



# TLF BOOK CLUB RETROSPECTIVE

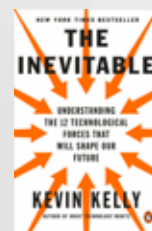
We normally dedicate these pages to a book review, but on the second anniversary of TLF Book Club we thought it might be interesting to take a look back at all 7 of the books we've read. Which were our favourites, which had most to teach us, and which should you consider reading if you haven't already?



## 01 Predatory Thinking

Dave Trott's "Predatory Thinking" was our inaugural book, reviewed in the Autumn 2017 edition of Customer Insight. Stephen recommended it as a long-time fan of Trott's consistently enjoyable and thought-provoking blog posts, and it certainly didn't disappoint. It's a book about outfoxing the competition, and one of its key messages is that advertising (as well as many other things in life) is a zero-sum game. Like it or not, you're in competition. You don't need to be the biggest to win, but you do need to be the most creative. Perhaps the most important principle, from a customer experience perspective, is Trott's notion of "getting upstream of the problem" – turning something you can't solve into something you can.

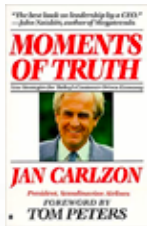
*Recommended for: anyone who wants to be inspired to out-think the competition, particularly if you have an interest in marketing.*



## 05 The Inevitable

People with the courage to go on the record with predictions have tended to be made to look pretty silly by the passage of time. Kevin Kelly may sidestep this by predicting broad trends in society, rather than specific technologies. In "The Inevitable" he identifies 12 technology trends which he believes will inexorably shape the future.

*Recommended for: anyone who wants some smart predictions about the future.*



## 02 Moments of Truth

Next up we turned to a classic of customer experience literature, a book that popularised a phrase so useful it's become a cliché – Jan Carlzon's "Moments of Truth". Some might call it a little self-serving, which is hard to avoid in this sort of business autobiography, but there are some great lessons. He outlines his approach to setting a clear customer-centred vision, equipping his staff with the information they need, and then trusting them to make good decisions for customers.

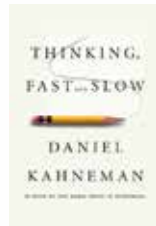
**Recommended for: leaders (or future leaders) in need of some clear thinking about strategy, trusting people at the front line, and communications.**



## 06 Better Presentations

We create a lot of presentations for clients, many of them (by necessity) involving quite dense information and analysis. Most of the books that give advice on presentation design focus on "big room" presentations – conferences where a Ted talk style of big photos and very little text are realistic and effective. Jon Schwabish's "Better Presentations" is aimed at academics or anyone with more technical material to present, giving a set of principles we can use to improve communication.

**Recommended for: people who need to present information – heavy slides effectively.**



## 03 Thinking, Fast and Slow

"Thinking, Fast and Slow", by Daniel Kahneman, is a staple of the research industry. It's not a light read, but it's still the best one-volume account of the basic research that underpins so much of behavioural economics and nudge theory. The only exception would be the chapter on priming studies, which Kahneman himself has largely disavowed.

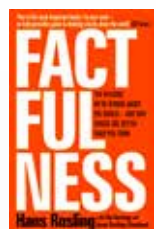
**Recommended for: researchers, or anyone who wants to understand where our knowledge of human decision making biases comes from.**



## 04 Everybody Lies

Our next book, "Everybody Lies", could be summarised in one quote – "Don't trust what people tell you, trust what they do." It might seem like a strange choice for a company which makes its living from asking people about their thoughts and feelings, but we'd be the first to advise clients to treat customer claims about their own behaviour with a healthy degree of scepticism. Seth Stephens-Davidowitz isn't making a case that we should be put out of business, though. He argues that "small" survey data and human judgement are essential to interpret and add to "big" data, even at the likes of Facebook.

**Recommended for: insight people or analysts wanting to make better decisions about customer behaviour.**



## 07 Factfulness

Our favourite book so far, "Factfulness", is Hans Rosling's posthumous masterpiece. His message is that the world is, in many important respects, better than we think it is. Rosling spent a lifetime trying to educate policymakers with data, only to find that preconceptions are bizarrely resistant to change. In "Factfulness" he outlines the cognitive biases which get in the way, and equips us with better tools to improve our thinking.

**Recommended for: everyone.**

### Book Club Reflections

We've really enjoyed having the Book Club, not just for the opportunity to read some interesting (and potentially useful) books, but for the internal discussions they've provoked.

**If you'd like to read along with us, our next choice is "The Death of The Gods" by Carl Miller. If you do read it, get in touch and let us know what you think.**