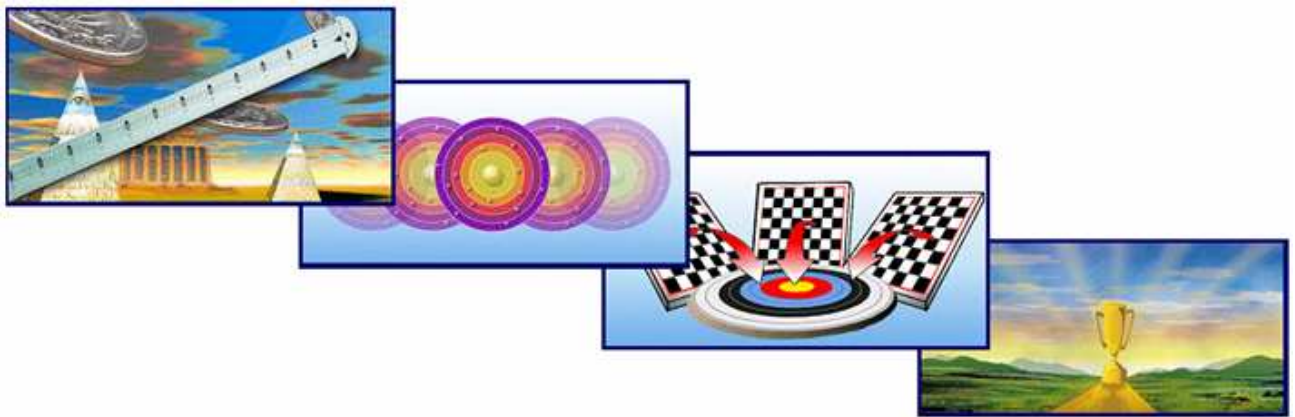


Creating and Executing Winning Strategies

Using Prometheus in Product Launches and Business Development



“However beautiful the *strategy*, you should occasionally look at the *results*.”

Winston Churchill

Table Of Contents

FORWARD.....	3
THE PROMETHEUS STRATEGIC PLANNING SYSTEM	4
IMPERATIVE I - DESIGN THE FUTURE.....	7
MY LAUNCH PLAN.....	7
KEY DESCRIPTORS AND MEASURES.....	7
IMPERATIVE II – TARGET FOR SUCCESS.....	11
SYSTEM ANALYSIS.....	12
THE “SYSTEM MAP”	13
PROCESS RECAP.....	15
CHANGING THE SYSTEM.....	15
CENTERS OF GRAVITY, DESIRED EFFECTS, AND IMPACT PLANS.....	16
IMPERATIVE III – CAMPAIGN TO WIN.....	18
IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING.....	19
TIME VALUE OF ACTION.....	19
RESERVES.....	21
RED TEAM ASSESSMENT.....	22
IMPERATIVE IV – FINISH WITH FINESSE.....	23
EXIT POINTS.....	24
THE TERMINATION PLAN.....	25
RECONSTITUTION.....	26
WRAP-UP.....	27

Forward

This Manuscript is a follow on to my **Strategy Manuscript**, www.prometheusstrategy.com, in which I gave you a lot of great information about strategy, and also first introduced you to the **Prometheus System**. Now, I am going to show you this *powerful strategic planning system, in action*, as I used it myself to create the Product Launch Plan for *Prometheus*.

Doing an Internet Marketing Product Launch is an event that is at once both exciting and exhausting, as well as both educational and eye-opening. It may well be the closest thing to a surefire way to get noticed in the Internet Marketing (IM) world; and the more successful the launch, the more widespread the notoriety. It is one of the most in-depth, layered, and multi-faceted learning experiences you can have.

It is also one of the fastest ways to gain a fairly deep understanding of the components necessary for long-term, sustained success. Doing a large-scale, complex launch is even more challenging, but the rewards can be great:

- ✚ Recognition
- ✚ Credibility
- ✚ A bigger, targeted, more responsive list (or the creation of one if this is your first launch).
- ✚ Lots of money
- ✚ An opportunity to create an ongoing business
- ✚ Development of great relationships that are built to last
- ✚ Getting on other successful people's "radars" so that they are calling you for more business-building and money making opportunities – and on and on...

A successful launch is truly the "gift that keeps on giving".

I am in the process of doing a launch for my **Prometheus Strategic Planning System**. This is the system that was used to plan the first, *enormously successful Gulf War*, to help greatly increase the market value of Fortune 50 and Fortune 100 companies such as Motorola, AMD, Pfizer, and McDonalds, and to win the *Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award* for Bama Foods (a major supplier to McDonalds).

It is the system that I currently use with all of my consulting clients, as well as to plan my own business strategy.

The results of the first **Prometheus System** have been praised by the first President Bush, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, General "Stormin' Norman" Schwarzkopf, the commander of Desert Storm, futurists Heidi and Alvin Toffler, and **many** other CEOs and leaders in business and industry.

The new, updated version is, quite simply, the **most powerful, dynamic, comprehensive, yet easy to use Strategic Planning System in the world today.**

I am using *Prometheus* to create my launch plan, and I am going to take you on an information-packed “tour” through the process, as I use it to create my plan. I will be switching back and forth between the First and Third Person as I both explain the process and describe how I am using it.

I am going to let you “*look over my shoulder*” as I use the system to create a *complete launch plan* for my *Prometheus* product. You will get not only insight into what must go into creating a successful launch, but also an overview of the amazing ***Prometheus Strategic Planning System*** itself, as you watch me using this incredibly powerful system to put my launch plan together.

Additionally, if you are really serious about taking your own business to another level (or *starting* a successful business), you should also be paying very close attention to the elements of *Prometheus* as I take you through my launch planning. These are many of the same elements that I used to create *my* overall Business Plan, and the “*Grand Strategy*” for my business as a whole. The only difference is scale (size) and scope (business areas).

The elements I refer to are some of the same fundamentals that have been used by the largest and most successful companies in the world, and you will see them **only** in the ***Prometheus System***.

