



R 'Ray' Wang: A conversation with a digital disruptor

By Angela Lipscomb, Influencer Relations Manager, SAS

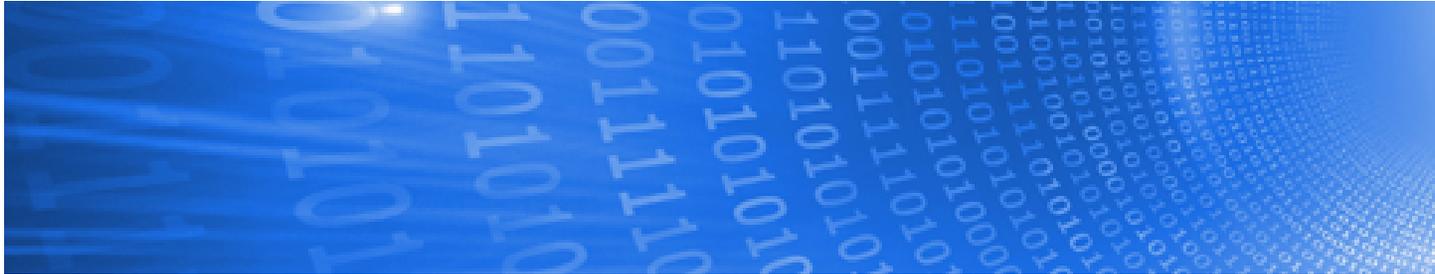
Ray Wang is surrounded by disruption. That should be no surprise. He's based in Silicon Valley, the hearth and home of upside-down, outside-in ideas. Ray is the founding chairman of Constellation Research where he advises Global 2000 companies on business and marketing strategies. But he's just as well known as a best-selling author, blogger and speaker.

He'll be a featured keynote speaker and panelist at [Analytics Experience 2016](#) held in Las Vegas, September 12-14. I recently had a chance to speak with Ray about the state of digital business and how analytics plays a role in enabling businesses to use customer data to improve customer experiences and enhance revenue.

Digital is data

In your best-selling book [Disrupting Digital Business](#) you talk about digital transformation requiring a new way of

Funnels are massively dead.



thinking. What is the importance of data to a digital business?

We've all heard about the importance of data. From big data to small data, the digital world relies on every interaction. Digital enables every touch point, every click, every piece of digital output to transform into right-time, relevant and contextual insight.

In fact, this data powers the ability to achieve a data-driven decision framework where data is transformed into information based on business process and context. Context enables relevancy of process which transforms data into information – from campaign to lead, lead to opportunity, order to cash, incident to resolution, hire to retire, procure to pay, and concept to product. Context driven by role, relationship, business process, product, geo-spatial, time, sentiment, and even intent enable both real-time delivery and right-time relevancy.

We then take this information and analyze for patterns. The bigger the dataset, the more opportunities for algorithms to find patterns of insight. The goal is to ask questions of the data and also consider the identified

patterns. From these patterns, systems gain the ability to guide the decisions and actions based on the data. This is the data to decisions framework that guides digital business. The goal? Augment human decision making and democratize insights.



Analytics and insights streams

What role does analytics play in enabling the digital business?

Analytics in a data to decision framework power the future of insight streams. One of the biggest opportunities for monetizing digital business will come from insight streams. These insights will come from the least likely sources and the most obvious. For example, least likely sources include the amount of power consumed, water used, visitors to the building, sidewalk foot traffic, and parking lot usage rates. These sources may seem mundane and useless information to most of us, but insight brokers will take that data to drive contextually relevant information. Obvious sources include internal systems such as workforce performance data, customer satisfaction and product quality stats (among other areas).

The customer journey is not a funnel

In her book, [The Analytical Marketer](#), Adele Sweetwood says the customer decision journey has changed, and that marketers have to get smarter about how they go about their marketing efforts. What change do you think has had the greatest impact on the need for marketing to evolve in the 21st Century?

The big shift is a move away from funnels. Funnels are massively dead. Most prospects and customers know more about their potential purchase than the sales team. In many cases, the case studies, product specs, demos and word of mouth have had more impact in closing deals than any other classic outbound marketing campaign. Hence, the case for integrated marketing efforts to consider the new prospect journeys.

Choose your own journey

You've talked about consumers not necessarily wanting a prescribed customer journey, but rather the ability to choose the journey that makes most sense for them. How can analytics help marketers provide this level of

personalization to their customers?

The shift from analog to digital systems represents a continued march to delivering on mass personalized systems. During the next 20 years, these systems will start with intention-driven design, solve the issue of massive individual scale and enable personalized experiences as these systems traverse the space/time continuum and tap into peer-to-peer networks. What we learn from these systems is that they do not replace their predecessors. In fact with each wave, the systems' extract information from the older systems to create new paradigms

Delivering on these customer segments of one will require a few foundational concepts:

Choose your own adventure type of journeys. With no real beginning nor end, expect these systems to work like a *Choose Your Own Adventure* book. Funnels fall aside as customers, partners, employees and vendors jump across processes, make their own decisions and craft their experiences on their terms. Journey mapping must account for infinite journeys and support customer-centric points of view.

Continuity of experience. A customer may start an experience on a mobile device, carry it with them on their commute, jump back into it on their office pc, and then come back home and complete it on their tablet. Regardless of channel, device, platform, or situation, context is carried. Experiences are delivered with massive context and personalization. While customers do not expect a disruption in the experience, they do expect relevancy regardless of the context.

Intention-driven design. Currently the fashionable approach is predictive. Predictive does a great job of using history to predict future patterns. Intention driven design tests for shifts in patterns by setting up hypotheses and awaiting the results. If we know a person always gets a specific type of coffee at the same time every day, that's predictive. An intention-driven system will test to see what type of coffee is purchased based on time of day, weather, relationships, location and even sentiment gathered from heart rate or physical activity. The test comes from studying shifts in patterns and behaviors. This self-learning and adjusting capability is powered by cognitive computing approaches.

IT and marketing: orchestration and collaboration

Do you think there is enough emphasis on collaboration between the CIO and the CMO? Just how important is this in evolving a digital business?

We are seeing more collaboration than in the past. Success in digital marketing requires line of business and IT collaboration. For marketers, a few core areas such as data management platforms, master data management software and data lakes will require even stronger collaboration. Integration, orchestration, workflow and privacy is another big area for collaboration. As we move to models of access, not ownership, *how* we orchestrate journeys, share information, and engage customers create opportunities for collaboration.

In addition to his roles at Silicon Valley-based Constellation Research, R. "Ray" Wang is the author of the popular business strategy and technology blog [A Software Insider's Point of View](#). His blog provides insight into how disruptive technologies and new business models, such as digital transformation, affect brands, enterprises and organizations. His best-selling book *Disrupting Digital Business*, published by Harvard Business Review Press, explains why 52 percent of Fortune 500 companies have merged, been acquired, gone bankrupt or fallen off the list since 2000. Wang has held executive roles in product marketing, strategy and consulting at companies such as Forrester Research, Oracle, PeopleSoft, Deloitte, Ernst & Young, and Johns Hopkins Hospital.



Exploring the analytical marketer

Ray Wang will join Adele Sweetwood, Senior Vice President of Global Marketing and Shared Services at SAS, to discuss practical techniques for marketing modernization with moderator and SAS Best Practices Vice President, Jill Dyché. The panel will share real-world examples of marketing successes, and what it takes to be truly agile in the new world of digital.

Analytics Experience 2016

