



David Thomson has spent years carrying out the data analysis, data modeling, and data interpretation that he summarizes in *Blueprint to a Billion*.

This book shows the traits of companies that break out of startup phase and become the real job creators of tomorrow, breaking \$1B in sales in 4-6-8 or more years, but in a highly predictable manner, with a goal oriented action oriented management team. What precisely do these companies do to achieve this growth?

Microsoft, Google, eBay, Staples, Genentech, Starbucks, Nike, and Harley-Davidson . . . these are just a few examples of an elite group of companies that have managed to turn billion-dollar ideas into billion-dollar businesses. What did these and other high-growth companies do to achieve such a goal? What blueprint do they follow to produce such results? Based on three years of in-depth research, David Thomson's *Blueprint to a Billion* approach provides the first quantitative assessment of the success pattern common across a distinct group of 387 "blueprint companies"—the 5% that have IPO'd since 1980 and grown to \$1 billion in revenue. They represent America's highest growth companies; they uniquely achieved exponential revenue growth and returns.

This book is not about one unique company, its innovation, and the financial returns it achieved; it's about the quantifiable, success-based pattern—independent of economic cycles or industries—shared across this group of 387 elite companies. It's about how you can use seven common essentials to better your business, organization, team, or yourself and produce exponential growth. It's about executing the essentials and linking them. It's about taking the actions that matter while avoiding pitfalls. The 7 essentials explored are:

**Essential #1:** Create and Sustain a Breakthrough Value Proposition

Wave 1: Shapers of a New World – Creating a New Market (EBay)

Wave 2: Niche Shapers – Redefine the Market (Starbucks, Siebel)

Wave 3: Category Killers – Optimize the Market (Southwest)

**Essential#2:** Exploit a High-Growth Market Segment

**Essential #3:** Marquee Customers Shape the Revenue Powerhouse

**Essential #4:** Leverage Big Brother Alliances for Breaking into New Markets

**Essential #5:** Become the Masters of Exponential Returns (ROA)

**Essential #6:** The Management Team: Inside-Outside Leadership

**Essential #7:** The Board: Comprised of Essentials Experts

Divided into three comprehensive sections, *Blueprint to a Billion* will show you how to formulate a breakthrough value proposition, create exponential revenue growth—the most valuable and unique kind of growth—and seize the opportunity to garner exponential returns. More importantly, it provides practical guidelines that you, as a business leader at any level, can use to improve company performance from one year to the next. While the book is based on quantitative evidence, it provides insightful analysis and very personal stories from many blueprint company leaders.

Overall, I'd rate it a B. The section on Break Through Value Proposition is the strongest (and probably the main reason some of these firms were so successful). The use of marquee customer is certainly important in creating new markets and new approaches (similar to "Crossing the Chasm"). I also liked the section on Inside-Outside Leadership as there are a lot of successful dyads and yet the prototypical CEO has it all can do it all – few of us really meet this standard.