At this point, I want to stop and give a shout out to Jeff Walker and John Reese. Jeff, as many of you know, is the “godfather” of product launches. I have purchased and benefited greatly from his wisdom in his Product Launch Formula 1.0 and 2.0 courses. John is the “godfather” of Traffic Generation and I have purchased and continue to benefit from his amazing store of wisdom as expressed through his Traffic Secrets 1.0 and 2.0 programs. Their information has been invaluable to me as I create my launch strategy – Thanks Jeff and John!!

The Prometheus Strategic Planning System

Let’s get started. The first thing I want to do is to give you a little background on strategy and the ***Prometheus System***, as it would be used in a product launch, or in developing an overall strategic plan for *your* business.

At its most basic level, strategy has four simple components:

- I. Knowing *where* you want to end up
- II. Knowing *what* to put your energy against

- III. Knowing the methodology of *applying* your energy
- IV. Knowing parameters for the inevitable *end games*

Any *strategic system* that does not deal with all four of these elements is *deficient* and *not likely* to lead to sustained success.

In the ***Prometheus System***, each of these necessary elements is addressed by an “***Imperative***”, or key step in the process.

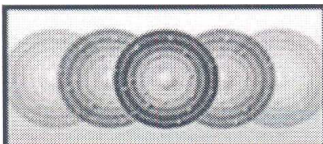


Imperative I: Design the Future

The *first* (and importantly first) step in strategic planning is to identify the future that you want to create. In the ***Prometheus System***, the desired future is called the *Future Picture*. It is a *very hard, very objective, very measurable picture of the future* you want to create.

Using *Prometheus* techniques, you break the Future Picture into separate, very descriptive *elements* that ensure a balanced future that is both crystal clear, and easy to implement.

Accompanying the Future Picture are *Strategic Measures*—*those measures that tell you when you have achieved your Future Picture, or when you are on the right course* for it.



Imperative II: Target for Success

There are a very large number of things against which you can apply limited resources. You know intuitively that some of those things will have much higher impact than others. *If you can single out and target the right things, the Centers of Gravity*, your launch will be far more effective, at a much lower cost, than if you did not take the time to identify your targets.

The ***Prometheus System*** also recognizes that everything takes place in the context of a “*system*”, and that systems have such annoying characteristics as inertia and resistance to change. But they also have *Centers of Gravity*—*the handful of things in a system that produce the most impact when affected*.

The *Five Rings Model*—exclusive to the **Prometheus System**—provides a real-world way to understand your market as a system, and to find its Centers of Gravity. The *best way to change a system* is by affecting its Centers of Gravity.

If you want to put your launch or your business on the fast-track to success, it is necessary to create *rapid and hard-to-reverse* system change. “System” for the purposes of this manuscript, means the Internet Marketing world, and to be even more specific in my case, the part of it having to do with Strategic Planning and Business Development.

To create hard-to-reverse system change, you must affect system *Centers of Gravity* (key leverage points) in a compressed period of time. Doing so greatly reduces the ability of your market to resist what you want it to do, and the changes tend to stick. This leads to the *third* of the *Prometheus Imperatives*—*Campaign to Win*.

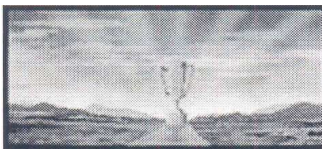


Imperative III: Campaign to Win

With the *Future Picture* standing before you as a clear beacon to guide actions, you begin to “attack” the Centers of Gravity previously identified. You do this with whatever resources are available to you.

You would then very carefully plan the sequence of your actions (your tactics), with a view towards achieving maximum impact in as short a time as possible.

It should be your objective in your launch to affect the Centers of Gravity in **Parallel**, which means to affect as many of them as you can in a very compressed time frame. Compressed, Parallel Operations have far higher probabilities of success than do stretched-out serial operations, and strangely enough, **cost much less**.



Imperative IV: Finish with Finesse

In the *real world*, every business cycle and product has a beginning and an end. Even though we know this to be the case, very few business owners plan for the back side of the inevitable cycle. The failure to plan in advance means that too much energy is devoted to the *wrong things*. In the **Prometheus System**, you plan so as to exit cycles and products with *maximum profits*.

Now that you have a basic grounding in Strategy and in the **Prometheus System**, let's get started.

Imperative I – Design the Future

The *First Imperative* is to **Design the Future**—in other words, this is where I had to decide what a good future would be for my launch, and for my future business, and make a commitment to make it happen.

The basic thrust of the First Imperative was for me to understand the *macro-environment* in which I was operating, to decide precisely what *tomorrow* should look like, and to identify the *measurements* that would tell me that I was on track, or had arrived.

What it is *not* is equally important: the first imperative is *not* the place to decide *how* you are going to reach your destination. You must assume that there will be a way to get there, if you really want to do so.

My Launch Plan

In developing any strategy, it is important to understand where you want to end up – in other words, your *Future Picture*. Your Future Picture needs to be *very detailed* and also be *very measurable*. I will show you as we move through this manuscript how these concepts applied to my product launch plan.

It is helpful to pay attention to the second word of that phrase “picture”, as you are thinking about where you want to end up. When you look at a picture, you can see *immediately* what it is trying to show you – and if you think in digital terms, the more “*pixels*” it has, the clearer it is, and the easier it is to make happen. In the **Prometheus System**, the pixels are called *Key Descriptors*.

Key Descriptors and Measures

Key Descriptors can vary according to what you expect to get out of your launch or your business. **My** launch is intended to get me started in the IM world, create a large, responsive list, and to create the foundation of a sustainable, profitable business. Accordingly, my Key Descriptors include (among others):

- ✚ *Financial Position* – What I *ultimately expect* to get out of my launch in *financial terms*. With this descriptor, be very careful to craft something that you know will make you happy.

You might be tempted to write your Financial Position in terms of expanding total sales significantly. Unfortunately, you can easily imagine a circumstance where sales have doubled or better—but because it cost you so much to do so—your company is on the brink of bankruptcy.

- Broadly speaking, I intend for my launch to generate “*seed money*” that I can reinvest in other segments of my business.
- Since I am doing a fairly complex launch, I plan to have *JV Partners and Affiliates* involved. That means that in addition to my other launch-related expenses, I need to factor in the percentage that I am giving them when I try to figure out my ultimate financial goals for the project.

