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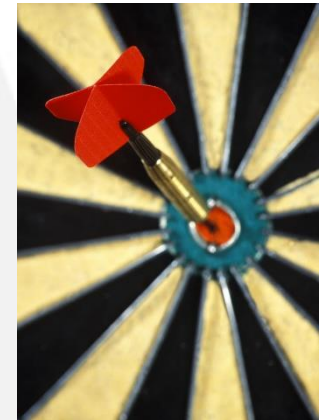


Clarity Early Adopter Study 2019

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- © Early Adopters have always been important to marketers... They are the people who pro-actively source and trial new technology – who's views can invariably make or break brands
- © The technology world is increasingly fast-moving and influential on our lives... We wanted to explore Early Adopter views on the evolving landscape to help our clients understand how they can connect with this vital audience and drive success for their business
- © We interviewed 10 Early Adopters...
  - ➔ A mix of gender and ages
  - ➔ All describing themselves as those first to the market for technology
  - ➔ Professionally recruited to ensure they met Early Adopter criteria
  - ➔ All based in Sydney
- © Interviews conducted in June 2019



*"Technology is now prolific in everything we do – from waking up to streamed radio to monitoring my sleep on a Fitbit and everything in between..."*

**An in-depth perspective of Early Adopters – on a host of topical issues affecting the technology and marketing world around us**

# how can this study help you?




**1. Meet the new type of Early Adopter...**



**2. Find out why businesses must help consumers embrace technology...**




**3. Understand how technology can create marketing 'wins'...**



**4. Learn why only smart, customer-centric brands will survive and find out what pitfalls to avoid...**



**5. See how financial service providers effectively leverage technology...**



**6. Explore how Early Adopters think technology will impact on the workplace and why service will be key...**

# 1. Meet the new type of Early Adopter...






# the profile of early adopters is evolving

## 'TRADITIONAL' EARLY ADOPTERS



## TODAY'S 'NEW' EARLY ADOPTERS



Predominantly male		Mixed gender
Wide age range, 18-50		Younger, under 35
Introverted – low profile		Extroverted – more visible
Self-deprecating 'geeks'		More egotistical / image conscious
Drawn to the mechanics of technology – “how does <i>this</i> work?”		Drawn to the aesthetics and brand – “what does <i>this</i> say about me?”
Hands-on / practical – want to build / understand equipment		Less practical – minimal interest in the ‘nuts and bolts’

**A new type of Early Adopter is emerging... Whilst not completely replacing the old style – they are increasingly visible and influential**

# differences emerge in behaviour / needs of the groups

## 'TRADITIONAL' EARLY ADOPTERS



- © Superior tech knowledge means they are less likely to 'Early Adopt' than before – they now wait before they buy!
  - ➔ Cynical towards 'rushed' product launches – prefer to wait for proven 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of a product lifecycle
  - ➔ Wary of low credibility providers with inferior products
- © Less inclined to 'play' with products than before
  - ➔ Less need to repair – tech is more disposable and cheaper to replace
- © More inclined to 'play' with retro / nostalgic gear

*"There is a whole new group who want things now! They want to be seen as being ahead of the game. I now wait for the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation launch – things usually don't work right first time around."*

## TODAY'S 'NEW' EARLY ADOPTERS



- © Are **desperate** to buy the next big thing
  - ➔ Queue outside stores before launches
  - ➔ Buy from overseas in advance of Australian launch
- © Less worried about performance – all about owning and being **seen** to own the latest thing
- © Little practical interest in the mechanics of a product / more about the outcome...
  - ➔ Convenience
  - ➔ Time-saving
  - ➔ Bragging rights

*"I know it makes me sound shallow but I just have to have the latest thing to show my friends."*

**Radically different mindsets and behaviors – but both remain important in building today's tech brands**


## *For today's 'New' Early Adopter...*

- © **Style** (look) is as important as substance (performance)
- © Need to evolve language used in marketing / comms... **plain-English** required for maximum reach and impact (not tech-jargon)
- © Media placement needs to be more **mainstream**
  - ➔ Traditional tech channels alone will not cut-through
  - ➔ Lifestyle / 'Experience' articles as relevant as tech ones
- © **Social media presence** is vital – it's the go-to media for 'New' Early Adopters
  - ➔ Reviews **and** promotions



