

趁著金融海嘯超越對手

Outdo your rivals during financial tsunami

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事情未必就像看起來的那樣：經濟崩潰，消費者信心陷入谷底，全球金融體系的根基正被撼動。不管翻開哪一本品位高的報紙或商業雜誌，裡面的報導都說各行各業正經受著叫人受不了的轉變。

把眼光朝旅遊行業細看的話，情況看來同樣嚴峻。根據國際航空運輸協會的預測，全球航空業的虧損將達到四十七億美元，而亞太區則受創最重，區內航空公司估計會虧損十七億美元，遠超先前估計的十一億美元虧損。機隊縮減，航線取消，機票割價，這些景況現在天天可見。大家經常說旅遊行業是全球經濟的可靠指標，這陣子兩者都滿是放緩的跡象。

困厄與機會共存

可是，在上述大環境中卻有一個怪異之處，那就是不管身在哪個機場，都依然會見到很多人乘飛機出行。飛行常客候機室裡大致上還是那麼繁忙，市中心的酒店仍舊擠滿了來自別處而要入住的旅客，顯得很熱鬧。雖然媒體說世界的活動已停了下來，但現實卻似乎有點不同。這就像大家正經歷著兩個並行的世界：一個世界裡滿是困厄，另一個卻充滿機會。

想深一層，這些場面未必像乍一看那麼不可思議。要理解這個怪異之處，我想向大家介紹一個很有趣的人，他叫亞當·傑克遜(Adam Jackson)，剛出版了一本大作，名為《問題的另一面：如何找出生命中隱藏著的機會》(The Flipside: Finding the Hidden Opportunities in Life)。這本書必定會成為今年的暢銷書之一，你還沒看的話，可別錯過了。大家現在正親身經歷著困厄與機會共存的兩個世界，當中的矛盾之處，這本書正好有清晰的解說，出版的時機

Things are not as they seem. The economy is in meltdown, consumer confidence is at an all-time low and the very foundations of our global financial system are being challenged. Pick up any quality newspaper or business magazine and you read of business after business going through gut-wrenching change.

Zoom into the travel industry and the picture looks equally bleak. The International Air Transport Association predicts global airline losses of US\$4.7 billion while our region will be hit hardest with Asia Pacific carriers expected to post losses of US\$1.7 billion (significantly worse than the previous loss forecast of US\$1.1 billion). Fleet reductions, route cancellations and seat sales are now a daily occurrence. Travel is often cited as a good barometer of the global economy, and these days both are showing all the signs of a slowdown.

Adversity and opportunity come in pairs

But there is an oddity to this whole picture. Walk into any airport and you will still see a mass of people taking to the skies. Frequent flyer lounges remain generally busy and city centre hotels still bustle with out-of-towners seeking sanctuary. While the media report a world grinding to a halt, the reality seems to be a little different. It's like we're experiencing two parallel worlds simultaneously – one of adversity and the other of opportunity.

However, this may not be as strange as it first appears. To understand this oddity I want to introduce you to an interesting man called Adam Jackson, who has just published a masterpiece titled "The Flipside: Finding the Hidden Opportunities in Life". It will be one of this year's bestsellers and if you haven't got a copy yet, you need to. The timing of its publication couldn't have been better for one simple reason: it clearly explains the paradox of the two worlds – adversity and opportunity – we are currently experiencing.

Having spent years exploring adversity, Jackson has come to the conclusion that every problem or obstacle, however big or small, offers an equivalent or greater benefit. In short, tough times offer opportunity: it's just that we can't see it because we focus on the hardship. So while the world economy contracts and it appears that there are fewer prospects, numerous opportunities exist but we are simply blind to them because we are focusing inwards or only focusing on the negatives. Dial optimism back into our thinking and suddenly it's like

可說是好得不能再好了。

傑克遜花了很多年時間去研究困厄，他的結論是，問題或難關不管是大小，都會帶來同等大小甚至更大的益處。簡單點說就是困境會帶來機會，只是我們一心一意應付困難，看不到機會而已。世界經濟在萎縮，前景也像十分渺茫，但機會其實仍然隨處可見，我們看不到，是因為我們只顧盯著自己，或是淨想著不好的事情。只要我們把樂觀的情緒放回思維裡去，就會像有人突然把電燈開了一樣。

這裡我提出要用新方法去應付問題，並且把燈光照射到四個影響我們行業的範疇裡去。我想使大家重新看到今天仍能找到的機會和可能的收益。我想幫大家重新啟動集體智慧，使大家重新著眼於創造未來。我想使大家振奮，不只是為我們行業變革的潛能而振奮，還為我們自己轉變的潛能而振奮。

