



MANAGEMENT

# 起死回生计

设计并非美学，而是一种规划，是企业增长的策略。以Steve Jobs救活苹果的实例，来看“企业要如何靠设计取胜”。

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置之死地，真的可以后生？

今年5月新上任马航总裁Christoph Mueller，在商界有“终结者”的封号。他接任奄奄一息的马航时，毫不留情地裁掉六千名职员。他更不讳言，指马航“理论上已破产”。

为重振马航，他采取削减成本的标准“课本方案”，目的是让马航翻身，目标是三年内赚钱。很多市场分析员断定，裁员只是开始，接下来还会有其他开源节流的措施。

账目出现赤字，削减成本理所当然。但，更大的问题是，要如何恢复马航的信誉（包括市场对这个品牌的信心），并让增长复苏？

苹果Apple公司在1997年也面临危机，险些变成烂苹果。同年，原被逐出苹果公司的创建人Steve Jobs回归，让苹果起死回生。

为了生存，Steve Jobs与死对头Bill Gates化敌为友，争取后者的投资。他还大幅度改革公司的管理，检讨运作，更特地挑选出能为公司贡献的精英人才。

当时，苹果公司深陷危机，他却激励职员“最好的尚未来到”，为团队打了一剂强心针。

Steve Jobs把所有资源集中在研发iMac电脑。这款苹果电脑1998年面市，取得空前成功。今天的苹果公司是超级品牌，企业强大。以市值计算，它是全世界最大的公司，估值已迈向破兆美元，前所未有。

不说不知，在助苹果东山再起之前，Steve Jobs其实也让濒临破产的Pixar死而复生。他眼光独到，看出公司的价值和潜力，全力支持创意团队的创作，并与迪斯尼签署合作协议。Pixar开始制作一部又一部的动画巨作。不久后，就以74亿美元被迪斯尼收购。

Steve Jobs如何制造商业奇迹？

Steve Jobs的教育程度不高，仅在里德学院（Reed College）修读印刷术（typography）。但他在20年里创造的财富，却比同辈超出很多倍。包括Bill Gates在内的商界领导人，都把他的成就归功于他的好眼光和洞察力。更重要的是，他了解设计的潜在威力，这也是苹果取胜的优势。

Steve Jobs曾说，对苹果而言，设计并非美学，而是一种规划。他深信，从研发到制作，产品包装和营销，过程是环环相扣的。因此，企业的各方面都必须相辅相成，才能达到最有效的成果。这个信念，塑造了苹果公司的企业理念。

苹果公司现任总裁Tim Cook表示，已故Steve Jobs对这个世界最大的贡献，就是苹果这个企业及其文化。

以Steve Jobs的经营理念重新定义设计：设计是一种规划，是企业增长的策略。把设计融入经营策略和企业管理，注重创意、全面性和平衡，这与典型的企业经营大有不同。

## 留住人才创意

典型的商业理论，把企业的不良增长归咎于高成本。因此，只要削减成本，生意自然会转好，并取得利润。

在中世纪的欧洲，放血是很盛行的民间疗法。当代的大夫认为，只要把不好的血放出体外，病人就能痊愈。商界裁员，有如放血，但这个做法可能导致企业流失人才，不只医不了病，恐怕还会因失血过多，难逃一死。

反之，以设计为主轴的经营策略，注重发掘并留住企业的创意核心——人才。这也是Steve Jobs在1997年回归苹果公司后的首要





MANAGEMENT



PHOTO BERLUTI





职责。他之所以接受死对头的投资，是为了留住公司的人才，保住他们的饭碗。

人才好比一个企业的创意引擎，只要安置在对的机身，就能发挥功效。所以，找出企业的人才，识别他们的才能，让他们在对的工作岗位发挥所长，才能为企业带来利益与增长。

识别人才的过程费时，但只要掌握创意核心品质，根据现有资源设计策略，就能提高其效率。这个做法更胜于砍掉宝贵资源，乱‘放血’。

## 打开全面视角

只注重数据和人力，不考虑营销、传讯等方面，是守旧经营理念眼光短浅的另一个问题。这就像驾车时只顾眼前交通情况，完全无视后视镜或侧镜。

经营企业如果采取设计策略，则提供全面视角，让经营者全面审核企业的各方面运作。以实例说明，某国民银行发展不良，数字不理想；在仔细检讨经营与运作后，发现银行职员未能与客户建立关系，因此限制了银行发展。

当中起因，很大程度上是因为职员不知道自己的价值，缺乏动力。职员本身不重视职务，不知道自己的价值，这是亚洲很多企业的弊病。

找出‘病因’，对症下药，首先就是调整职员的心态，激励他们，提供相关培训，让他们能设身处地，站在客户角度，为客户服务。有了这方面的训练，职员服务态度大有进步，经验也提升。