✚ *Measures* – Each Key Descriptor needs measures. A Future Picture, to be of value, **must** have measures associated with it. Absent measures, the chance of bringing it to fruition will be small. In any event, if you have no measures, you will know neither when you have arrived, nor know if you are on the right track. When creating measures, they need to include the *unit* of measure (in my case a certain amount of Currency), but they can be Boolean, Percentage, etc.

You ought to be able to connect *every action* with the future value of your business. If you cannot do so, you have either chosen the wrong target, the wrong market segment or product, or have not thought through the problem very effectively.

It is hard to over-emphasize how *important it is to get your measures right*, and to understand that the tactical measures you use every day probably are not the measures which tell you whether you are winning.

Good Measures have some of the following characteristics:

- Measured from start to finish, and tactics are connected to strategy
- Absolute (such as Six Sigma)
- Not comparative (such as “best in our industry”)
- Carefully conceived to avoid the temptation of non-strategic actions
- Aligned with strategy, well-crafted, and clearly understood
- Useable in the real world
- A reasonable consequence of the thing being measured

Measures must include (at a minimum):

- How do you describe the measure? (A certain amount of money in my PayPal account as a direct result of the launch).
- How often do you measure it? (On the day of launch, I will be looking at the stats a LOT; and then daily thereafter).

- Strategic Success Value – what is my baseline for success? I have made some number of investments in software, training, and in a technical partner and in a copywriter. I have to get that back, plus a healthy percent more to consider my launch a financial success and to meet my goal of funding further business operations.

Ultimate Measure –The ultimate measure of success is whether you are more valuable after a campaign or other activities. If this is the ultimate measure of success, then you ought to be able to explain the connection between *everything* you are doing, and the expected contribution to making your company more valuable. If you cannot do so, you have a problem.

- ✚ *Market Position* – This is my “Power Position”. Where do I expect to be in relation to the market as a result of this launch – a leader, follower, in a commodity position, etc.?
 - In my case, since I am a virtual unknown in the IM world, I am using this launch to establish myself as an expert in Strategic Planning.
- ✚ *Business Areas* – Identifies the business(es) I wanted to be in or not be in (Be careful here about being too expansive). I needed to identify the business areas (the scope of my business) I wanted to be established in as a result of the launch.
 - As a result of the launch, I want to be known as an expert and **the “go-to guy”** in **Strategic Planning**. I am not interested in any other business segment at the moment, although that will change over time. I have 25+ years as a successful management consultant, and I am going to leverage that experience and expertise in the IM world as I move forward. I do not want to fall into the “newbie trap” of trying to do too many things at once.
- ✚ *Innovation* – Do I want to set myself up as an innovator – as someone who is known to bring cutting edge products to the market in an interesting manner?
 - This is a Descriptor which requires some careful thought. At first blush, it seems the answer is obvious, yes I do. But it is not that simple. Before you make that decision, you need to think through the consequences of it.
 - By committing yourself to Innovation, you need to understand that your time, research and development budget, and costs will all be higher than if you decide to, let’s say, adapt other people’s products by going the PLR route as your product development business model. That being said, I plan to be as innovative in the release of the **Prometheus System** as time and my budget allow.

This brings up an important point in creating any strategy, or component thereof – will you be better off, in a business sense, if you achieve the goal? The answer (as the cartoon below suggests) to that question may be a bit more complex than you realize. Take the time to really look at this question as you create your plans.



Doing so may not only save you a lot of headaches, but in the end, *it may even save your business.*

- ✚ **Brand** – Do I want a Brand (an Image)? For what should it stand, and how well known should it be?
 - As noted above - in time, I want to be known as ***The Strategy Expert*** within the broader Internet Marketing community.
- ✚ **Outsider Perception** – What do I want others to think about me / my company / my product(s)?
 - I want to be someone who is sought out by others as they begin to develop a strategic plan for their business; as a speaker at Internet Marketing Conferences; as someone who is known as a high-quality, reliable person, and a productive and desirable JV and Affiliate partner (I don't want too much from this launch – do I!?!?).
- ✚ **Incentive Plan** (Philosophy, for a company) – How will I share the proceeds of my launch?
 - I plan to offer a straight commission on each sale, plus a "list royalty" on all follow-up sales using *Prometheus* and related products for the next eighteen months. I will also have a JV contest with a number of prizes (all of this must be factored into the Financial Position Descriptor).

There may be other possible *Key Descriptors* that you may want to consider, such as *Culture* and *Workforce Characteristics*, and even your *Ownership Model*, if you are a larger IM or off-line company.

When you have completed all of the Key Descriptors and the Measurements associated with each one (yes, they *all must have measures*—otherwise how will you know when you have achieved them—or if you need to adjust your plan in any way), you will have created your *Future Picture* (your desired end point) for your launch. This is the *solid foundation* upon which *all else* depends, so *take the time* needed to think it through very carefully.

Think of your Future Picture and Measurement Plan as if you now have a super *sophisticated GPS system* to guide your actions from here on in. Because you took the time to do this right, you now know *exactly* where you want to go and how you will know if you are making progress (or have arrived).

Imperative II – Target For Success

It is now time to move into the *second phase* of planning your launch strategy; *Imperative II – Target for Success*.

The Future Picture and the Measures, together, provide the beacon and the yardstick for the future (a successful launch) I intend to create. I also need to look at the “*systems*” within which I am operating—the systems I must affect in order to get to my Desired Future.

One system is the *marketplace* in which I will be selling my products and services. I also need to look at my own “internal” system (*my business*), and understand my own business assets as they relate to my launch.

In addition, one of the most important things that you can do once you have created a compelling Future Picture for your launch is to *choose the right targets* (*Centers of Gravity* against which you apply resources). If you correctly identify the targets (key leverage points), you will have gone a long way toward setting yourself up for a *very successful* take-off. With the targets identified for your launch, you could start right away to “attack” them.

It is rarely a lack of energy or competence that causes a launch or a business to fail; almost always the real problem is failure to focus resources against the right targets. But, if the targets are right, then your business and market systems will change in such a way as to move you decisively toward your Future Picture.

