

Welcome to the April 2007 issue of the SPS e-newsletter.

## » SPS news

### New sponsor

We are proud to announce that Cranfield School of Management, one of Europe's leading university management schools, are sponsoring the e-newsletter for the forthcoming year. As part of this new relationship we'll be bringing a range of [exciting opportunities](#) to participate in Cranfield's management education and development programmes.

### New service for SPS members

We're also pleased to launch a new section to the e-newsletter where members can promote their services to one another - see [Members' services](#). If you'd like to take advantage of this member benefit simply send up to 100 words describing your service offering to [publications@sps.org.uk](mailto:publications@sps.org.uk).

### Shaping Tomorrow - key trends revealed

[Shaping Tomorrow](#) provides new and renewing SPS members with a high-level peek into key trends. This month the service highlights key emerging patterns and predictions for 2007 and beyond, including: religion finds technology; USA losing its poll position; Apple aims for TV breakthrough; clean labels: a growing but not yet global trend; home cooking for pets; internet revolutionises TV; mysterious bee deaths threaten agriculture; ethics comes to restaurant menus; Antarctic melting speeding up; and big media gets a second life.

SPS members enjoy access to Shaping Tomorrow's newsletter containing 10 new trends per week and its organised database of over 12,000 future, strategy and change management resources. [More info](#)



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## » Research and insight

### 1. Strategies of the Serengeti

In the 1980s we went in search of 'excellence'. Today, many of the companies heralded as excellent have floundered or died. In the 1990s we looked for businesses which were 'built to last'. Many have not lasted. By contrast, the ecosystem of the African Serengeti has thrived for thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of years. It has lasted.

The animals of these great grass plains are supremely adapted for excellence in their highly competitive environment. The key to success for the animals in the Serengeti is using the right strategy at the right time. In issue 11 of *Strategy Magazine* Stephen Berry takes a light-hearted look at these animal strategies, and gives some serious pointers towards what each animal has to teach us in business.

» [Read the full article](#)

### 2. Service life cycle in the industrial sector

Nothing lasts forever. As individuals we all typically pass through different stages of life in which characteristics such as our interests, priorities, earning power and levels of fitness alter. Social commentators like to refer to this ordered evolution from birth to eventual decline as the 'seven ages of man' or the 'circle of life'. Models that describe similar life cycles in the business world also exist - one of the best known is the product life cycle, which has a long track record as a marketing model.

Less well known, but equally valid, is the service life cycle, which applies to products that cannot typically be considered

'disposable' because of their complexity, rarity or price. In issue 11 of *Strategy Magazine* Mark Whitley describes the relationship between the two and the organisational implications for companies that take up the challenge of manufacturing the original product and delivering service to the customers who buy it.

» [Read the full article](#)

- SPS members enjoy access to the online library, with downloadable versions of all the articles published in *Strategy Magazine* since its relaunch in September 2003. For more information on membership benefits visit the [SPS website](#) and provide your details.



## » Events and workshops

### **Strategy Development and Implementation**

#### **SPS member discount - £195**

New to strategy or need a refresher? This fully-inclusive two-day workshop will introduce strategy and its context within business planning, and is especially designed to help delegates understand how to achieve sustainable growth and competitive advantage. Introducing a number of common organisational problems as case studies, delegates will learn how to approach similar day-to-day problems from a strategic perspective rather than an operational one.

This course is suitable for CPD credits with the Institute of Management Consultancy.

Provided by Strategic Creativity; Great Missenden; 10-11 May 2007; members £800+VAT, non-members £995+VAT.

[More details.](#)



### **See "the most influential thinker on business strategy today"**

#### **Final reminder for Birmingham conference on 21 May 2007**

#### **SPS member discount - 33% saving per seat**

Only a few discounted SPS places remain for the upcoming conference with C.K. Prahalad and Dr Philip Kotler in Birmingham. Prahalad is changing the way leaders think: *BusinessWeek* described him as the "most influential thinker on business strategy today." His research specialises in corporate strategy and the role of senior management in large, diversified, multinational corporations.

