

Seize technology to enjoy business and personal growth... oh yes!

GROWTH OPINION

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If you want your brand to grow fast, you need to embrace the mayhem of innovation says Bianca Best, Managing Director of BLINK and Strategic Partnerships.

The future is being incubated at our schools but in the wrong way. Just ask education guru Ken Robinson, who delivered the stimulating [Ted Talk](#) about how schools are killing creativity. He laments an antiquated ethos that enforces learning by rote, an approach that yields little value later 'out in the big wide world' given that our children will enter adult life at the most unpredictable and volatile time in history.

As grown-ups, we also need to adapt to what has been called the age of information, the age of acceleration, the technical revolution and even the second industrial revolution. We

need to be able to handle a pace of change that's unprecedented. The world is pulsing with newness at ludicrously fast speeds.

Moore's Law identified in the 1960s that the number of transistors on a chip doubles each year, whilst the cost of production halves. The story of the last six decades has been about our ability to cope with ever greater processing power, available at ever decreasing cost.

The impact on the marketing landscape has been huge. Data and digital are omnipresent, making campaign evaluation tighter and more optimisable than ever. We're engaging with a new breed of consumer who is impatient, discerning, vocal and suffering from mass media bombardment. To deliver business growth we need to create meaningful moments.

And then there's globalisation. We're more connected, always on and geographical boundaries have been obliterated for bountiful trade and commerce. Scale has become everyday ambition.

But in the words of Thomas Friedman, New York Times technology columnist and best-selling author of ['Thank You For Being late'](#), we should not fear today. Conversely, he invites us to step headlong into the mayhem, seizing the opportunity that comes with all this freshness. He states: "Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less."

Innovating and growing

What does this mean for businesses? It means accepting innovation and adaptability as core cultural imperatives. It means being comfortable with failure. It means 'intra'preneurialism.

[Dr Astro Teller](#), Google X's most-renowned scientist, describes how innovation is necessary for businesses to survive and thrive. "Innovation is a cycle of experimenting, learning, applying knowledge and then assessing success or failure. And when the outcome is failure, that's just a reason to start the cycle again." He implores us to start

working differently today.

It's not just about working differently, however. It's about thinking differently. It's about adopting a mindset of curiosity, exploration and continual invention. In a world where knowledge sharing is made possible through cloud technologies connecting brains at the blink of two blue ticks in a WhatsApp feed, the ability to spark new ideas is constant. These new ideas create new value. And it's this new value that creates growth.

I see a deep correlation between growth in our companies and growth in each of us individually. When we personally invite collaboration to transcend 'what is' with 'what could be' we become more powerful and collectively more impactful out in the market.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella illuminated this last summer with his acquisition of Github, stating: "Developers will be at the centre of solving the world's most pressing challenges. However, the real power comes when every developer can create together, collaborate, share code, and build on each other's work."

That's his personal strategy for pre-eminence in the global digital economy. And we should have a similar plan for our own personal economies. Reid Hoffman, co-founder and chairman of LinkedIn, tells us: "Your life and professional career is in permanent beta. We are all works in progress." In his book, [The Start-Up of You](#), he tells us that to succeed professionally today you need to think and act like you're running a start-up.

Embracing network intelligence

If we can embrace the network intelligence we have at our fingertips, through the prolific social networks available, we have the potential to push our impact upwards exponentially. We can access new information when we want it and collaborate immediately to evolve it. But if we can also combine this with bravery, we have a formula for an extremely valuable contribution.

These networks give us the potential to harness technology to drive growth across both personal and business realms simultaneously. Now, that is true innovation.

In this new world, I wholeheartedly concur with Ken Robinson, nervous that we're educating children out of their creative capacities. Innovation unequivocally requires creativity and a dash of trial and error. In his words: "If you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original."

We should be educating our children and ourselves to embrace failing fast and seize the magnitude of tech-enabled possibilities at our disposal today.

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