市場推廣要豐富多彩

在當前的環境裡，我們聽到的、讀到的，都是外遊人數不住減少的消息。人家跟我們說，航空公司正在縮減航班，因為市民大眾都不再外遊了；這裡的假設是，我們唯有坐著等候，直到旅客回來。大家最常見的策略，不外是「降低」和「希望」而已。所謂降低，指降低對收益的預期，而所謂希望，則指希望積蓄足以挨過難關。大家都變得只管盯著問題，而錯過了市場推廣的大好機會。

談到旅行社的市場推廣，無論是對企業還是對個人，都仍算不上是精心策劃。旅行社往往不清楚顧客打算花多少錢，他們最終能為公司帶來多少利潤，以及他們偏愛甚麼旅遊產品。很多旅行社都只是用一種已過時的方法去做市場推廣。世界各地一些最頂尖的品牌都有精心策劃的廣告宣傳活動，為的是和今天精明的消費者作雙向交流；可是，旅行社卻只是用簡陋的字體把低廉的價錢印在普普通通的宣傳單張上，以為這樣就足以吸引消費者來買旅遊產品和服務。只要翻翻報紙，就會發現旅遊廣告很難說有甚麼實在的不同。那些廣告都一模



somebody's turned the light on.

I'd like to reframe some issues and shine the light on four areas affecting our industry. I want to dial us back into the opportunities and possible pay-offs that exist today. I want to help re-boot our collective thinking and get us re-focused on building our future. I want to get you excited not only about our industry's potential for change but your potential for change.

Marketing in glorious colour

In today's environment we constantly hear and read about the ever-reducing number of people travelling. We are told carriers are cutting capacity because the general public isn't travelling any more, and the assumption is we'll sit around and wait it out until they return. The prevailing strategy is one of reduction and hope – a reduction in revenue expectations and a

一樣，都叫人買便宜貨，可是這種宣傳方式已經落伍，只會使有意買東西的人看後索然無味。

我們需要用新方法去應付問題。顧客少了，意味著市場推廣要更加有效，才能分得一杯羹。現在就轉變吧，快點成立或者聘請你的第一個市場推廣專責團隊。難以花錢聘請全職員工的話，請兼職的也可以，或者按直銷公司的表現來付費，並且使公司的品牌顯眼悅目，確保花在市場推廣的錢物有所值。

研究顯示，經濟不景時維持甚至提高市場推廣開支的公司，當經濟復甦後，往往會勝人一籌。對這些公司來說，經濟不景時正好致力於市場推廣，把握脫穎而出的良機。這種方法既然對Nike和蘋果公司有效，難道對你公司會沒有效？

與顧客對話

市場推廣務須有效，這點說過之後，我想把顧客溝通單獨挑出來談談，因為這雖是市場推廣中非常實在的要素，但很多人卻依然忽略了。

我不但經常要外出公幹，而且因為私事也會定期出門。我家裡有五個人，一年大概會旅行六次左右。這些旅程長短不一，其中有一半是在每年的同一時間去同一地點的。我的行程多數都由兩家旅行社安排，它們都有我詳細的個人資料，而且清楚我過去的行程。可是，叫人難以置信的是，這兩家旅行社都從來沒有主動接觸過我。

我的保險代理可不一樣了，他們會定期接觸我，確保我已經買了可能需要的不同保險；他們會發訊息給我，提醒我要給保單續期；他們還會定期通知我，使我瞭解最新的保險資訊以及其他保險計劃。保險代理憑著保險這個話題，就已經可以和我對話了，旅遊產品有趣得多了，我的旅行社為甚麼不能照做呢？

讓我們用新方法去應付問題吧。不要老是想著顧客為甚麼不打電話來預訂甚麼，大家要明白，我們今天要主動接觸顧客，要由我們來打電話給顧客。我這麼說是因為實際上很多人仍會出門旅行，去機場看看就清楚了。可是，現在他們決定要買甚麼的時候，都小心得多了，而且航空公司和酒店這些旅遊服務商還會直接跟他們

hope that your pockets are deep enough to survive. We have become totally focused on the problem and have missed a big opportunity: marketing.

Travel agent marketing, whether to corporates or to consumers, is still relatively unsophisticated. Often travel agents don't have a good handle on customer acquisition costs, their lifetime value or their buying preferences. The monotone approach of many agents' marketing communications is outdated. **Today's savvy customers interact with some of the most inspiring brands on the planet supported by the most sophisticated advertising campaigns, and yet when they come to buy travel products and services they are expected to be motivated to buy from simple flyers that scream prices in the crudest of fonts.** Scan through our daily newspapers and you'll be hard-pressed to find any meaningful differentiation between travel ads. These advertisements seem to follow an identical style of "bargain hunting" that is borrowed from a different age and leaves the potential buyer totally underwhelmed.