*"If I were selling a Smartphone today I wouldn't be talking about how many mega pixels the optical zoom has, or how fast the processor is... I'd be talking about ease of use, and how well it works with things like Instagram and Pinterest..."*

**Today's technology marketers cannot play by yesterday's rules. The market leaders have caught on, what about the rest of the pack?**



**2. Find out why  
businesses must help  
consumers embrace  
technology...**





*"You can't stop technology... There is so much out there – you need to save your energy to get what you can out of it not fight it."*

- © Even the most engaged **struggle to keep up** with market developments – there's so much going on in so many areas
- © Reach and influence of 'tech' extends to all aspects of our lives and homes
  - ➔ Life is increasingly unrecognisable from before
  - ➔ Tech has unprecedented impact on what we do
- © Continued impact of new technology seen as inevitable – it cannot and should not be stopped
  - ➔ Early Adopters are bemused that some want to slow it down – 'why would you?'
  - ➔ Many indicate more focus on the upside is required – and providers need to help take consumers on this journey by demonstrating the benefits more clearly

**Technological evolution is seen as relentless – assistance is required to help even the most engaged keep up**

# embracing technology enhances our lives in many ways



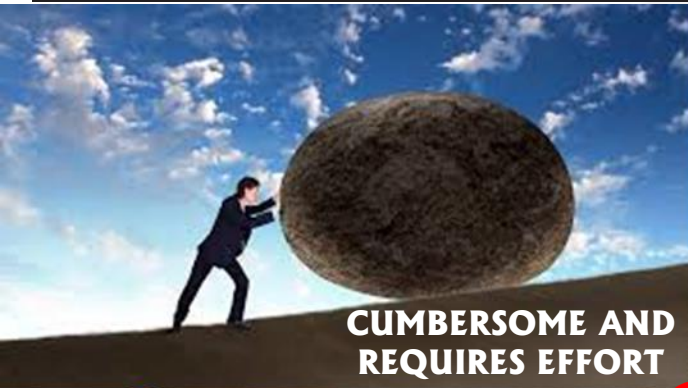
*"Tech benefits you in ways you don't realise... I recently travelled to Russia – I don't speak a word of the language... yet it was so safe and simple... I could use Uber to get around, Google translate to make myself understood and I didn't need cash – just my cards or phone – amazing!"*



**You get back what you put in... embrace change and go along for the ride to make the most of the opportunities it presents**



there are downsides to resisting change



*"If you don't engage with technology –  
I feel you live a less fulfilling life."*



**Failure to engage makes life harder and leaves you at the risk of missing out in so many ways...**

3. Understand how  
technology can create  
marketing 'wins'...







© Technology offers huge opportunity for marketing and marketers

- ➔ Aiding targeting and personalisation
- ➔ Pre-empting needs / behaviour
- ➔ Seamlessly rewarding loyalty

© Early Adopters have no issue sharing personal data if they perceive a benefit

© Yet few Early Adopters believe companies are anywhere close to maximising the opportunity

- ➔ Mis-using data (ethically and practically)
- ➔ Overloading with multiple / tactical messages
- ➔ Not supporting marketing innovation with traditional basics



**Belief that many large businesses could and should do more with technology and data to improve their marketing efforts**

- © There is growing negativity towards social media as a whole and, as a pioneer, unsurprisingly Facebook suffers
- © Facebook also has unique challenges at a brand level...
  - ➔ The youngest increasingly see it as 'for older people'
  - ➔ Alternatives (e.g. Instagram) are a 'better fit'
- © Behaviourally, Facebook is getting things wrong...
  - ➔ Too aggressive in pushing news / marketing (often to its own agenda rather than the user's)
  - ➔ Abusing its power (e.g. privacy violations / Cambridge Analytica scandal) and eroding its brand reputation

*"Facebook feeds become unbearable as they overload you with their sponsored content... I find Instagram less invasive."*

