

✘ Here comes a 4-part article from **HBR.org** (which I love) and **Nilofer Merchant** (which I didn't know about but I'm glad I discovered).

It's about **social media** and its **acceptance in industry culture**.

Beginning from well-known examples like Facebook, Twitter (you know...), author Merchant shows how much has changed with social media and how much some well-established brands are missing the point with social era.

*Facebook, Kickstarter, Kiva, Twitter, and other companies thriving in the social era are operating by the rules of the Social Era. They get it. They live it. And to them, it's ridiculously obvious.*

*But too many major companies — Bank of America, Sony, Gap, Yahoo, Nokia — that need to get it, don't. A friend of mine who runs a venture capital firm is emblematic of the bias I encounter in the Bay Area. He tells me to ignore the big enterprises; that they are not the future. But I'm not willing to give up on these firms. I think we can get the 800-pound gorillas of our day to act more like 800 gazelles — fast, nimble, and collaborative.*

About the way **we all browse, choose and buy on social networks**:

*People buy two categories of things: The distinct, and the generic. The distinct items are the things that have a limited quantity, that are artisanal in nature, and that are worth paying a premium for. The generic items are, well, the things you might find on Amazon.*

*When companies like Best Buy or Target are simply aisles of what you can find online, then it's easy enough to become a storefront for Amazon. Everything that is undifferentiated is going to be delivered in ever more efficient, low-cost ways. Porter's value chain is well suited for this mass-market, cost-driven approach, where customers remain at the end of the value chain.*

So what?

*But for organizations wanting to thrive in the social era, being distinct is key to both profitability and winning. While there has always been a market for bespoke, differentiated items, until very recently that market served a tiny fraction of the uber-rich. But today, both macroeconomic forces, and technological advances mean that customized products aren't just for the one percent. Instead, customized products and experiences can be for everybody, at least some of the time.*

*How will the smartest, nimblest companies move away from less-profitable generics and into more-profitable distinct goods and services? By using the rules of the social era.*

New rules for Social media - a 4-part article about social era and industry culture

Here's a summary of all posts:

[Part 1: Rules for the Social Era](#)

[Part 2: Social Means Freedom, for Better or for Worse](#)

[Part 3: Why Porter's Model No Longer Works](#)

[Part 4: Why Social Marketing Is So Hard](#)

Recommended.

[Via [HBR.org](http://HBR.org)]