Targeting is critical—perhaps the most critical, and most short-changed, part of strategic thinking and acting. Some of the reasons:

- ✚ *Affecting the wrong “targets” wastes effort at a minimum, and may doom chances for success. Multiple choices present themselves whenever we take on a new task or project; the more complex, the higher the number of choices.*
- ✚ *Simple logic tells you that if there are very many targets (and there always will be), some are almost certain to be more important than others.*
- ✚ *There are never enough resources. Not only do we need to choose which targets to affect, we must also choose where to use scarce resources – and resources are always scarce. Again, if you do not get the targets right, by definition, you will be expending scarce resources against the wrong things.*
- ✚ *Targets are not activities unto themselves; rather, they are part of a system. That means that affecting one target will have some impact on other targets. What we really want, however, is to make a major change in an *entire system*.*

When you introduce a new product, you want to *change a whole market system* so that the “energy” (money, customers, good “press”, etc.), that you create flows in *your* direction.

Find and affect the right targets in order to change a system effectively. The right targets are called the “*Centers of Gravity*”, for these are the targets that are the most important to a system, and will have the greatest system impact when “attacked” in the right way. Effort aimed at *Centers of Gravity* delivers *much greater results* than the same amount of effort applied elsewhere.

Systems Analysis

Now that I have the Future Picture for my launch finished, and I know exactly what I am looking to achieve, I need to understand the *market system* within which my business will operate, and within which my launch will take place.

When most people create a new product, they (hopefully) take a great deal of time to fully develop their concept. Then they create a marketing plan touting all of the features and benefits of their product; create a web page and sales letter; maybe a blog; grab some JVs and Affiliates; post to Forums; write some articles and / or press releases, and roll it out in hopes that their market will buy it.

While all of these steps (and many more) are necessary for a successful product launch, they are not enough – and even worse, as a group they are inherently defensive in nature. If you are on the defense, the *very best outcome* you can expect is not to lose everything.

What you are doing in the above typical marketing scenario is essentially relying on your ability to convince someone of the value of your product or service. Remember, only *offense* changes an environment.

In addition to the tactics listed above, you really need to not only understand your market, but also to figure out how to change it in such a way that it will gladly help you achieve your Future Picture.

Here is what I need to do to understand the market system:

- ✚ Map the relevant market system – Draw it out
- ✚ Determine “System Effects” – In my case - what must the market look like, and be doing to help me make my launch successful
- ✚ Identify Centers of Gravity (COGs) – Leverage points in the system
- ✚ Decide “Desired Effects” for the COGS – How must they change to make system change happen

The “System Map”

The first step in working with systems (your market and your own company) is to define their *scope*, where it is better to err on the expansive side. If you define your systems too narrowly, you will frequently find that something outside the system has a huge impact on you. Had you identified the system in advance, you could have taken appropriate action up front as part of your overall strategy.

What I need to do to begin to truly understand my market system is to “*map it*”. In other words, I need to identify all of the major components of the market system.

First, I recalled my Future Picture. It told me *almost explicitly* what the relevant systems *must look like* if I am going to realize my objectives. For example, if I wanted growth that exceeds the ability of the current market system, I would have needed to make the system more energetic (perhaps by finding ways to bring customers into the market that are not currently part of it).

My growth goals were / are of necessity more modest, so the corresponding system change will be less. Since it is difficult enough to successfully enter this highly competitive market, I knew that my system change goals connected to my launch were going to be limited to *beginning to change the mindset and the buying habits* of potential customers of a Strategic Planning System.

The point to internalize is this: If you want something from your market that it is not currently giving you, *you must change it* appropriately. Essentially, what needed to be done is for me to understand the big picture; the market system within which I wanted to operate; to find the *leverage points* in that system that need to be modified in order for system change to happen, and to figure out the assets I have available to use to create that change and execute my launch plan.

I first literally took a pen and paper and made a “*system map*” of all of the major components of the IM marketplace. It included such things as:

- ✚ Major “players” (I named them on my list)
- ✚ Forums
- ✚ Interfaces (Google, Yahoo, etc.)
- ✚ End Users
- ✚ Competitors
- ✚ Suppliers (such as Fulfillment houses)
- ✚ Media
- ✚ etc.

Next, I broke down the overall market into a smaller, but still very substantial (for my product) “slice” of the market that would affect or be affected by my launch. What I want to ultimately achieve is to change the “*energy state*” of this slice of the market so as to make it very open to using *Strategic Planning* in their businesses and in their product launches.

I then decided what the overall *Desired System Effects* (what my market segment needs to become to give me a good probability of having a great launch) needed to be for that part of the market I wanted to change, in order for me to reach my Future Picture.

I did this by defining the “new” market using what in *Prometheus* are called “*System Descriptors*”.

Some outcomes of that exercise follow (stated in *future terms* – as if the new market condition *already existed*):

- ✚ Business owners and entrepreneurs know the importance of creating Strategic Plans for any product launch to succeed, or for any business to have a chance of making it over the long haul.
- ✚ Business owners and entrepreneurs willingly invest the time and money needed to create a sustainable business model for themselves.
- ✚ The importance of strategy is embraced by businesses of all sizes and types.
- ✚ The IM “world” continues to expand exponentially, thereby creating an ever-expanding pool of potential customers.
- ✚ Funding is available for business development, and costs for entry into the market continue to decrease.

- # I am recognized as one of the top sources for strategic planning expertise.
- # Technology has been developed that enables marketers to easily create, track, and adjust strategies.

Now, I needed to understand my *own assets* that I could bring to bear in support of my launch. Some of these assets I already had, and some needed to be acquired:

- # A great product
- # A website; reliable host with good bandwidth; Opt-in Page; Pre-launch notification page, membership area,\; forum; JV, and regular blogs, etc.
- # An autoresponder
- # Ways to accept payment
- # Technology partners
- # A JV Contest
- # A compelling story to recruit JV and Affiliate partners
- # Forums
- # A Traffic Assistant to help with Traffic generation processes
- # A Copywriter
- # Publicity (press releases, articles, testimonials, etc.)
- # Jeff Walker's *Product Launch Formula* 1.0 and 2.0 programs
- # John Reese's *Traffic Secrets* 1.0 and 2.0
- # etc.

Process Recap

To recap the process to this point, I have created my *Future Picture* (Key Descriptors and Measures), which is where I want to be as a result of my launch.