**facebook**

*"Facebook has forgotten about the customer... It is working to its own increasingly murky agenda."*

**Whilst it remains a powerhouse player – Facebook is seen to be abusing its power and losing customer-centricity**



- © Google Home and Amazon Alexa are seen to be among the latest 'must have' products – especially for Early Adopters
- © They deliver to core requirements of new technology – they are fun, save time and are something to talk about
- © However, there is some cooling towards them as they are seen to be overstepping the mark...
  - ➔ 'Listening in' at home uninvited / without being activated (e.g. without being given permission)
  - ➔ Accusations of fixing search results



*"I have Alexa and was talking about needing luggage with my wife. The next day there are banner ads on my Internet for this... I get it but I am not comfortable with it."*

**Blurring of ethics in the use of technology for marketing – a good product being let down by its (overly) commercial focus**

- © When we first talk about tech brands to admire, views on Uber are positive; it's described as one of the original disruptors transforming an industry (and our lives!)
- © However, as discussions evolve, more negatives than positives emerge...
  - ➔ It is more expensive than new entrants / copy-cats (many perceive that prices seem to have crept up)
  - ➔ Perception the quality of cars and drivers have deteriorated over time
  - ➔ Continued changes to its tech undermines utility / functionality
  - ➔ Uber does not treat drivers fairly
  - ➔ Uber Eats damaging the fast food industry



*"In my view Uber is trading on its former glory and doesn't have a point of difference to all the new copy-cats out there in the market."*

**Uber seen to have switched off, neglecting the marketing basics by not controlling its brand imagery or providing an ongoing 'reason to believe'**





### © YouTube ads not as invasive as Facebook's

- ➔ Feel more effectively tailored to the user
- ➔ Advertising an acceptable 'price' of viewing video content
- ➔ Ads often aligned to the subject matter of the clips being viewed



### © Apple remains the gold standard in tech marketing, delivering to the needs of both types of Early Adopters with great products and smart marketing

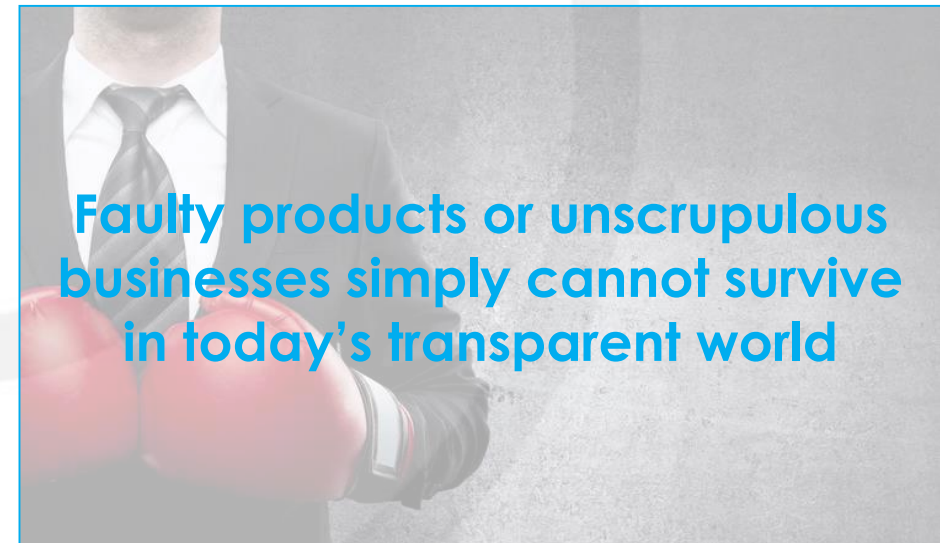
- ➔ Stylish, aesthetically beautiful products
- ➔ Smart technology that consistently delivers benefits to customers
- ➔ Communicated through slick, eye-catching marketing with clear messaging and consistent branding

**Two businesses that realise 'digital' alone is not a strategy – they support their offer with the marketing basics required to thrive**

