

It should be obvious that failing to meet the needs of your users especially when competitors do manage to achieve this is a bad idea. There is a conceit here in the assumption that your competitors will try to achieve this. If you're operating in a market where everyone ignores user needs or better still tells users what they want (regardless of needs) then no-one gains an advantage.

But how do we work out those user needs? This is extremely tricky because we bring our own biases to the table. The first thing to do is to understand what users are we talking about — your customers, the regulators of your industry, your shareholders, your employees or even your own business? If you're talking about customers then you need to focus on their needs not your business needs i.e. you might need to make revenue and profit but that is NOT your customers' need. By meeting the needs of your customers then you should aim to satisfy your business needs to make revenue and profit, not the other way around.

But surely I should focus on my business first! This is a topic known as flow which we will cover later. When you look at a map, each component represents a store of capital (whether physical, financial or otherwise). The lines between components represent capital flows from one component to another. If you think about a business then you want a flow of capital (in this case revenue) from customers to yourself. To do this you're going to have to meet their needs because they're unlikely to give you money for nothing. Unless, you're operating in a bizarre market where everyone ignores the customer or you tell the customer what they want.