



# Customers Rule! Why the E-Commerce Honeymoon is over and where Winning Businesses Go From Here

*Roger D. Blackwell, Kristina Stephan*

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## **Customers Rule! Why the E-Commerce Honeymoon is over and where Winning Businesses Go From Here** Roger D. Blackwell, Kristina Stephan

**Customers Rule!** The high-tech honeymoon is over and customers are choosing the winners today — and it doesn't matter to them whether those businesses operate out of a storefront or reach them through a computer screen. Any company that's still debating whether the future belongs to traditional bricks-and-mortar stores or the dot-coms is probably already losing the battle.

Retail executives, consultants, and marketing firms alike have been jumping on the e-commerce bandwagon, proclaiming the end of retail as we know it. The numbers tell a different story. It's become clear that the Internet is not a revolution in retail — it's an evolutionary force and nothing more. No one can deny that the Internet has changed the way we live, communicate, and work, but the Internet is not where the retail war is being waged.

Today's battles are being fought supply chain against supply chain. The weapons are consumer-savvy sales, marketing and fulfillment organizations, multichannel retail, distribution and marketing operations, and yes, the Internet. The mission is complex and demands new skills and strategies, but the goal is a simple one: solving customers' problems better than their competitors and with better-than-current solutions.

Roger Blackwell and Kristina Stephan have spent years watching, analyzing, and advising the players. In **Customers Rule!** they offer case studies that reveal the inside story of successful operations like Victoria's Secret, L.L. Bean, Nordstrom's, Sherwin-Williams, and a dozen other corporations — companies that have created a blended strategy that combines the best of online and offline commerce. They also reveal the flaws that made companies like Boo.com, eToys, and Pets.com road kill on the information superhighway.

In **Customers Rule!** you'll learn about the crucial operational requirements for success in today's hyperaccelerated, hypercompetitive retail environment, discover how to reach online customers (and keep them once you do), observe successful online and offline branding strategies, and see how successful companies are creating customer satisfaction 24/7, 365 days a year. There's much more, but Blackwell and Stephan's principal message is that a blended strategy which preserves the best of the old and takes the best of the new is the surest way to success.

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