



The Origin of Brands: How Product Evolution Creates Endless Possibilities for New Brands

Al Ries , Laura Ries

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What Charles Darwin did for biology, Al and Laura Ries do for branding.

In their exciting new book, *The Origin of Brands*, the Rieses take Darwin's revolutionary idea of evolution and apply it to the branding process. What results is a new and strikingly effective strategy for creating innovative products, building a successful brand, and, in turn, achieving business success. Here, the Rieses explain how changing conditions in the marketplace create endless opportunities to build new brands and accumulate riches. But these opportunities cannot be found where most people and most companies look. That is, in the convergence of existing categories like television and the computer, the cellphone and the Internet.

Instead, opportunity lies in the opposite direction—in divergence. By following Darwin's brilliant deduction that new species arise from divergence of an existing species, the Rieses outline an effective strategy for creating and taking to market an effective brand. In *The Origin of Brands*, you will learn how to:

Divide and conquer

Exploit divergence

Use the theories of survival of the fittest and survival of the second best

Harness the power of pruning

Using insightful studies of failed convergence products and engaging success stories of products that have achieved worldwide success through divergence, the Rieses have written the definitive book on branding. *The Origin of Brands* will show you in depth how to build a great brand and will lead you to success in the high-stakes world of branding.

The Origin of Brands: How Product Evolution Creates Endless Possibilities for New Brands Details

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Author : Al Ries , Laura Ries

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Possibilities for New Brands Al Ries , Laura Ries**

From Reader Review The Origin of Brands: How Product Evolution Creates Endless Possibilities for New Brands for online ebook

gone-plaid says

It has a few key points that are helpful and accurate, but there are some serious errors in their assumptions about technology merging tools into one omni-device. The point that people will "always" want their PDA and their phone as separate devices because the interface would be too difficult to use was hilarious in hindsight.

Lauren says

i don't think this book is accurate anymore. it talks about how when products merge features into one product they fail (tv/vcr, for example). but in the six years since i've read it, the marketplace has changed and started to prove Ries wrong in this area. now we have keyboards on cell phones, along with MP3 players, etc and they're insanely successful. i'd be curious to see an updated edition of this book.

otherwise it has great theory that i've applied in real work situations. unfortunately it went over other people's heads when i explained it, but with the right diagrams and powerpoints the ideas eventually made me look kinda like i know what i'm doing. :)

Scott Dinsmore says

Why I Read this Book: Each and every one of us are exposed to thousands of brands a day. I wanted to understand what it takes to put a brand in that special place in one's mind and how I could use that knowledge to fuel my own success.

Review:

I must admit that I am quite the fan of Ries' work. He and Trout did a fantastic job with Positioning so many years back, which has had a grand effect on countless businesses. Al and his daughter Laura (who from now on I will address as Ries) took the fundamentals of a classic and built many of today's new concepts into a book that anyone interested in building a successful brand and company should have down cold. The Origin of brands is that book.

Ries stayed consistent with his previous work in that this book is written in a very clear, concise and easily digestible manner. A book like this can be comfortably read in a number of days. One of the main reasons for this is that Ries chose a few simple yet fundamental concepts and stuck with them throughout the book by giving fantastic examples of everyday brands to which all of us can relate. I feel strongly that examples are a fundamental part of a well written book, especially when it relates to a specific area of expertise as this one does.

Ries uses a rather unique way of starting the book with a theme from which he bases most every chapter. He begins with the concept of Darwin, evolution and convergence vs. divergence. In the end this book can be

explained in these basic concepts. Ries makes the reader quickly realize that the road to the top for your brand and business is that of divergence; not convergence. Please remember that statement, because that is the base on which the book is built. The natural course of products and nature alike is for things to converge and branch of into separate ideas and products. How often do you see a tree with branches growing into each other? Possibly for the same reason the web/tv or the clock radio never made it and why no one ever really uses their Swiss Army knife. It just is not natural. The key that Ries emphasizes is sum of most products combined is less valuable than their separate parts. After all, how well does any one tool in a Swiss Army knife actually work? I think I'll stick with my full-sized pair of scissors and screw driver if you don't mind.

This idea of the success of divergence has huge implications on each one of use striving towards success. The wonderful thing about divergence is that things will always be diverging and therein lays countless opportunities for success with new brands in new categories. If an entrepreneur is looking for success, he should start with where things will diverge next. This is where one can find the greatest opportunity to be first and to positively establish your brand in the mind of the customer. What better way to be first than to create a new category and be the first brand in that category? Ries is quick to remind us of numerous examples. How many brands were in the cola category before Coke hit the market? How many energy drink brands before Red Bull? How about the athletic shoe category before Nike? The answers are all zero. The real success is not in developing the unique brand but instead in developing a new category in which your brand can be first. I encourage you to think about this as you go through life working towards success.

