

# James H. Gilmore

Jim Gilmore specializes in provoking executives to think more richly and constructively about growth and innovation. Combining imaginative business thinking with practical analytical tools, Jim excels at helping businesses conceive new ways of understanding customer needs and adding value in the marketplace. To direct new strategic thinking and foster greater corporate ingenuity, Jim leverages insightful frameworks drawn from his world-renowned expertise in three innovation disciplines.

First, Jim challenges organizations to think beyond goods and services as means to overcome commodification and engage customers with truly new forms of output. His highly influential work, *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage* (Harvard Business School Press, 1999), now published in fifteen languages, literally wrote the book that spawned worldwide attention in experience design, experiential marketing, and customer experience management. Tom Peters rightly called *The Experience Economy* “a brilliant, absolutely original book.” Gilmore’s thinking on the subject is unparalleled in terms of challenging businesses to explicitly create value in two customer currencies—the importance of their *time* and the desire to achieve personal *transformations*.

The second innovation area in which Jim assists businesses is in mass customizing products and processes. He is co-editor of *Markets of One: Creating Customer-unique Value through Mass Customization* (Harvard Business School Press, 2000), which addresses how to best pursue customized offerings in the face of increasingly fragmented markets. Jim challenges businesses to go beyond mere customer satisfaction (the gap between what customers expect and what they perceive they get) to focus on the new innovation metric of *customer sacrifice* (the gap between what customers settle for and what they want *exactly*) in uncovering new innovation opportunities. Not limited in any way to consumer businesses, Gilmore argues this metric in particular holds the key to creating value in B2B relationships.

The third arena of innovation directs businesses to consider a whole new consumer sensibility in today’s marketplace, namely the desire for authenticity. Jim’s most recent book, *Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want*, (Harvard Business School Press, 2007), outlines how authenticity must be managed as a distinct business discipline if any innovation is to find a receptive buyer. In a March 2008 cover story, *TIME* magazine recognized the significance of Gilmore’s insights on this subject and named it one of “Ten ideas that are changing the world.” Here Jim addresses ways for businesses to innovate that go beyond appeals to availability, cost, and quality—outlining the deliberate steps needed to gain the perception of authenticity and a reputation as real.

Jim is co-founder of Strategic Horizons LLP and a Batten Fellow and Adjunct Lecturer at the Darden Graduate School of Business at the University of Virginia. He is a graduate of The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, an alumnus of Procter & Gamble, and before co-founding Strategic Horizons LLP was head of CSC Consulting’s Process Innovation practice.