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Response to *The Apple Experience* by Carmine Gallo

I particularly liked the presentation on Carmine Gallo's *The Apple Experience: Secrets to Building Insanely Great Customer Loyalty*, as presented by Alex Cho. Personally, I am not a big fan of Apple's products technologically, but I can say that their marketing really works.

Most of the guidelines are things that seem to be common knowledge today, at least among large technological firms. For example, hiring for team fit, and hiring for character rather than purely technical skill are strategies that companies such as Google or Facebook are also well-known for. Thus the employees form a tight-knit, similarly-innovative group, and are more motivated to work.

On the other hand, what makes Apple really stand out is their marketing prowess. For example, the description of Apple's advertisements when compared to IBM's advertisements are striking. Apple is known for the simplicity in its advertising: not only does this make a larger impression, but it also simplifies the process because there are fewer aspects to confuse or offend the target audience. On the other hand, IBM's bloated advertisements were full of information, but they had to be translated to many audiences and had to be screened to make sure that there were no culturally offensive features among multiple target audiences. I would say that many companies nowadays, especially technological companies, have copied Apple's aesthetic with great success.

The other part that really makes Apple stand out is its store environment. It has a very different feel from traditional brick-and-mortar stores: the space was wide-open, employees would circle around so that customers would feel like they were barely waiting ("resetting the customers' 'internal clock'"), and customers were encouraged to interact with products around the store. The atmosphere would feel almost familial, something that wasn't as expected in a business setting.

In other words, the Apple way of selling was less about what the customer feels, about relationships rather than the product itself. We can also tie this into the previous point about making sure to hire employees by fit and making sure to enrich the employees' lives as well as the customers': this helps build more passionate relationships between employees and customers.

What I would have liked to see more out of in this book is the science behind these marketing techniques. I'm sure there is some mix of intuition or informal experience that informs a lot of these "secrets" of Apple, but I would also assume that there are a lot of user studies and a large body of psychological science that these secrets are based off of. And even if it may not have been a big part of Apple's methodologies in 2012 when the book was written, there's no doubt that Apple is doing user studies nowadays, in the age of big data and machine learning.

I think Gallo presents a lot of interesting ideas that are fascinating in that they work and they are things that we take for granted, perhaps like how we take for granted many human relationships. While I may not be able to apply much of this as a more technical engineer rather than a salesperson, I still believe that parts of this will apply. In particular, the hiring process and the idea of enriching the employees' lives will probably also carry over to engineers like me. Another way I think this book helps is by promoting a general mindfulness: pay attention to the customer, what they're doing, what they're feeling, what they desire, and what they are lacking; by paying attention to the things you might miss if you treat the interaction as a purely business relationship, you may be able to get a much more fulfilling (and profitable) transaction with another person.