station where customers can watch 'live' as their items are being made or personalised. We also offer workshops at a few ateliers, encouraging customers to be "hands-on" and learn a crafting skill from our craftsmen.

Each atelier also incorporates a sense of tradition and embraces the company's rich heritage through its décor, which includes vintage machinery and memorabilia from Winnie's family business. Along with carefully planned and decorated store interiors, these references to the brand's heritage and craftsmanship come together to create an all-round shopping experience.



Mr Chong Beng Cheng (*above and opposite*) has worked for the company for over five decades. It was then known as Goy Liang Book-Making Company. Today, he is Bynd Artisan's Master Craftsman and is an example of how the brand's senior staff have upskilled and adapted to the times.

Has the arrival of social media and the sharing of experiences in these channels impacted your brand? Are you actively moulding your brand experiences to enable social media sharing?

Recognizing the importance of social media in creating and reaching a large audience, Bynd Artisan makes efforts to curate the shopping experience to encourage social media sharing, from the décor to the ambience to our products. Even our senior craftsmen are exposed to social media. They encourage customers to share their shopping experience on social media, and even make use of the platform to interact with consumers.

Social media also plays a large part in our marketing. We harness various social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook, which we use for advertising, brand engagement and to interact with consumers. In keeping up with the times, Bynd Artisan also makes use of new features on social media such as the Instagram Shop function to create an engaging experience online as well.

Where do you see your brand in ten years?

In ten years, we envision Bynd Artisan to have expanded across the region and beyond, with ateliers overseas and an expanded e-commerce presence. So far, Bynd Artisan has spread awareness through East and Southeast Asia, with pop-up stores in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Manila.

Bynd Artisan also has a corporate bespoke arm, which caters to a broad variety of clientele, including SMEs, private banks, government ministries and MNCs. In the

coming years, we seek to expand our presence in the corporate gifting sector and overseas markets.

● How to create a Shop Experience

- Think about what you can do, such as appealing to the senses, that can't be done online.
- Break the segment convention. Who says shops have to look and feel like all other shops?
- Start thinking from your brand. What makes it different and how can you help people experience the difference in your shop?
- Use the space for more than display – make it social or educational.
- Make the human interaction that can only happen in a shop special and memorable through training and special touches.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photo by Jazpar Yeo

Jörg Dietzel grew up in Germany and was educated at the University of Bonn, Germany, and the University of Natal, Durban, South Africa. After training as a journalist, he started working in advertising, first in Germany, then London, Beijing, Singapore and Hong

Kong. He ran DDB China and founded DDB Berlin, was Chief Development Officer for the legendary Batey Ads agency in Singapore (who invented the Singapore Girl for SIA). In 2005, he started his own brand consultancy in Singapore and was asked to teach at the National University of Singapore and the Singapore Management University (SMU). In 2013, his former client offered him the position of Director of Marketing at Audi Korea in Seoul, followed by two years as global Head of Creative and Sales Media at Audi's HQ in Ingolstadt, Germany. In 2019 Jörg returned to Singapore, his home of choice, where he teaches Advertising and Strategic Brand Management at SMU, consults clients, gives talks and workshops on branding and hosts programmes on TV and radio.