One of the beauties I enjoy most about brands and the concepts that make them most successful is that they are directly transferable to the most valuable brand of all; you. This is a concept that I bring up in a number of reviews and it is one that should not be taken lightly. Your most valuable brand is yourself and you are the one in charge of securing its position in the minds of those around you. Even Ries' concepts about using public relations (PR) to build a brand as opposed to advertising are crucial to take into account. What is more valuable to you, hearing someone talk highly of themselves or hearing others talk highly of that person? The credibility, value and success come from the things others say about your brand and that of your product.

Our brand and those we build are only as strong as their respective PR and do not gain credibility from self advertisement. I encourage you to think about branding in this light as you dig into the concepts detailed in The Origin of Brands. You will get exponentially more out of any branding or positioning book by realizing that these concepts are just as important to implement with your personal brand as they are with the product brand you are building. I hope you enjoy learning about brands in this new light. I assure you that your return on learning will be invaluable. I know it has been for me. So the real question is, what new category does your brand define?

-Reading for Your Success

Krithika says

One of those books that gives you a new perspective on pretty much everything. The authors build a great case over time for the basic premise that building brands actually means building new product categories in which that brand can be the leader. It's written for marketing or PR people, but can give you a different outlook on consumer brands in general as well.

Essam AlGhamdi says

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Claudia Orta says

El origen de las marcas es un refrescante libro de mercadotecnia (o lo fue en su tiempo, pues leí la edición que se publicó en 2004). Esta obra abarca los temas de lanzamiento de nuevos productos, branding y posicionamiento que pueden ser digeridos por no ser comunicados sin conceptos técnicos, lo que lo hace una lectura amigable tanto para personas dedicadas a la mercadotecnia como para curiosos que tienen su primer acercamiento con ella (por cierto, ¡bienvenidos!).

De una manera creativa, los autores hacen una alegoría de la obra de Charles Darwin *El Origen de las especies*. Esta comparación resulta útil en el *salvaje mundo de los negocios* donde al parecer la marca grande se come a la marca pequeña y el más apto es el que sobrevive.

La idea principal del libro es la **divergencia**, que un poco más allá de la muy pregonada diferenciación. Comúnmente se les enseña a los estudiantes de mercadotecnia a ser igual que tu competencia, pero con un punto que los distinga de los demás; la divergencia dicta que si la competencia está haciendo algo, debo hacer una cosa totalmente diferente.

Este principio de la divergencia es la fuerza originadora de marcas exitosas, más después los autores nos enseñan que la marca no es el primer crío de la madre divergencia, sino la categoría. Podemos entender qué es una categoría si pensamos en cervezas: cerveza light, cerveza artesanal, cerveza oscura, cerveza importada...etc. Cada una de esas categorías divergieron de la categoría *cerveza*. Cuando una empresa logra crear una categoría, puede posicionar su producto en un mercado sin competencia, lo que automáticamente lo convierte en líder.

Cabe destacar que la divergencia no es lo mismo que la evolución pues esta última es un proceso de cambio paulatino, la divergencia es un cambio radical en la manera de hacer las cosas. Supervivencia del primero en la categoría y cómo sobrevivir si se es el segundo, branding de nuevos productos, manejo de portafolio de marcas y técnicas para el lanzamiento de nuevos productos...todas estas son ideas secundarias expuestas por Ries&Ries.

Lo que me gusto del estilo de redacción es la cantidad de ejemplos que los autores exponen, acerca de empresas reales que todos conocemos. Lo que no me gustó fue que los ejemplos pueden ser repetitivos; dándole a los autores el beneficio de la duda, podría ser que hayan hecho énfasis en la enumeración de bastantes ejemplos de un solo tipo de concepto para que el concepto sea mejor asimilado (aunque creo que después de cinco ejemplos, debe ya ser claro). Además de esto, como lo mencioné al principio, no alcancé a disfrutar el libro porque leí una versión desactualizada, en la cual se hacía una especial mofa a la idea de la convergencia de teléfono y agenda electrónica, o de teléfono y cámara fotográfica (que en este tiempo conocemos como Smartphone).

Joana Botelho says

O livro “A origem das marcas” peca apenas por ter sido editado já há alguns anos, pelo que muitos dos assuntos abordados já estão desactualizados. De qualquer forma, é possível tirar muitos ensinamentos sobre a criação de uma marca que os autores defendem que seja resultado da criação de uma nova categoria, através de divergência das já existentes.

Leia tudo em: <http://blogbuythebook.wordpress.com/2...>

Rudolf Waldner says

The concept and execution of building a brand is not an easy task. This book details a how-to that every business can benefit from. If you want to grow your brand, buy this book, read it, and execute these not-so-easy-to-implement principles. Al Ries will guide you every step of the way.

