

## Reflection 13. Create Excitement

From my experience, the most successful financial service providers create excitement about their products and services. I've seen this in Ethiopia when ACSI launched new savings services, in Kenya with the rebirth of Equity Building Society, and the during the rapid growth of Chase Bank and Rafiki. I've seen this in the fintech space with the launch of M-Pesa and within sector-based services such as MoGo and Oye.

Importance: Creating excitement has significant benefits, it reduces the cost of acquisition of new accounts, it magnifies the impact of marketing and communication activities, it motivates staff, it differentiates the service provider, it builds the brand.

Unfortunately, in my view it is becoming less common and more difficult to create excitement as interactions are increasingly digital, and human interactions have reduced.

Examples: A few examples of how excitement were created and the impact it had are important, the examples cover a fifteen-year period, but they all illustrate some important principles, and practices.

Branch Opening: Nakuru was the thirteenth Equity branch to open, to promote the branch, every existing branch manager and a team of other Equity staff spent a week in Nakuru going business to business, event to event, publicising the opening of the branch and how Equity's services could be relevant. Branch managers spoke to business owners, far more relevant than inexperienced direct sales representatives. At the day of branch opening, 1047 accounts were opened. The branch broke even in less than six months.

Product Launch: Chase Bank launched a new product to support Kenya's very popular investment clubs or chamas. The even launch was held in the Kenya International Conference Centre, it was widely publicised, investment club members were invited to the launch. Huge publicity was gained, the product was highly relevant, it was met with great interest.

Use Case: The launch use case of M-Pesa was 'Send Money Home,' this reflected a specific demographic of split families, where aged parents are typically living in the village, with their children working in towns and cities. An M-Pesa transaction costing perhaps KSh.30 replaced a risky transfer through buses which could cost as much as 10% of the amount transferred.

So, from these examples, how is excitement created?

1. Respond to real needs: through innovation in products, services, and channels. We can see this today in targeted fintechs, MoGo, Oye, and MyDawa. This implies understanding customers through research.
2. Be Relevant: In these examples, there is demonstrated relevance for the customer.
3. Evolve: Be better than the alternatives in the market, offer more, we can see this happening in embedded financial services.

4. Involve staff: Create excitement internally, involve staff directly in the dissemination and delivery of the product or service. The route to market will differ according to the product or service, but involve staff, train them in the product or service, engage them in promotional activities.
5. Communicate: Shout! This isn't easy today - it is much more difficult to create visibility today with highly dispersed media channels, so multi-media marketing is likely to be required, including the use of influencers, either within the value chain, or/and through social media. Back this up with traditional below and above the line marketing.

So, let's walk through an example of a fintech use case. Oye. Oye offers commercial motorcycle riders (boda bodas) free basic insurance which they obtain by filling their motorcycles at participating fuel stations. Prior to Oye, many riders in Kenya (and other regional markets) drove without insurance, which contributed to significant distress for all parties involved in an accident regardless of cause. Today riders have insurance, participating fuel stations more sales.

Oye, built the solution based on research within the rider community, team members, including the founder, participated in numerous sales and marketing events, these grew as existing customers were able to spread the product through Word of Mouth.

First Principles Consulting can share its experience with your team, help you to design and develop products and services which excite through responding to needs, that are relevant, innovative, and evolve from existing solutions. We can develop rollout strategies which maximise engagement and that are more likely to create excitement.

*If this reflection speaks to you... speak to me so that we can inspire change, together.*

David Cracknell

Additional reflections in this series can be downloaded from [www.firstprinciplesinfinance.com](http://www.firstprinciplesinfinance.com)