I then identified and mapped the systems - the market I wanted to do business in, and my own assets. Next, I created an overall description of the end state that the internal and external systems must attain (the *System Desired Effects*) in order for my Future Picture (a successful launch) to become a reality.

Changing the System

Now, since I have finite resources available to me, I needed to find the leverage points in my market where the smallest effort would make the biggest difference.

It is easiest to do this if you find a way to segment the levers in some way. I used a process within the *Prometheus System* called the "*Five Rings Model*". This concept enabled me to clearly and precisely define exactly what the major components of my market system were.

Some of the key elements are:

- # The launch process itself
- # The current leading figures in my part of the market (Strategic Planning and Business Development)
- # Software programs I can leverage
- # Major JV Partners and Affiliates
- # Leading figures in the IM world (to review and endorse my product)
- # Forums
- # Outsourcing partners
- # etc.

Centers of Gravity, Desired Effects, and Impact Plans

These (and many more) were the key leverage points, or *Centers of Gravity*, that I needed to impact to achieve the lasting system change needed to enable me to have a great product launch.

Every Center of Gravity has its accompanying *Impact Plan*, which tells me *exactly* what I need to do to a Center of Gravity to change it so that it will help me reach my ultimate goal of a great launch. These Impact Plans are a smaller version of my Future Picture, and tell me what the Centers of Gravity must look like and be acting at launch time in order for me to achieve my Future Picture.

The *Desired Effect*, the *first step* in building an Impact Plan, describes what the Center of Gravity will look like at a designated point in the future (my launch date). The *second step* (which is the same second step I took when I created my Future Picture), is creation of Measure(s), which gives me an objective way to know that I have achieved the desired effect, or that I am on or off track to get there.

The *third step* is deciding when I need to realize my desired effect. The *fourth step* is deciding on the actions (tactics) necessary to get me to the desired effect.

Let me walk you through an example of how this is playing out for me, as I plan my launch, which will occur in mid August.

I have a great reputation as a management consultant in the off-line world, but am essentially unknown in the Internet Marketing world. As a result, I do not have a list of “hungry buyers” ready to jump on my offer at launch day. So I identified a Center of Gravity called “*List*”.

Now I needed to create an *Impact Plan* for that COG.

The *Desired Effect* was pretty simple in this case: “*Create a large, responsive list that will be ready on launch day to buy my product*”. That was my description of the future state of the “List” Center of Gravity.

My time frame was to have, by launch day, a combination of a list that I was creating through my own actions, as well as access to the lists of successful marketers.

So, *how would I measure that?* I decided to measure it in a number of ways, and I also put a “time stamp” on the measures, so that I had a deadline. Here are some of my measures:

1. The number of names in my autoresponder account by launch day
2. The number of “major” JV and Affiliate Partners I could get to sign up to promote my product by launch day
3. The number of “lesser” tier JV and Affiliate Partners I could get to sign up to promote my product by launch day

I put a *hard number* against each of these measures so that I could track progress / success. It would not be difficult to track these numbers. However, just having people say they will promote your product is not the same as actually having them do it. Oftentimes, they are also promoting other launches as well as tending to their own businesses. So I had to create a set of actions (tactics) that would ensure they would be much more likely to follow through on their commitment.

Here is what I did:

✚ I drafted and sent an email to a number of IM “gurus” that I had purchased product from. It turned out that was a ***long*** list, as I had purchased a great deal of product!!

I then gave them some background on me and asked if they would not mind doing an “expert” interview with me. I also included a *Strategy Manuscript* (an idea shamelessly stolen from *Rich Schefren’s Internet Manifesto*) to give them some good, free information on business strategy. I managed to get **12** interviews (so far!) out of this process with very well known IM people (who also had big lists).

Once I did the interviews, I asked them if they wanted to JV with me. I gave them a copy of my product to review (I also asked for testimonials). As of this date, eight have agreed with two more strong possibilities. These people all together have lists that add up to about 200,000 subscribers, so I am well on my way to achieving my three goals.

Believe me when I tell you, ***the Prometheus System works very well*** when it comes to creating and implementing a hugely successful strategy, because it *helps you put all the pieces in place* that you need to make it happen.

In addition:

- ✚ I joined JV Network and JV Seeker in order to secure even more JVs.
- ✚ I have created a JV contest with \$11,000 in prizes.
- ✚ I am posting to Forums to increase my recognition factor, and have asked a number of forum members to review my product and give testimonials (more “Social Proof”).
- ✚ I joined Butterfly Reports and will be sending branded reports with links to my Pre-launch notification page.
- ✚ I have created and outsourced the distribution of Videos, Press Releases, and Articles about Strategic Planning and *Prometheus* to increase my recognition factor.
- ✚ I will be advertising on AffiliateAnnouncement.com.
- ✚ I will be hiring blog posters, getting product reviews from other sources, and so on.

All of these tactics are designed to build my own independently created list, and to get additional JVs and Affiliates through direct contact and “indirect contact”, which will help me to reach my *Desired Effect* for the **List** Center of Gravity. Oh, by the way, I did all of this in **Parallel**, as opposed to serially. This is an extremely important concept that I will explain further on.

There were a number of these Centers of Gravity that I created Impact Plans for, and the completion of them will all add up to my Future Picture of a successful launch.

Imperative III – Campaign To Win

Completion of the Targeting Phase of the ***Prometheus Strategic Planning System*** now leads to *Imperative III – Campaign to Win*. It is here that you will see the bridge between planning and execution. It is here that the connection between tactics and strategy becomes clear.

To this point in the planning process, I have designed a *Future Picture* (a successful launch) that is exciting, compelling, and clear. Next, I found the *Centers of Gravity* (leverage points) I needed to change in order to reach my Future Picture, and I constructed the *Impact Plans* (how the COGs needed to change to help me with my launch).

