

[PDF] The Long Tail: Why The Future Of Business Is Selling Less Of More

Chris Anderson - pdf download free book



Books Details:

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Author: Chris Anderson
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Description:

From **Publishers Weekly** *Wired* editor Anderson declares the death of "common culture"—and insists that it's for the best. Why don't we all watch the same TV shows, like we used to? Because not long ago, "we had fewer alternatives to compete for our screen attention," he writes. Smash hits have existed largely because of scarcity: with a finite number of bookstore shelves and theaters and Wal-Mart CD racks, "it's only sensible to fill them with the titles that will sell best." Today, Web sites

and online retailers offer seemingly infinite inventory, and the result is the "shattering of the mainstream into a zillion different cultural shards." These "countless niches" are market opportunities for those who cast a wide net and de-emphasize the search for blockbusters. It's a provocative analysis and almost certainly on target—though Anderson's assurances that these principles are equally applicable outside the media and entertainment industries are not entirely convincing. The book overuses its examples from Google, Rhapsody, iTunes, Amazon, Netflix and eBay, and it doesn't help that most of the charts of "Long Tail" curves look the same. But Anderson manages to explain a murky trend in clear language, giving entrepreneurs and the rest of us plenty to think about. (*July*)

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From In *The Long Tail*, Chris Anderson offers a visionary look at the future of business and common culture. The long-tail phenomenon, he argues, will "re-shape our understanding of what people actually want to watch" (or read, etc.). While Anderson presents a fascinating idea backed by thoughtful (if repetitive) analysis, many critics questioned just how greatly the niche market will rework our common popular culture. Anderson convinced most reviewers in his discussion of Internet media sales, but his KitchenAid and Lego examples fell flat. A few pointed out that online markets constitute just 10 percent of U.S. retail, and brick-and-mortar stores will never disappear. Anderson's thesis came under a separate attack by Lee Gomes in his *Wall Street Journal* column. Anderson had defined the "98 Percent Rule" in his book to mean that no matter how much inventory is made available online, 98 percent of the items will sell at least once. Yet Gomes cited statistics that could indicate that, as the Web and Web services become more mainstream, the 98 Percent Rule may no longer apply: "Ecast [a music-streaming company] told me that now, with a much bigger inventory than when Mr. Anderson spoke to them two years ago, the quarterly no-play rate has risen from 2% to 12%. March data for the 1.1 million songs of Rhapsody, another streamer, shows a 22% no-play rate; another 19% got just one or two plays." If Anderson overreaches in his thesis, he has nonetheless written "one of those business books that, ironically, deserves more than a niche readership" (*Houston Chronicle*).

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