Among his published works, his 2004 book, *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid, Eradicating Poverty Through Profits*, was named the top business book of the year by Amazon.com editors and *Fast Company* magazine, and was praised by Bill Gates and Madeleine Albright for its compelling insights into creating sustainable growth in developing economies. In 1994 Prahalad co-authored the bestseller, *Competing for the Future*, with Gary Hamel. Translated into 14 languages, it was named the best selling business book of the year in 1994. He is particularly well known for the work he has conducted with Hamel. This includes the articles 'The Core Competence of the Corporation' (*Harvard Business Review*, May-June, 1990), 'Competing in the New Economy: Managing Out of Bounds' (*Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 17, No. 3, March, 1996) as well as the best selling book *Competing for the Future: Breakthrough Strategies for Seizing Control of Your Industry and Creating the Markets of Tomorrow* (1994).

As one of the management world's most creative thinkers, Prahalad will present business parallels from his Indian background in the field of international development and corporate strategy. During an information-packed conference in Birmingham, Prahalad will present his latest insights including:

- How to anticipate the needs of markets and customers.
- Why delivering not just a competitive product, but a superior customer experience, will be the differentiator between successful companies and 'also-rans'.
- The changing relationship and responsibilities of corporations and society.
- Why the 'forgetting curve' is as important as the 'learning curve'.
- Why globalisation and the availability of information call for a new model of competition and firm strategy.

Prahalad will be appearing in person along with marketing guru Kotler at their full-day national management conference in Birmingham on Monday 21 May 2007. Their insightful conference, "Redefining Value in a Commoditised World" is supported by SPS and organised by Benchmark for Business.

#### **How to register**

With few seats left available, to secure your place(s) at the **discounted rate of £595 plus VAT per place**, please insert "SPS" after your organisation name to benefit from this unpublished 33% discount. Go online to register at [www.benchmarkforbusiness.com](http://www.benchmarkforbusiness.com) and follow the secure registration process for this conference or call Gareth Martin at Benchmark for Business on +44 (0)1224 636200.



### Ashridge Open Programmes

The SPS and Ashridge have teamed up to offer SPS members some exclusive benefits, the first of which is a 10% discount on any of Ashridge's open strategy programmes.

Ashridge has a wide variety of short, residential programmes to help individuals and organisations to achieve their development needs. These programmes focus on blending the practical experience of their faculty with leading-edge business thinking, to inspire and challenge you. In addition, learning in small classes - typically 12-30 participants - promotes collaboration on your own issues and ensures individual support, enabling all participants to return, better able to transfer learning to the workplace.

For more details, visit [Ashridge](#). Please quote your SPS membership number when booking.



## » Members' services

### MyStrategicPlan

Save time, get focused and obtain better results with MyStrategicPlan. Our online strategic planning system is as dynamic as your client's organisation. Develop, manage and execute their plan quickly and easily. Organise their thinking, produce expert-looking reports, and keep everyone on the same page with one place to track their achievements. MyStrategicPlan is self-guided, cost-effective, web-based strategic planning software which will assist you in working with your clients.

Check out our system at [www.mystrategicplan.com](http://www.mystrategicplan.com). For partnership information contact us at: [info@mystrategicplan.com](mailto:info@mystrategicplan.com)



## » Sponsor



### Free Director Development Taster Events

*Think Cranfield, Think Excellence*

We are renowned leaders in executive development. Our programmes are challenging, innovative, highly stimulating and based on the latest research.

We will develop your knowledge, advance your career, make a real difference

to your organisation.

#### Director Development

13 June 2007  
2.00pm to 4.30pm

Find out how we can help you develop your role as a director, with no obligation, at this free taster event run by Murray Steele, course director for both The Non-Executive Directors' Seminar and The Director as Strategic Leader. [More info](#)

#### Delivering Strategic Change

13 June 2007  
9.30am to 1.00pm

We can help you and your organisation identify the type of change required and ensure that you are armed with the right tools to deliver change successfully. Find out how, with no obligation, at this free taster event run by the course director, Murray Steele. [More info](#)

[Cranfield School of Management](#): improving the practice of management.



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