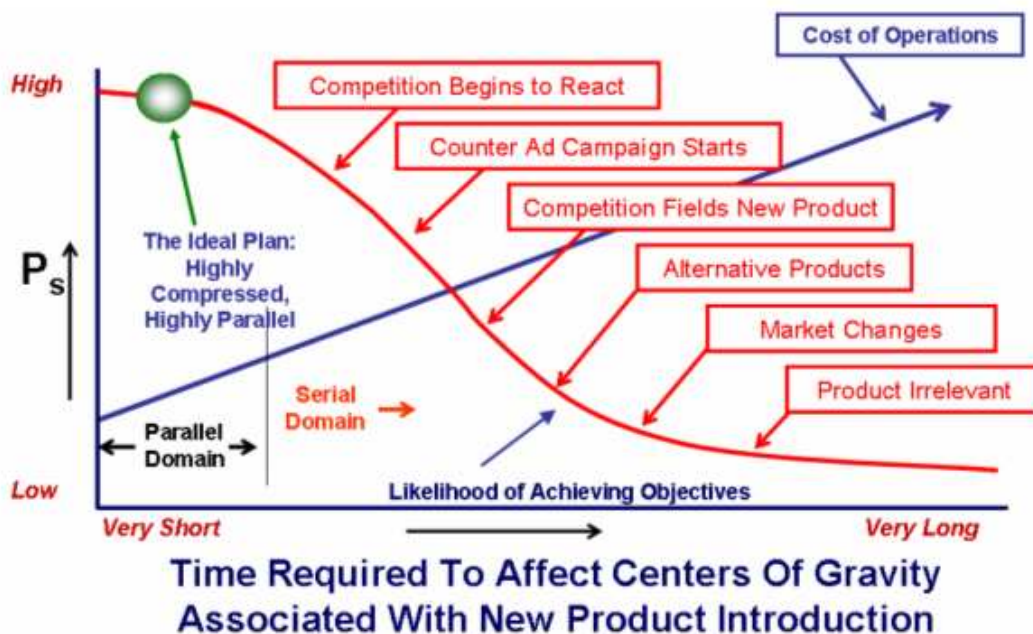
Implementation Planning

Now, I am going to create the *Master Implementation Plan* for my launch strategy, and figure out how to orchestrate my resources against the Centers of Gravity using *Parallel Operations*. This is another process developed within *Prometheus* that will enable me to have a successful launch.

Although there are many facets to strategy execution, perhaps the most important thing to keep in mind is that the *effort must focus* on changing Centers of Gravity. Any other focus will sub-optimize your efforts.

One of the key components of any successful strategy is timing and speed. Take a look at the picture below, which may look familiar to those of you who have read my *Strategy Manifesto*.

Time Value of Action--Business



The *Time Value of Action*, whether applied to business, to war, or to any other field of competition, may be the single most important concept in this document.

Its message is clear: if you attack Centers of Gravity **in parallel**, (in other words, change more than one at a time), you have a *very high probability of succeeding*, and your cost is relatively low. Conversely, if you take a long time—that is, you attack serially (do one thing at a time)—your probability of success falls, and your cost of operations *actually rises*.

It is simply necessary to think about time in a different way. We all know that time is expensive, but now you understand one of the major reasons for its cost. As I said, we need to rethink our view of time, and begin to understand that we can use time to our benefit. Most importantly, we now know that the *faster* we bring key strategic Centers of Gravity under pressure, the *higher our probability of winning*, and the lower our probability of suffering losses, or having our strategy fail.

When we change multiple Centers of Gravity very rapidly (almost simultaneously), we stand a much better chance of getting what we want.

Conversely, the longer we take, the more serial we allow our tactics to become, the more likely are events to be harmful to our interests. *Bad things will happen*—without fail. This does not mean that you cannot win over a long time—it simply means that your odds of winning become rapidly worse than they could be, and that your costs go up inexorably.

So, let's see how that applies to me. Parallel implementation against a number of Centers of Gravity (COG) is, as stated above crucial to success. So, I identified a number of COGs (A List, A website, Getting JVs and Affiliates, Getting “Gurus” to be involved in my launch, Getting publicity, etc.), and created Impact Plans and tactics to make these Centers of Gravity useful to me.

I created *Parallel Implementation Plans* to change all of those COGs at essentially the same time. In other words, I did not concentrate on just the List, then move on to the Website, then the JVs, etc.

By doing this, I am creating my overall plan consistent with my launch date, but I am also changing the overall IM landscape, (going on offense) in this instance in my favor. By changing all of these Centers of Gravity “at once”, I am getting my name, my expertise, and my upcoming launch noticed. I am building my credibility, and, thereby, my chances for a profitable launch.

If I tried to do this one step at a time, not only would it take a great deal of time, and cost a lot more, but I would probably be lost in the “clutter” in the IM world and never be noticed.

Perhaps even worse, someone else might stake out my territory before me, because I was taking so long to get my product out there!!

Let's go back to the "List" Center of Gravity. I had to decide how I was going to go about creating a list and doing it fairly quickly. I did have a choice. I could have done it the old fashioned way, one post or one article at a time, or giving away a small product here and there as part of some "giveaway" promotion, or gone to a bunch of Internet Marketing events and done networking – and very slowly built up my name and a list.

Or, I could have adopted a *Parallel Strategy* where I hit the "List" COG from all kinds of angles to create a large responsive list as quickly as possible. The choice was pretty obvious.

As you recall earlier in this manuscript, I took you through the actions I had developed to deal with the "List" Center of Gravity. All of those actions (and more) are taking place simultaneously so as to make the "List" COG what I need it to be. The real beauty of Parallel operations is that if some of your tactics fail (and they will), you will still succeed because you are not relying on a single action for success.

Reserves

There is yet another concept that I want to touch on here from the *Prometheus System*. That is the concept of *Reserves*. Reserves are a notion well understood in the military environment where leaders know that they need the forces available to exploit a breakthrough, or to counter enemy actions. It is not a concept that is widely understood or practiced in the business world.

It is *not possible* to forecast the details of the future with as much precision as we would like. You do know with near certainty, however, that *something*, either good or bad, *will* arise with which you need to deal. Reserves are the things that give you the ability to deal with threats and opportunities without destroying everything else that you are doing. Reserves can be people, money, equipment, facilities, or even a little time left open on your daily schedule.

If you try to operate everything at 100% of capacity, something will break, frequently with catastrophic results. Unfortunately, human nature drives us away from reserves, because we think that something not fully committed is being wasted, or we believe that it is better to bet everything up front rather than to hold something back.