4. Learn why only smart, customer-centric brands will survive and find out what pitfalls to avoid...



- © Success or failure comes quickly in today's world with 'players' especially vulnerable to:
  - ➔ Changing market conditions / consumer sentiment (with social media accelerating events)
  - ➔ Competition emerges rapidly (often stealing / replicating existing offers at a lower price)
  - ➔ New regulations / legislation (as legislators struggle to keep up)
- © Emphatic belief that only businesses that keep their eye on the ball, and continue to evolve will succeed **and** there is little overt need for external regulation



**Core belief that markets will self-regulate and only smart, accountable businesses will survive in the long term**



# case study 5 – rise and fall of Speed X

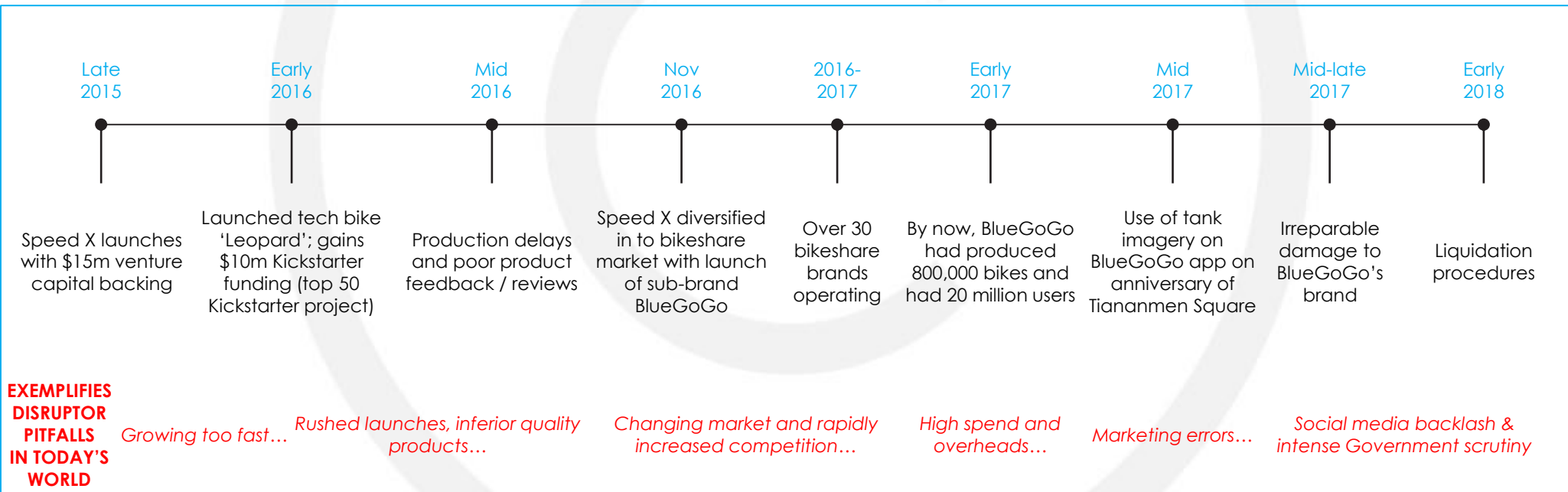
From Kickstarter darling...



To broken and bankrupt...

*"In May 2017, SpeedX and BlueGoGo were at the zenith of their industry – a company of more than 500 staff, valued at more than US\$150M, with an attractive high-end road bike on the way, a fleet of 800,000 sharebikes, and 20 million registered users. Within six months it was all gone..."*

(Cycling Tips)



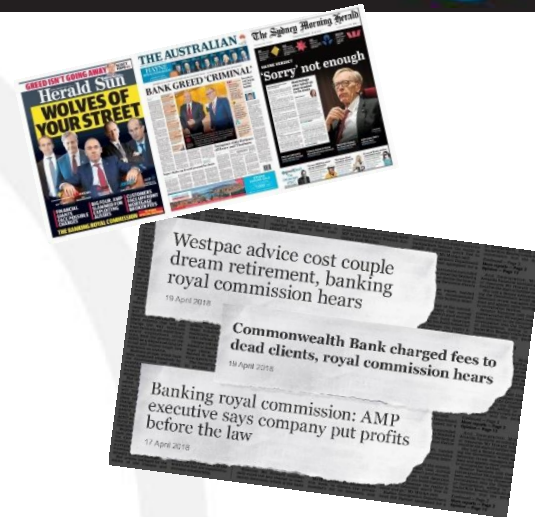
**Brands vulnerable to strategic and marketing errors, increased competition and changing environments when they lack solid foundations**



