

Don't Start a Movement

I used to believe that making a big impact on the world required a movement. I thought you had to get a bunch of people to believe certain things, and get those people to get more people and so on.

I don't like movements anymore. In fact, I like the opposite of movements.

Think about the iPhone, or Apple in general. No movement existed or was needed to make them change the way the world interacts with technology. Sure, there are pockets of True Believer Apple fans, but what actually moves the market isn't a Movement, but a great product. They just solve a problem and create value for individual customers. Really well.

Wal-Mart's an even better example. There are no fanboys or fangirls. In fact, there are many movements that exist for the sole purpose of disparaging or destroying Wal-Mart. Yet Wal-Mart is here, and has done more to raise the standard of living across America than every movement combined. They just solve a problem and create value for individual customers. Really well.

Movements are exhausting, and inevitably degrade to inward-looking, ingrown, inbred, inner-circle posturing and purging. They are self-righteous and generally annoying.

Things that actually move the world in a positive direction relentlessly focus on making something that makes someone's life better every day, offering it to them to accept or refuse, and adjusting to what people choose.

I want to create products and experiences that make people's lives better, as evidenced by the fact that they willingly part with their resources to obtain it, whether or not they know what they are a part of philosophically.

Adam Smith's great insight was that we didn't get our meat from the benevolence of the butcher, but by his regard to his self-interest. Yet lover and haters of Smith alike spend so much time appealing to benevolence, instead of creating stuff that makes it in our self-interest to engage.

I don't want fans. I want customers. I want to make total stranger's lives better, not just rally a mob.

I don't want a movement, I want to move the world.