Financial planners typically advise people to have an emergency fund that covers six months of expenses in the event that they lose their job. This is a good example of maintaining reserves, where having the reserves means that you don't lose your house when you lose your job.

As I was planning my launch, and the consequent creation of my IM business, I was constantly bumping up against new ideas or concepts that would make a real difference in the success or failure of my plans - things such as new software programs to make my website more attractive, other products such as Liz Tomey's JV Seeker, Mike Filsaime's Butterfly Reports, Jeff Walker's PLF 2.0 program, and John Reese's Traffic 2.0 program.

If I did not have any money in reserve, or any time on my schedule, or the ability to acquire Outsourcing Partners, I would not have been able to take advantage of some of these opportunities, and the chances of my launch being as successful as I am planning it to be, would have been considerably lessened. *You can use reserves to reinforce success, or to check failure.*

Here are some examples of reserves:

- ✚ Shift Resources To Most Profitable Project
- ✚ End Unprofitable Projects
- ✚ Delay Projects
- ✚ Outsource
- ✚ Acquire capability
- ✚ Enter into Joint Ventures and Affiliates agreements
- ✚ Re-role Individuals and Groups
- ✚ Recruit

Reserves can be the difference between success and failure. Find a way to have them, and know where and when to use them!

Red Team Assessment

This is a very simple, but often overlooked tool that can make all the difference between success and failure. "*Red Teaming*" simply means stepping back from your plan once it is done, and trying to find the flaws in it. You need to ask yourself:

- ✚ What could go wrong with your plan
- ✚ What have you missed
- ✚ How will your market react, and how can you counter that reaction

Challenge everything in your plan! If you can, have other people do it with you. The point is to search out as many problems as you can find that you may have overlooked, or that *may* occur, and adjust your plan accordingly. Believe me, you will be very glad that you did.

Imperative IV – Finish With Finesse

Everything ends, but we rarely plan for the end, and when it happens, somehow we are surprised. Organizations, products, trends, styles, and everything else have been ending since the dawn of human history. It would seem as though we might have learned to control the endgame by now. However, it is not too late!

We are now on the fourth and last Prometheus Imperative. In many ways, it is similar to Imperative I – Design the Future. In fact, we could have named this one “Design the Endgame”. We prefer, however, the title of *Finish with Finesse*, for it tells not only that there is an endgame, but also how we should approach it. How many products and organizations have gone from profitability and success only to end up losing money and going out with a whimper? If you can win the start phase, why can't you win the end phase?

Part of the reason may be that so much of our lives have depended on tactical success. In the *tactical world*, trying again and again to do something, or routinely forcing ourselves to get up quickly when knocked down on the sports field, are necessities and frequently pay off nicely. Like many things in the tactical world, however, these ideas do not extend well into the *strategic world*.

In the *strategic world*, you really need to operate on the basis of probabilities and risks, versus rewards. In the strategic world, there is never a 100% probability of success, there is always a risk in any venture, and there are always associated costs. *Prometheus* is designed to give you the *best possible chance for success* at the *lowest cost*, but even with great planning, you will still find that what works well today will not work so well tomorrow, and that changing circumstances have dramatically reduced your probability of success while escalating your costs.

Regardless of the reasons, you *will find it necessary* to exit projects and concepts at the right time. Some you will exit because they have been quite successful, and it is now time to move on to greater heights, while you will exit others to minimize your losses so as to give yourself another strategic opportunity. Remember: *exits apply to success and to failure.*

There is a great deal of work that can and should be done in this phase of your planning. The ***Prometheus Strategic Planning System*** is quite unique in even considering this issue, and there are a number of steps that are explained in the process to help you understand *exactly* how to deal with endpoints.

Exit Points

For purposes of this manuscript, I will walk you through a portion of the process as it will apply to my product launch. My launch has a set of specific aims as noted earlier (e.g., getting known in the IM world, making money, building a business, etc.). How will I know when I have succeeded? I have set in place a number of strategic measures, or what *Prometheus* calls “Exit Points” to let me know when these milestones (and others) have been achieved - in other words, when I have achieved my Future Picture (a successful product launch).

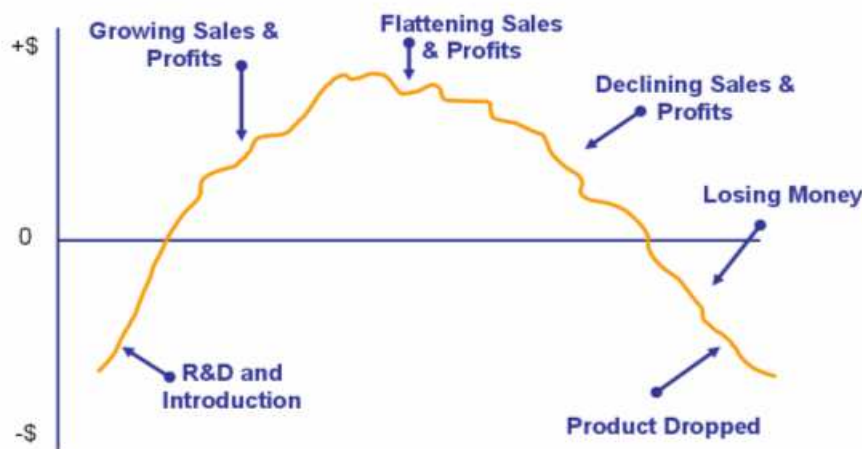
That is my *ultimate success measure* – the sum of all of my measures. I have also set in place a number of “triggers” that will tell me if my plans are in jeopardy:

- ✚ If my rewards do not justify my risks, or the opportunity costs are too high
- ✚ If there is no likelihood of profits
- ✚ If someone “stole my thunder” (grabbed my market ahead of me)
- ✚ If my discounted future value is too high (defined as the premise that an investor prefers to receive a payment of a fixed amount of money today, rather than an equal amount in the future)
- ✚ If my launch schedule and activities become impossibly complex (I may not exit here, but I will certainly do a *thorough* strategic assessment)

I may or may not choose to exit my product launch if these things happen, but it will be a clear-eyed decision, not as a result of being surprised or unprepared. I have set up a number of specific actions to take if these things occur. *Time is money*, and I intend to spend my time and my money wisely.

