



Conquering Complexity in Your Business: How Wal-Mart, Toyota, and Other Top Companies Are Breaking Through the Ceiling on Profits and Growth

By Michael L. George, Stephen A. Wilson

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Conquering the complexity in products and services can generate larger contributions to profits and growth than nearly any other business strategy

Here's a guarantee: Somewhere in your business, there is too much complexity. You may also be losing out by having too little complexity where it counts - in the products, services and options you offer to customers. Either way, the impact of complexity is enormous in terms of lost profit and missed growth opportunities.

Conquering Complexity in Your Business shows how to break through the ceiling on profits and growth by implementing the three rules for conquering complexity:

- Eliminating complexity that customers will *not* pay for
- Exploiting the complexity that customers *will* pay for
- Minimizing the costs of the complexity you offer

Select specific approaches to eliminate different kinds of complexity. This knowledge will significantly improve your ability to grow profit, revenue, and shareholder value.

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Editorial ReviewFrom Publishers Weekly

When Thoreau's injunction to simplify, simplify, is translated into the context of business management, the result is this labyrinthine treatise. George, author of Lean Six Sigma, and "complexity expert" Wilson contend that overcomplication is an insidious drain on businesses. A proliferation of product and service offerings intended to boost business actually imposes hidden costs and masks the unprofitability of stagnating lines, while consumers are often baffled and irritated by the plethora of superficially distinct options. The authors' cure for complexity, however, seems almost as complicated as the disease. They offer a maze of arcane diagnostic tools for assessing the complexity and profitability of products, services and customers, along with advice on how to simplify, standardize or eliminate them altogether, and pile on mathematical equations, byzantine flowcharts and highly technical case studies ("at 50KW the DC voltage doubled, cutting the current in half—which meant the design for the lower power ratings could be used all the way to 80KW"). They provide a number of useful insights, actually, although lumping them under the trendy rubric of "complexity" doesn't add much conceptual rigor. Unfortunately, the method of quantitatively analyzing the profit impact of minute components of larger processes seems itself an onerous layer of complexity to add to the project of simplifying business practices. The accountants and process design engineers who might read the book will find much food for thought, but are also likely to put it aside when it comes time to roll up their sleeves and get to work.

Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From [Booklist](#) The authors are experts on the Six Sigma and Lean Production methods used to increase efficiency, cut costs, and improve resource use in corporate environments and have written extensively on techniques for improving speed and quality. Here they make the case that every business harbors too much complexity, a "silent killer" that increases costs and drains profits and resources. The methods they offer to expose complexity could be the the next big strategic business weapon--dominant companies such as Wal-Mart, Toyota, Dell Computer, and Capitol One are already using these techniques to great success. Although some of the concepts presented are easy to understand, such as reducing the number of steps in production, reducing waste, and creating standardized tasks and procedures, others are quite advanced (functional analysis, conjoint analysis, exploiting commonality), and there are numerous equations and diagrams that require a mathematical mind to comprehend. This timely research has much to offer medium-sized to large businesses. *David Siegfried*

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"The cost of complexity isn't offset by what you can charge. Complexity creates opportunities for you to fail your customer." (American Airlines President Gerard Arpey, Wall Street Journal, 9-17-2002)"

ReviewFrom reader reviews:

Arthur Elsberry:Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have considerably more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book titled Conquering Complexity in Your Business: How Wal-Mart, Toyota, and Other Top Companies Are Breaking Through the Ceiling on Profits and Growth? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You realize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have different opinion?

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