[illegible]



- © The Royal Commission and associated media coverage showed failings in the financial sector
- © Yet Early Adopters believe banks smart use of technology offsets the challenges and contributes to *building* greater trust
  - ➔ Apps that work well demonstrate that businesses 'get' their customers financial needs / lives
  - ➔ Evolving and adding new services (i.e. 'pay by phone') shows they're moving with the times
  - ➔ Banks lead the way in developing leading edge security protocols that make you feel safe
  - ➔ Banks are most likely to compensate customers who are victims of cyber crime / fraud (compared to other industries)



*"I know as a customer (of CBA) that if anything happens, they will reimburse me and look after me."*

**Sense there is an opportunity for all businesses to leverage technology in the same way – to generate greater trust in these challenging times**

# yet the revolution in financial services is only just starting

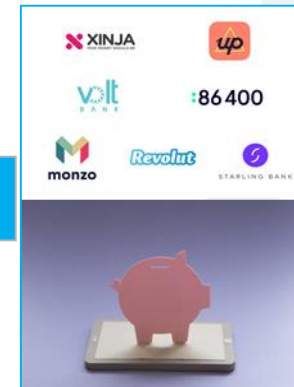
- © In spite of their acknowledged efforts at tech innovation, it is clear larger banks will face real challenges in the future
  - ➔ Regulations are changing to make it easier for new entrants to compete
  - ➔ New entrants have different financial structures and are prepared to fight on price
  - ➔ New entrants are seeking to win 'hearts and minds' by positioning themselves as more customer-centric and ostensibly *not* as a big bank!

**BIG BANKS BRING...**  
*Infrastructure*  
*Investment*  
*Experience*



**FUTURE  
BATTLEGROUND  
WHO WILL  
WIN?**

**SMALL BRANDS BRING...**  
*Innovation*  
*Imagination*  
*Disruption*



**Already Early Adopters are showing signs of embracing the new order...  
time will show how the larger banks respond**



6. Explore how Early Adopters think technology will impact on the workplace and why service will be key...





# technology means *different* not fewer jobs



- © In the mainstream media there is often concern with technology having a negative impact on jobs
  - ➔ Some Early Adopters believe this is a result of the disruption the media industry *itself* has faced
- © Early Adopters are less concerned... Whilst it is accepted **some** jobs (manual / process related) will disappear – they believe just as many **new** jobs will be created
- © The challenge is to say what these new jobs will be, consistent suggestions include:
  - ➔ App / Technology R&D
  - ➔ Tech support
  - ➔ Customer facing roles

*"It's not surprising some in the media have an anti-tech agenda... Look at what's happened to them!"*



*"Even 3 or 4 years ago – who'd have imagined that you could make a living out of being an 'influencer' on social media!"*

**The doom and gloom is seen to be unmerited. Whilst things will be different – many believe the new roles will be as numerous and more exciting!**

© Consistent belief amongst our Early Adopters that a 'human' component must remain in most industries...

- ➔ Customer service
- ➔ Design
- ➔ Innovation

© Whilst technology will become increasingly important – the human element and delivering great service will be the key differentiator moving forward



*"I can see the more routine, process sort of jobs being lost... But you will still need jobs that require a human side."*

## TODAY'S MARKETS ARE INCREASINGLY:

- © Tech-Driven
- © Commoditised
- © Fickle

## SO, TO SUCCEED, BUSINESSES MUST:

- © Truly understand their customers
- © Customise and deliver to needs
- © Use **great customer service** as the key for differentiation

**Businesses cannot focus solely on technology – even the best technology needs to be supported by 'human' aspects**

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