Look at the following graph.

Defining the Exit Points



Most products follow a curve that looks something like the graphic above; they need money and resources before they produce a return, after which sales and profits increase nicely.

At some point, however, the sales and profits begin to flatten, which is followed by a decline in both. Finally, the red ink becomes so bad or noticeable that the company drops the product (or goes into bankruptcy along with the product's demise). The shape of the curve may not be as balanced as this illustrative case, but the thrust pertains to virtually every case.

If you accept the general shape of the curve, you would all agree that it is both *pointless and unprofitable* to go down its back side. At some point near the top, you *need to do something*. That something may be a significant product modification, or it might be a deliberate, complete withdrawal from the category.

The mandate, though, is to *avoid the pain and suffering* associated with the downside, and the normal attempts to recapture the glory days of the product's dominance. If you have *determined your exit points in advance*, you will be able to end the product in some way, and consider doing so a real success.

Using *Prometheus* has enabled me to construct a well thought out set of exit criteria that will greatly minimize the danger of my launch going south.

The Termination Plan

I have also used *Prometheus* to build a *Termination Plan* which is a way for me to exit my successful launch *on top*. This means that I have built in plans to not simply quit my launch after a pre-determined amount of time, but instead I plan to exit in such a way as to *garner all available profits, relationships, credibility, and so on, and to use that "currency" to springboard my business to the next level*.

What does staying on top and being ready for the next operation really mean? *First*, you must maintain enough energy to continue with the next product or project, for the rest of the world is going to continue. If you exhaust yourself trying to keep a product alive and fail (as you eventually will, as all products eventually go belly up); you will have no energy to start another product or project.

Second, refer back to the discussion on reserves.

There are two times in the life of a market or of a product where chaos and unpredictability may reign - at its beginning, and at its end. Thus, it is especially important to have reserves for the unexpected during the termination phase.

Third, it is important at this point to avoid target fixation.

Target fixation is a phrase from the fighter pilot world that means you have become so intent on hitting your target, that the target is all you see, and you lose awareness of what is going on around you. Many fighter pilots have crashed into the ground because they became so fixated on hitting the target that they lost awareness of their altitude above the ground.

When they finally did become aware, it was too late; there was insufficient altitude to pull out of their dive. Exactly the same thing can happen to a company desperately trying to save a dying product. All attention, all energy focuses on the rescue attempt, with no perception that the external environment has changed to the point where the product no longer makes sense. Hence, the critical importance of *Exit Points* and a *Termination Plan*.

Reconstitution

This leads me to the last part of the ***Prometheus System*** as it relates to my launch. This is the step we call *Reconstitution*.

This is where I simply restart the *Prometheus* process again – in other words, what is my Future Picture in my new reality (having a list, credibility, new relationships, more money, etc.).

This is somewhat like the advice you may have received about having a “backend” product line, other services to sell, becoming a speaker at events, and so on. The point is, you are there; you have made it; you are successful – so now what? My plan is to:

- ✚ Restart the *Prometheus Process*: what is my Future Picture in the new era?
- ✚ Resources available: knowledge from the prior experience; people who can work together; money; energy, and enthusiasm.
- ✚ The reconstitution process is in many ways the easiest of the Finish with Finesse steps, for it is really a restart of *Prometheus*, except now I have plenty of experience with it, and much more knowledge that I had when I began. The sooner I start my reconstitution planning the better off I will be, in part because I will be doing it without the pressure that might exist post-termination.

In my launch process, I have created a very detailed *Reconstitution Plan*. I do not intend for my launch to simply be a “flash in the pan”. It is, instead, a means to an end – the creation of a viable, profitable, sustainable Internet Marketing based business.

Wrap-up

When strategizing for any part of your business, having a planning system in place will significantly enhance your overall probabilities of success, while at the same time greatly minimizing the possibilities of a catastrophic failure.

The ***Prometheus Strategic Planning System*** is designed to help you create and execute a strategic plan in *FastTime* – in other words, very quickly. If you take too much time to create and execute your strategy, your competition will leave you behind.

Prometheus is also a *fractal* process, which means you can create sub-strategies throughout your business, and thereby capitalize on opportunities as they arise. The more you become familiar with *Prometheus* and its vocabulary, the more significant the strategic opportunities you will find.

The *Prometheus* Process is similar to a computer operating system. Once you learn it, you can build your own application-specific programs – you can customize your approach to your specific situation.

I hope you have enjoyed this, the second in my manuscript series on the ***Prometheus Strategic Planning System***. I will soon be making this incredible system available to all those who are truly interested in a system that will enable you to create not only *great launches*, but also a *great business*.

This system will enable you to quickly and accurately recognize what your *Future Picture* must look like. You will know how to create the *exact measurements* that will tell you how you are doing. You will very quickly understand precisely *where you need to be focusing your scarce resources*. You will recognize how to *shape your market* in such a way that they will be lining up at your “door” to buy your services and products.

You will realize how to create *multiple work streams* that you will *execute in parallel* to bend your market to your will. Finally, you will realize when the logical time is to move from one set of strategic activities to the next. You will know how to *soak the maximum amount of profit* from your strategy, and when to leave your old products or services behind, and move into the next phase of your strategy.

Please go ***right now*** to www.prometheusstrategy.com and sign up for launch notification and to receive additional great ***free*** pre-launch materials as I move closer to the launch.

In addition to the Strategy Manuscript, and the manual you just finished reading, I will also be releasing a series of *five information packed videos* about Strategic Planning in general, and the ***Prometheus Strategic Planning System*** in particular.

I have given you a great deal of information in these pages. If you study them carefully, you will discover many “secrets” for creating a strategy that will enable you to build an extremely successful business. But I also realize that creating a great strategy is both a process and a destination. So, we will be in touch soon so as to give you more information on how to access the **Prometheus Strategic Planning System**.

I know you will agree that I have put a lot of great content into this document. I would very much appreciate your feedback at my blog:

<http://www.prometheusstrategy.com/blog>

I look forward to our “conversations” at the blog.

To A *Great* Strategy -- And Even *Greater Success*!!

Jim McCarthy