



Mass Customization: The New Frontier in Business Competition

By B. Joseph Pine

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The mass production of standardized goods was the source of America's economic strength for generations and became the model for successful industries. Today, that model is a major cause of the nation's declining competitiveness. In the turbulent business environment that characterizes many industries, it no longer works. As Joseph Pine shows in this work, innovative companies are embracing a new paradigm of management - mass customization - that allows them to create greater variety and customization in their products and services at competitive prices, or better.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Brings to the fore the discussion on how companies will meet the future needs of their customers and, ultimately, survive in intensely competitive markets." -- *Information Week*

From the Publisher

Winner of the 1995 Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing Research. Named a best business book of the year by the Financial Times, Named a best business book of the year by Library Journal

From the Back Cover

The mass production of standardized goods was the source of America's economic strength for generations. But in today's turbulent business environment mass production no longer works; in fact, it has become a major cause of the nation's declining competitiveness. As Joseph Pine makes clear, the most innovative companies are rapidly embracing a new paradigm of management - mass customization - that allows them the freedom to create greater variety and individuality in their products and services at desirable prices. New ways of managing, together with new technology, enable savvy businesses to provide each customer with the attractive "tailor-made" benefits of the pre-industrial craft system at the low costs of modern mass production. Companies that have discovered and successfully implemented mass customization are swiftly outpacing their competitors in gaining new customers and achieving higher margins. Among the firms that are leading their industries to this new frontier are McGraw-Hill, which can deliver custom-made classroom textbooks in quantities under 100 copies; Motorola, which can manufacture any one of 29 million variations of pagers within twenty minutes after receipt of order; and TWA Getaway Vacations, which offers custom-designed tours at the same price that others charge for standardized group tour packages. Pine explains mass customization in its historical context. He reviews the history of production in America, demonstrates why mass production cannot work in industries experiencing upheaval, and outlines how new forms of competition have led to greater variety and customization. Based upon academic and field research, his work is a thoughtful analysis and commentary on when and how managers in both service and manufacturing industries can make the crucial transition to mass customization. He details the strategies, methods, and organizational transformations required to develop, produce, market, and deliver individually customized goods and services, and he shows managers how to analyze their own industries to determine if they should shift to mass customization. The term "mass customization" was coined by Stan Davis in his 1987 book, *Future Perfect*. Joseph Pine has documented its place in the continuum of industrial development and mapped out the management implications for firms that decide to adopt it.

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