

FOREWORD

by Joan Waltman, President, QUALCOMM Wireless Business Solutions



Having worked in the technology industry for the past 22 years, I have come to appreciate the uniqueness of true ground-breaking innovation and advancements

that lead to changes in the way that people live their lives. Having worked for QUALCOMM for the past 16 of these 22 years, I have gained a deep appreciation for what it means to deliver 10X improvements through technological advancements and I have seen the corresponding improvement in quality of life that that can bring. QUALCOMM is a company renowned for both creating new science and technology (invention) and applying it to solve customer problems (innovation). As a result, I must admit that I was a bit skeptical when I heard that Luke would lead a session in which he would ask key customers of our FleetAdvisor fleet management system to describe the “anchors” holding down their FleetAdvisor system “boats.” And then, when that was done, he would ask our customers to create a box representing their ideal FleetAdvisor system product so that they could “sell” it to us to

help us identify untapped market needs. Still, I thought that the idea sounded promising enough to give it a try. I’m glad we did.

That was several years ago. Since then, our division has leveraged several of these Innovation Games to help us do the following:

- Better understand how customers use our products, so that we can make effective roadmap and strategy decisions
- Identify key marketing messages for the launch of our asset-tracking product line
- Discover new product opportunities, resulting in the creation of our new business intelligence solution

As Luke and our QUALCOMM Wireless Business Solutions (QWBS) team “experimented” with learning customer preferences and needs through these games and tools, there have been times when a small number of our customers have reported that they were resistant to participating in the activities. Although this is disappointing, I feel that our commitment to serving our customers has been advanced through the use of Innovation Games. If you approach the use of these games and tools with an open mind and a similar commitment to understanding

your customers, I think you will realize similar benefits. The key is matching the right game to the audience and preparing them appropriately for what they will be asked to do and how it will ultimately benefit them through the development of better products. Reading this book and participating in the forums will help you do this.

As time moves on, technologies advance ever more rapidly, and the longer lasting value of any technology is ultimately played out in how it becomes customized to suit different lifestyles, businesses, and personal preferences. As a result, I've come to believe that customer intimacy—having a deep sense of what customers do and how to translate that into technological innovation—is both an art and a science that creates competitive advantage. Because product developers typically are not also

customers, and customers cannot tell you what they have not experienced or how future technological advancements could change their lives, finding ways to solve customers' unmet needs and problems in a meaningful way is always going to be a challenge. *Innovation Games: Creating Breakthrough Products Through Collaborative Play* presents many creative ways to gather those keen insights and nuggets of understanding that can make all the difference in deciding which problems you choose to solve for your customers and in how well you can achieve that ultimate goal of delivering superior products to the market.

Joan Waltman
President
QUALCOMM Wireless Business Solutions