

Discussion Note

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Innovation Journalism for Innovative Thinking in Corporate Environments

Violeta Bulc, Founder and Director, Vibacom, Slovenia

Discussion Panel

Thomas Buckholtz, Business Advisor and Executive Coach;
fmr Commissioner, US General Services Administration, USA
Tony Perkins, Founder Always-On Networks
Anders H. Pers, Business Angel, former Publisher
Västmanlands Läns Tidning, chairman TT news agency and
chairman TV4, Sweden

Comments by Thomas J. Buckholtz

Opportunities exist for journalists to report on tools to predict and invent the future. Innovation tools, programs, and journalism can provide people the following.

- Clarity – knowledge, insight, and implementation – about what works.
- Roadmaps for introducing information and information technology into products and services.
- Stages of approaches to innovation.

Opportunities exist to build more synergy between intra- and extra-organizational communications and journalism.

- Corporate-internal newsletters can contain success stories which can be a basis for external coverage by journalists.
- Journalists find some successes indirectly.
 - The software marketplace’s “enterprise license” was developed by a customer. Journalists discovered it as suppliers added the practice to their sales efforts and sought coverage for their products and new way of doing business.
 - By covering the customer side of the enterprise license story, journalists discovered and began covering successes that corporate customers were achieving by using personal computers.

- Journalists can be integral to progress. Journalists and their coverage helped build the early 1990s United States nationwide grassroots movement to improve governmental service to the public. At least one publication sponsored conferences regarding the subject.
- Journalists can miss significant publicly visible innovations. The United States General Services Administration created and grew a practice known as the “Government-Wide Acquisition Contract” starting in the early 1990s. Journalists did not cover the topic for several years. A 2006 article noted \$290 billion in then-current GWAC procurements.

Opportunities exist to balance supplier-provided information with customer-provided perspective.

- Much information about the information technology marketplace focuses on “approaches” and “competitors” (to follow themes from Curt Carlson’s presentation). Most such information can be traced to vendors.
- Readers – including information-technology customers and vendors – can use and do need more knowledge about “needs” and “benefits and costs” (to follow more themes from that presentation).
 - What are people achieving (or do people need to achieve) via innovation?
 - How do they do it? How do they want to do it? How can they do it?

Dr. Thomas J. Buckholtz is a business advisor and executive coach. His ideas led to the creation of the Palos Verdes Estates (California, U.S.A.) Shoreline Preserve, Rotary International’s Donations-in-kind Information Network, two United States federal government procurement practices (including the Government-Wide Acquisition Contract), and the Republican National Committee’s Grassroots Division. He had pivotal roles in the creation of multi-participant computer games; automated document libraries; hand-held computers; the enterprise software license; \$100 million in productivity gains throughout a \$6 billion company; and the early 1990s United States nationwide grassroots coalition of private-sector, news-media, academic, and government employees and organizations that spotlighted the opportunity to improve governmental service to the public. As a Commissioner in the United States General Services Administration, Dr. Buckholtz served as co-chief information officer for the federal government’s Executive Branch, led a \$1 billion telecommunications and systems-integration business unit, served as GSA’s CIO. Also, he has led operations for high-tech start-ups. Dr. Buckholtz authored the books *Information Proficiency: Your Key to the Information Age* and *Direct Outcomes: Think Well. Do Great.* He co-produces and co-hosts a television program. He is an author or interviewee for more than 100 articles. As a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellow, Tom earned a Ph.D. in physics from the University of California, Berkeley. Previously, he received a B.S. in mathematics from the California Institute of Technology. He also completed executive business administration programs at Stanford University and the University of Michigan.