We need to reframe the issue. Fewer customers mean you need to be more effective in your marketing to win your share of them. Make a change now and create or hire your first dedicated marketing team. Bring in freelancers if you can't justify full-time salaries or pay for performance with direct mail houses and make your visual brand style eye-catching to ensure the effectiveness of your marketing dollars.

Studies have shown that firms that prosper after an economic downturn tend to be those that either maintain or even increase their marketing spend during the downturn. They see it as an opportunity to break from the crowd, and make marketing their work. If it works for Nike and Apple, why shouldn't it work for you?

Talking with customers

Building on the need to market more effectively, I want to single out a very specific element of the marketing mix which I feel is still largely ignored – customer communication.

Not only am I a frequent business traveller but I also travel regularly for personal reasons. I am part of a family of five and we will travel approximately six times a year. The travel is a mix of long and short haul and half of those trips occur at the same time, to the same destination every year. I generally book through one of two travel agents. Both have all my personal contact details, as well as my booking history. But here is the amazing fact: neither has ever proactively communicated with me.

Contrast that with my insurance provider. They contact me regularly to ensure I have all the various types of insurance coverage I may need. They send me reminders of when a policy needs to be renewed and they send me regular updates on insurance issues or other insurance available. If they can create a conversation with me around insurance, why can't my travel agent do the same around the much more exciting product of travel?

So let's reframe the issue. Instead of being preoccupied that our

接觸，要是這些對話沒有你的份，你就完了。話是這麼說，你其實具備了引起對話的一切條件。因此，馬上接觸現有的顧客吧，和他們對話，看看他們想買甚麼旅遊產品，使他們知道你的產品款式多、選擇多，向他們保證，你為他們做的旅遊安排最物有所值。

產品要有想像力

單是上個月吧，就有八場研討會邀請我參加，想向我介紹新的「抗衰退」金融產品；此外，我收到的邀請還來自三個已加了新材料的「抗衰退房地產」工作坊，以及四個全新的「如何使用業務抗衰退」培訓活動。可是，關於旅遊產品的研討會邀請，你猜我收到多少個？一個也沒有。人人都跟我說銷售額下滑，業績表現疲軟，經營環境不佳，但卻沒有人說要開發新的衰退期產品。我聽到的，是大家異口同聲地說「但是我們已經降價了」。那不是新產品，那叫打折。大家不妨想想，假如福特推出了一款最新的家庭轎車，但新舊型號的唯一不同只是價錢而已，你對新型號會感到興奮嗎？

還是那句話，用新方法去應付問題吧。顧客現在不買東西，是因為他們買東西的標準變了；只要符合他們的新標準，就能夠賣東西給他們。快把公司裡最本事、點子最多的人叫來，大家圍著白板，想想可以推出甚麼衰退期的新產品。這些新產品大概要按區域設計，因為顧客都在找價廉物美的產品；這些新產品要使顧客買得放心，減低他們覺得可能要承受的風險；最後，這些新產品要由不同部份組成，使顧客可以按財政狀況自行選擇和組合。

要有出名的特長

今天，大家都只願談論怎樣維持現狀，怎樣多挺幾個月，只要不關門就好了。熬過去的心態已經生了根，使企業家平素的思維無從發揮。大家眼裡的旅遊行業問題深重，就好像只有問題似的；坦白說，這樣看是看錯了。

當前的經濟周期難免會有險阻和難關，這些我都知道，但經濟周期有高有低，低谷是會

phones aren't ringing with customers placing orders, we need to understand that today the opportunity is to make their phones ring by proactively reaching out to them. The reality is that many people are still travelling and you will see them at the airport. However, they are certainly more cautious when making purchasing decisions, and they are being spoken to directly by a number of travel providers such as airlines and hotels. If you're not part of that conversation you will lose out; but you have everything you need to create a conversation. So **start now by reaching out to your existing customer base and begin a dialogue with them around their buying needs. Educate them on the variety and choice of products available and assure them that you can get them the best value for money when it comes to their travel needs.**

Bringing imagination to your products

During the last month I have been invited to eight seminars introducing me to new "recession proof" financial products, three updated "recession real estate" workshops and four brand new "recession-proof your business" training events. Do you know how many invitations I received on or about travel products? None. Everyone is telling me that sales are down, volumes are suffering and trading conditions are soft yet no one is talking about developing new recessionary products. And I can hear the chorus of voices harmonising around "but we reduced our prices". That's not a new product, that's called a discount. Imagine if Ford introduced their newest family sedan, and the only change from the old model was the price. Would that leave you inspired?

