

From a Start-up to an S&P500

– A Product Marketing Journey

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A Disclaimer:

The opinions and views expressed in this presentation are personal and do not reflect a corporate view of Cisco Systems, or any other company mentioned in this presentation

And a Request:

Ask questions. Interact. Interrupt if you have an urge.

A few Introductions...

- The company – Cisco is a large networking company... that also offers solutions for Storage, Servers, Voice, Video, Collaboration, and much more..
- The Business Unit - 'Application Delivery Business Unit' offers solutions that accelerate application traffic over the wide area network (WAN)
- Myself – manage the product marketing team for ADBU. Joined Cisco through acquisition - Actona Technologies. Prior experience with a few startups and a few medium-size companies.



The “3 Things”

- Faith
- Customers
- Team

The Story line

- **Chapter I – “Early days”**
 - Identifying a market, technology innovation, acquiring initial customers and landing an acquisition.
- **Chapter II – “Acquisition integration”**
 - Developing an identity, reforming the team, balancing priorities, re-launching a product
- **Chapter III – “Growth pains”**
 - Handling large customers, gaining sales traction, dealing with economies of scale

Early Days – is there a market?

- “Technology looking for a problem”
 - Taking market predictions with a grain of salt
 - Build it and they may not come..
 - The questions you ask may determine the answer
- Looking for customers
 - Marketing is sales. Sales is marketing
 - “I believe we can do what you need”
- The first PO
 - #1 priority for the team
 - Whatever it takes

Early Days – “Series B” challenge

- Money is finite – it eventually runs out
 - Explorations cost time and money
 - The near death experience(s)
- You and your VC – the tables have turned
 - What’s your TAM and “proof points”?
 - “Ask what you can do for your VC”
- A new lease on life
 - Change of management
 - A bi-cultural/bi-continent team

Early Days – “The Exit”

- Identifying a BIG market
 - If TAM ain't \$1B – don't bother
 - Remapping the problem space
- The birth of a category
 - Wide Area File Services (WAFS)
 - Getting analysts on our side
- Landing Enterprise customers
 - Introductions help
 - Elevating the sales game
- Pursuing Strategic partners
 - Understand “what's in it for them”
 - It's a sales process

Early Days – The Lessons

- Committed teams make a difference
 - Faith, remember?
- Reevaluate strategy based on market data
 - Customers will show you the way
- Professional network matters
 - Partner with someone who has them
- Startups are “investment tools”
 - Technology is a means to an end
 - Investors focus on their ROI



Acquisition Integration - Identity

- Forming a 'Business Unit'
 - New management, new game rules
 - Expanded team – newbies and veterans
 - New and existing product lines
- Building your 'Human Network'
 - Getting things done takes knowing people
 - Networking is a survival skill
- Redefining the mission
 - SWOT analysis and TAM (again..)
 - Product and business strategy
 - Changing the “plan of record”

Acquisition Integration - Alignment

- Inertia vs. New direction
 - Existing revenues, customers commitments
 - New market potential
- The human factor
 - Getting cross-functional buy-in
 - Relentless evangelism
- A 'Balancing Act'
 - Portfolio management 101
 - Harvesting vs. Investment
 - Courage and Consequences
 - Handling collateral damage

Acquisition Integration – The Launch

- The product development
 - Significant re-architecture
 - Mature company cycle - 2yr
 - Roadmap pitch to “hold the market”
- Defining an “Advanced Technology”
 - ‘Application Networking Services’
 - Specialist sales team
 - Dedicated outbound marketing team
- Explosive initial growth
 - Global product launch
 - Market share leader in 18mo

Acquisition Integration – The Lessons

- You can make a difference in a big company...
 - Build your ‘human network’
 - Create and drive a ‘virtual team’
- Strategic planning matters
 - Long implementation cycles
 - Do the internal selling
- ‘Portfolio management’ is critical
 - Limited resource pool
 - Requires tough choices
 - Prepare to handle consequence



Growing Pains – Demanding Customers

- It's not enough to 'book a sale'
 - Product has to be deployed and function
 - Return on investment must be realized
 - There is always a risk of 'de-book'
- Quality is **CRITICAL** to success
 - You are held to a 'higher standard'
 - Failures cause customers downtime and losses
 - Bad reputation is extremely hard to restore
- Focus on 'Customers Satisfaction'
 - Customer Found Defects (CFDs) trump features
 - Do 'whatever it takes' to resolve escalations

Growing Pains – Sales Traction

- From specialists to generalists
 - Limited supply of ‘sales specialists’
 - Learning to deal with ‘generalists’
 - One ‘small product’ amongst many
- Simplicity is **CRITICAL** to success
 - ‘Out of the Box’ experience
 - Technical information distribution
- Focus on ‘Sales Support’
 - Regional sponsors
 - Help desk
 - Webinars, seminars, road-shows...

Growing Pains – Economies of Scale

- Become a *<small>* part of a big story
 - Position within major company initiatives
 - Create relevance and value to broad solutions
- Form *<internal>* strategic partnerships
 - Align with a bigger business
 - Create an ‘attach’ model
- Focus on ‘Channels’
 - The way to scale the business
 - Channel programs, incentives
 - “Ask what you can do for your Channel”

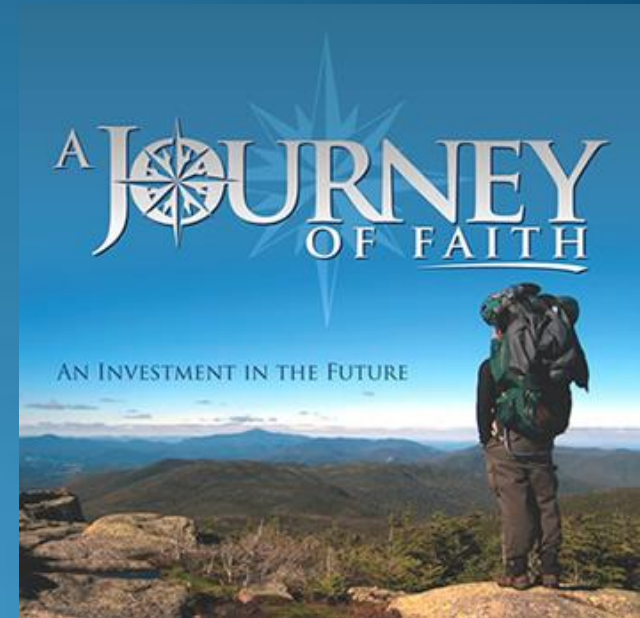
Growing Pains – The Lessons

- Customer success is your success
 - Product reputation matters
- Quality – Simplicity - Support
 - Make the necessary investments
 - Helps customers, sales and channels
- Understand the bigger picture
 - Create relevance for your product line
 - Partner with other businesses



The “3 Things”

- Faith
 - Gain it. Spread it
- Customers
 - Their success is yours
- Team
 - Build it. Lead it



Thank you!

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