

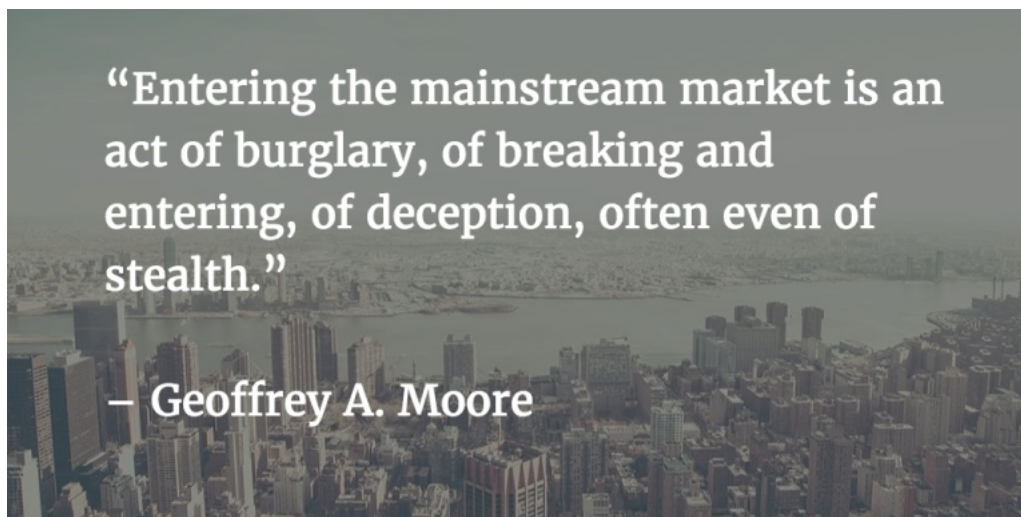
Crossing The Chasm Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/crossing-the-chasm-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *Crossing The Chasm* gives high tech startups a marketing blueprint, in order to make their product get the initial traction it needs to eventually reach the majority of the market and not die in the chasm between early adopters and pragmatists.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Guess the year *Crossing The Chasm* was published in.

Until 2 minutes ago, I would've guessed something like 2005, you know, the early Facebook years.

Nope.

1991.

That's 25 years ago (and also the year this handsome guy was born *points at self*). Considering most successful crossings of the chasm have happened over 10 years later, this is staggering.

But you might not even know what chasm we're talking about. That's alright. Mr. Geoffrey A. Moore will explain.

Here are 3 lessons from Crossing The Chasm:

1. The chasm is a gap between visionary early adopters and the pragmatic majority.
2. Crossing the chasm requires securing a specific niche as a beachhead first.
3. Position yourself as a market leader in your niche by making a strong claim.

Ever wanted to launch a high tech product? Here's the blueprint for ya!

Lesson 1: The chasm is a gap between visionary early adopters and the pragmatic majority.

Innovators jump on the product at first, followed by early adopters, the early and late majority, to finally reach the laggards (the people who only got a Facebook account when their Mum had already joined 6 months before).

The chasm is the huge gap that lies between the early adopters and the early majority, when a product is very disruptive and requires behavioral changes.

The reason is that the motivations for buying a product are vastly different. The visionary early adopters want huge changes and are willing to bet on them against the odds.

People in the early majority are much more pragmatic though. They don't want big changes and huge innovations, but rather incremental improvements based on using proven products and solutions.

Therefore, most arguments visionaries make to get the majority to buy aren't appealing.

The majority wants to buy from established brands and companies, but without having the majority buy your product, you can't become an established brand.

This dilemma is what Geoffrey Moore calls "The Chasm" and it's something all high tech companies must overcome, if they ever want to see their product become successful and reach the majority of the population.

Lesson 2: You can only cross the chasm by targeting a specific niche first.

So how do you overcome that vast chasm between the two groups?

You start small.

Pick a very targeted and specific niche of customers inside the early majority to focus on. Then you can expand into other niches later on until you cross the critical threshold.

Think of it as first securing a beachhead in an invasion, to take a stand and then build from there.

In order to convince your target segment you're selling a holistic, well-supported product with good references and establish yourself as the market leader, you have to strictly sell to only your target group.

Don't expand too early or sell to outsiders, just because you have the chance to. You'll end up adjusting and customizing your product to death to make it fit for every individual

purchase.

When you commit to only sell to 28-34 year old professionals in San Francisco, for example, you gain 3 advantages:

1. Since the market is small, it's easier to win over the majority in it.
2. Word of mouth references circulate faster.
3. You can develop a standard package product that meets all requirements of your target group.

But you don't just have to commit to a certain segment. You also have to talk about that commitment.

Lesson 3: Position yourself as the market leader in your niche by making a strong claim.

Positioning is extremely important when it comes to customers making purchase decisions.

For example, when I mention Lamborghini, you immediately recall certain attributes in your head, like "expensive", "luxurious", "high-end", "sportscars" and "rare".

That's great positioning in action.

Pragmatists want to know where you stand with respect to your competition (as they're only interested in established brands), but you're the high tech newbie, and there might not even be direct competition, so what can you do?

You define your competition yourself.

When you contrast yourself with a *market alternative* (the traditional way of doing things) and a *product alternative* (a competitor, who uses the same technology, but in a different industry), you can easily position yourself as the leader in the new, combined field.

For example, Dropbox could've positioned itself by saying: "For private PC users, who are sick of carrying files from one PC to the next via USB stick, we offer a hardware-free file syncing solution. Our service makes your files available on any device with an internet connection, just like YouTube does with video, but with any type of file you choose."

These 2 sentences are all it takes to give you a powerful position – in fact, it shouldn't take more than 2 sentences to make it clear to everyone in your target niche.

This claim will allow you to focus exactly on your initial niche and eventually take the majority of the market share there, so you can then expand and dominate the rest of the market as well.

Crossing The Chasm Review

I've heard the concept of *Crossing The Chasm* several times before, and I keep wondering whether it translates into other segments as well, where the products aren't as high-tech.

If you want to learn more about it, Simon Sinek integrates it well into his TED talk.

Mr. Moore's blueprint works, dozens of companies have proven it over the years – most recently Uber, who initially targeted the techy hipsters at the SXSW conference, video drones, who are becoming a standard tool for shooting video and of course Facebook, who collected college campus after college campus in his user base until everyone wanted to get an account.

I would've loved to give you more points from the Blinkist summary, but, oh well, you're gonna have to read that for yourself

[Read full summary on Blinkist](#)

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What else can you learn from the blinks?

- What characterizes each stage of the technology adoption life cycle
- Why pragmatists only want whole products and how you can provide one
- How to choose your first niche and how much time you have in it
- Which distribution channels you should use to expand
- The market in which it is even harder to cross the chasm than in B2B
- Which post-chasm challenge your companies might face and how to deal with them

Who would I recommend the Crossing The Chasm summary to?

The 17 year old, who dreams of running a tech startup, the 53 year old, who just realized she might be part of the laggards group, and anyone who has trouble telling people in 2 sentences what they do for a living.