Again, let's reframe the issue. **Customers aren't buying because their buying criteria have changed, so if you can meet their new criteria you will achieve sales.** Get your best and brightest creative minds around a whiteboard and map out what your new recessionary product offering could look like. These new products will probably be regional as people look for a better cost-benefit ratio, they will come with a guarantee so as to reduce any perceived risk for the buyer, and lastly, they will likely be modular so customers can pick and choose the components according to their financial circumstances.

Be known for something

Much of the conversation today is dominated by discussion on how to maintain the status quo, how to simply get through the coming months intact. The survival mentality has taken root at the expense of healthy entrepreneurial thinking. **We look at our industry as one with problems to the point of obsession, and quite frankly, that's a mistake.**

I am not ignoring the perils and challenges that are present in our current economic cycle, but it is just that – a cycle and it will pass. If you are an inherently strong business, with good products and customer service plus you exercise astute financial management, the odds are in your favour. In

過去的。如果你公司根基強固，產品和服務都出色，在財務管理上又夠靈活，那麼你的勝算應該很高吧。事實上，你公司目前的狀況應該勝過六個月前。為甚麼？因為很多對手都失去了爭勝的雄心，老是想著不關門就好了。他們做生意的心思已被問題癱瘓，不會抓緊當前環境中的機會。

所謂用新方法去應付問題，可以是不再想著怎樣熬過去，而是從反面看，競爭少了，就要把握機會，發掘自己的特長。趁著對手只顧站著不動，快想想你公司在哪方面可以迅速增長。說不定這是大展拳腳的良機，讓你建立電子商務平台，讓你設立分銷代理的特許網絡，讓你在市場推廣或締造新零售體驗方面定出新水平。

埃森哲公司(Accenture)的管理顧問在這方面做了很出色的研究工作。他們認為，要公司樣樣皆精未免太危險了，這會使公司顧此失彼，兼且引起內部衝突，因為管理層的時間和公司的資源都同樣有限。挑選幾個真正有價值的業務領域，然後全力開發，務求公司因為這些業務而變得出名。這好像一提起電子產品設計就會想到蘋果公司，或者就近的例子，是一提起客戶關係就會想起我的保險銷售員。

用新方法去應付問題吧

開篇時我說過，事情未必就像看起來的那樣。我希望大家讀到這裡，有些人會同意：事情確實比先前看起來的要好。難關與機會是錢幣的兩面，要盯著哪一面看，完全由你自己選擇。選擇難關的話，業務就會萎縮下去；選擇機會的話，未來就是你的天下。亞當·傑克遜指出，要選擇機會的話，首要的特質就是要有天生的樂觀精神。以我的經驗來說，企業家大都天性樂觀，因此，我希望這裡談到的內容會激起大家的創造力，會使大家的公司充滿創造力。✎

西蒙·諾羅茲先生是Travelport亞洲區的董事總經理。Travelport集團是國際旅遊綜合企業，擁有品牌包括全球分銷系統Galileo和Worldspan、酒店和地接服務供應商GTA；以及全球網上旅遊公司Orbitz Worldwide百分之四十八的股權。

fact, you're probably in a stronger position today than you were six months ago. Why? Because so many of your competitors have replaced their desire to win with one to simply exist. Their business thinking has become paralysed by the problems rather than motivated by the opportunities that exist in today's environment.

Reframing the issue can look like this. Flip the obsession of merely existing on its head, and look for areas where you can excel as the competition drops away. As your competitors focus on standing still, imagine where your business can surge ahead.

Perhaps this is your opportunity to get a jump-start in establishing an e-commerce platform, in setting up a franchise network of sub-agents, in setting new levels in marketing or creating a new retailing experience.

Accenture management consultants have done some great work in this area. They claim that trying to get your business to excel at everything can be dangerous. It stretches the organisation too thin and can create internal conflict for management's time as well as resources. Pick a couple of business areas that hold real value and target those for development to the point where you become known for them. Think of Apple for design, or more locally my insurance salesman for customer relationships.

Time to reframe the issues

I opened this piece with the notion that things are not as they seem. I hope by now some of you agree that they are in fact better than they seemed.

Obstacles and opportunity are two sides of the same coin and the choice of which side to focus on rests solely with you. Choose obstacles and watch your business shrink, or choose opportunity and unlock your future. Adam Jackson has pointed out that the one overriding characteristic for choosing opportunity is the inherent optimism in the individual. In my experience, entrepreneurs tend to be optimists and I therefore hope the ideas shared here will serve as sparks of creativity for you and your businesses. ✎

Mr Simon Nowroz is managing director for Asia of Travelport. Travelport is a global travel conglomerate comprising of global distribution system (GDS) business that includes Galileo and Worldspan, and GTA, a hotel and ground service provider. Travelport also owns approximately 48% of Orbitz Worldwide, a global online travel company.