

BLURRED VISION



For most companies in mature markets, 2013 was another challenging year. Geopolitical conditions were shifting, macro-economic factors were changing and local markets were under duress. Globalisation is taking its toll. The globe wide redistribution of work and wealth is putting a heavy strain on the once winners. Italy, Spain, Portugal and France are under the heaviest pressure in Europe to adapt to the new conditions. And the resistance of the population to change is very high. Political lobbies, interest groups of all kind are clinging to the old schemes and try to keep the status quo. Schizophrenic consumers are continuing to push their employers for more: more safety, more income, more free time. Then, leaving the workplace and turning their basketball cap around to become consumers, they don't care anymore about social protection and welfare. They look indiscriminately for the cheapest solution, which most of the time isn't produced any more by their neighbour next door or even by themselves, but by some hard working Stakhanovist in Guangzhou or elsewhere in the developing world, working 12 hours a day, 6 days a week all year long and sleeping at the end of the assembly line. And they don't realise, that their day-to-day behaviour is the trigger for the changes which are happening all around them.

MADE BY ME !

In 1998, two brilliant consultants at Deloitte, one of the world's largest business consultancies, Michael Fradette and Steve Michaud, were already forecasting the time of blurred vision and absolute uncertainty and the death of predictability. And already then, they were acknowledging the facts and advocating a new type of entrepreneurship: corporate kinetics. Instead of trying desperately to plan the future, they were proposing to create the self-adapting, self-renewing and instant-action enterprise. "If you can't predict the future, ensure that you are ready for whatever comes next", was their motto.

By re-reading this book in the past days, I was reminded that the work of our consultancy is currently revolving around this subject: helping companies to adapt constantly to the ever-changing conditions, assisting them in shaping their organisation to cope with the new environment and supporting their efforts to maintain the economic framework they need to continue to make things. Made in Italy, Made in France, Made in Germany, Made in Japan, have all a different meaning for consumers. Design, Taste, Quality, Technology are concepts conveyed by these labels. Everywhere in Europe, entrepreneurs are becoming aware, that they have to fill these concepts with truth and to export them into the world to the new wealthy, the new middle classes, the new economies.

To face this challenge, they need a lot of energy and creativity. Inspiration and transpiration go together in that enterprise. The turn of the year is time for a rest. To regain energy to be efficient in the New Year in offering products and services "Made by Me".

In this spirit, we wish you a successful 2014, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!