Rudolf J Waldner

Marketing from the Trenches: Your Guide to Retail Success

The Corporate Jungle: Animal Personalities Colliding with Job Titles

Tony Cohen says

I am a bit challenged when writing my review for this book, so I will redirect people to what I said about J-pod, which was, in essence, that the existence of another very similar book to this one renders the effects somewhat muted. "Positing, the Battle for Your Mind" is the book of his that really has to be read, especially the 20th anniversary edition with honest comments, both showing the author's wisdom and failures of prediction.

The previous book covered a whole host of insightful and clever points, while this one seemed to mostly stress the main point. Nothing ever converges, despite the millions thrown at any such project adopting aforementioned title. The sole exception, is when things converge for convenience, say 7-11 or the Iphone. Even though the book came out before the magical product, it seemed to reflect his thinking to a T. See, the fact that the Iphone works as a convergence, seems to go strongly against the author's thesis. (I don't want to repeat what he painstakingly and thoroughly laid out in his book...hell...almost a treatise so extensive were his NUMEROUS examples) It is a Hand-held computer, MPS player, phone and camera all rolled into one, but it works solely because it is convenient. The camera is hardly impressive...but you are carrying it because who can be asked to carry a camera on top of a phone....and who wants a phone and an mps. All these things are small, but collectively your pockets are stuffed...which is why it works...despite the fact it would take a pretty poor camera for the Iphone to trump it.

Does this review sound slightly boring...well I think that is a fair reflection of the book. It is good, just VERY REPETITIVE and not as good as early work.

Laurent Destrooper says

Extensive in it's promise

Tiff says

Outdated historical information (shucks didn't know this was published in 2005) but contains some applicable concets suited even to today's time. The writing though felt like what another reviewer here shared felt like it could have been better off as a short article than as a whole book. Tons of fillers and examples that are not relevant to this day and age anymore and a lot of "Did you that who did ____? Well it's ____" over and over again. Guess what I'm attacking mainly is Ries' hatred for convergence. The book is all about comparing Origin of Brands to Charles' Darwin Origin of Species by saying that Divergence is what brought many key brands out there today but he is too critical on convergence. There are a lot of good insights though on tips on how to become a strong brand and I can actually understand now why some companies fail at launching a product while some others don't. It is an interesting read for the 2nd half of the book so my suggestion is to just skip the first few annoying chapters. Would have rated this one star higher if not for it.

Leader Summaries says

Desde Leader Summaries recomendamos la lectura del libro El origen de las marcas, de Al Ries.
Las personas interesadas en las siguientes temáticas lo encontrarán práctico y útil: marketing y ventas, gestionar marcas y posicionamiento.
En el siguiente enlace tienes el resumen del libro El origen de las marcas, Cómo crear marcas que perduren:
El origen de las marcas

Kathleen says

Haters of the radio alarm clock, these guys explain why smashing together the good attributes of various products never creates a better one. It's fun to read about the demise of various brands and record their bad decisions. Convincing argument, now if only the non-design-oriented management of every non-Fortune 500 company could grasp this.

Sandip Roy says

The Origin of Brands takes learnings from Darwin's evolution as a theory and establishes Divergence as the main tenet of brand survival than convergence with countless examples of today and from yesteryears..... however as times are changing fast especially in the area of technology, some observations dont hold good any more.....

Tarun Bahuguna says

The book is nothing related to history or origin of branding rather it talks about the latest brand (during publishing) and their case studies.

The book is based on Ries' study and experience on why some brand succeeds while others fail. According to him a brand becomes a hit among its customers if it offers something new or different from existing and flops when it tries to please everybody or offers too many different services under one name. The former approach he called 'divergence' and lateral he referred as convergence.

The book has plenty of examples where Ries has tried to prove his point, first half is dedicated to denounce 'convergence' approach which many big companies have gets seduced to easily. It includes example from software giant who offered internet services in television to media corporations who tried hard to push single brand in all three platform of print, electronic and digital. Ries has been a big critique of convergence and display it as the biggest cause for any brand to lose the market share. In fact, he even went to an extent where he dismissed the idea of internet services on mobile or so called smartphone because of small screen size. Ries may be wrong on convergence when it came to technology but remember Apple's iPhone was an example more of a divergence and before it browsing anything on mobile was considered uncool.

In the latter half he talked about how age old brands have been threatened and toppled from their position by relatively new entrants and what should be the tactics in taking on a strong brand head on. The key to this success he has pointed out to 'divergence' where the new entrant offers something fresh and different to consumers than the existing. Like in his previous books, Ries have repeated here also that the first mover have the biggest advantage and more of a chance to dominate biggest share of market than his competitors.