此外，银行也重新定义职衔，把服务人员塑造为为客户提供专业意见的军师。银行也重新打造工作空间，让职员与客户能在更宽敞更适宜会谈的空间见面。

实行全方面策略后，银行收入也倍增。

很多时候，问题不是直截了当就能解决的。培养全面视角，分析企业每个层面，才能有效解决复杂问题。好比开车，有时要加速，不能单靠引擎加码，可能还要更换轮胎，才能跑得又快又稳。

## 软硬步步为赢

了解问题，设计对策以后，还要加以施行；否则再好的主意，都只是空想。

典型的经营理念，拿算盘管理企业，注重亏损与盈余，数字至上。无法直接用数字体现的品牌管理、服务素质，就常被忽视。

航空业大致上可列为服务业。但马航目前的规划着重改革财务和管理架构，明显忽略了“让市场恢复对品牌有信心”这部分。换个方式说，就像病人觉得只须靠手术就能痊愈，完全不做复健。

欲速则不达。再好的医疗，再高明的医术，也要配合复健、看护等，病人才能恢复健全体魄。同样的道理套在企业管理，反映的是，软件和硬件都一样重要。

苹果手表面市，说明了软硬兼具的效益。

为了这个产品的面市，苹果聘请了奢华时尚品牌Burberry的前总裁Angela Ahrendts。有了出点子的人，也需要卖手表的地方。苹果在东京银座、巴黎的Galeris Lafayette等高档时尚区设立专卖店。

苹果步步为‘赢’，半点不马虎。

由此可见，设计策略是经深思熟虑的精心部署，是软硬的平衡。有好的产品，也须懂得引起注意，才有机会大卖。

Think Different。这是苹果公司之前的宣传标语。

世界步伐快，科技发展迅速，资讯发达，企业管理今时不同往日，单靠课本和守旧的想法，已行不通。

Uber没有德士车队，却是全世界最大的私人德士服务公司。脸书只是个社交媒体，追随者却比任何一个宗教信仰多……这些例子给企业领导人的重要启发是：

传统的视角，未必能赋予领导人创造未来视野。

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DESIGN





DESIGN



PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

# THINK DIFFERENT

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO GENERATING GROWTH WILL BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE TYPICAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT METHOD, SAYS **LAWRENCE CHONG**

In May, with one swift stroke, 6,000 Malaysian Airlines (MAS) employees lost their jobs. MAS' new CEO, Christoph Mueller, nicknamed "The Terminator", declared that the airline was "technically bankrupt". Applying the typical playbook of business management, he announced that the solution was to cut costs, and focus on turning profitable in three years. Market analysts were not surprised by the move but have said that this is just the first step. To cut is straightforward. The tougher question is: How do you restore confidence, generate conviction and revive growth?

Consider another high-profile company which nearly went bust — Apple — and how it turned the corner. In 1997, returning to the company he founded (but was subsequently kicked out of), Steve Jobs made peace with his nemesis Bill Gates in order to secure an investment. He reviewed the organisation to identify the talents that he could count on; he told all staff that their best days were still ahead, then focused all their resources on a single product. The iMac — a bulbous, all-in-one computer which came in five outrageously flashy colours — was launched in 1998 to resounding success, providing the fuel to rebuild Apple.

That Apple is now a powerful company is beyond anyone's doubt. What is incredible was that Jobs did not just revive one company but two; before Apple, there was Pixar. When

the small crew at Pixar approached Jobs, they too were on the brink of bankruptcy. But Jobs saw value, backed the creative team and signed a deal with Disney. Pixar began to produce one animated blockbuster after another. Soon, Disney acquired the company for US\$7.4 billion.

How did a man like Jobs, who had little education — the only credit Jobs cited for his education was a typography course at Reed College — create more wealth than his peers ever did within 20 years?

Many thinkers and leaders in business and management, including Gates, credit Jobs with vision and the ability to understand the power of design, which ultimately gave Apple the edge. But what did Jobs himself think about the subject? Jobs once explained that for Apple, design is not about how things look but how they work. This belief that every element has to be designed to work in sync, and to deliver an effective outcome, shapes everything at Apple. How the organisation thinks, how it develops ideas, builds supply chains and organises its culture, as well as how products are shaped and presented — everything is done with purpose and in harmony. Current CEO Tim Cook said in an interview that the late Apple chief's most significant contribution to the world was "the company and its culture."

So what is the difference between a design-led strategy versus the typical business management approach? The typical business management approach has an





almost fanatical belief in looking at business in a clear-cut manner. The company is not growing because costs are high, so trim the fat and you will naturally see growth and a return to profit. This “bloodletting” approach — of simply cutting costs and hoping for growth — is dangerous as many companies eventually get cut to the core, losing critical talent vital to their (eventual) recovery.

In contrast, in the design-led approach, the task is to ascertain who are the existing creative persons or units that are creating value, and how best to retain them. One of Jobs’ immediate objective upon his return to Apple was to identify the key talents that he needed to retain. One of the primary purposes of the investment that he obtained from Gates was to pay those people.

The typical management thinking has a limited view on business and tends to look at issues from just the finance or human resource point of view. This is like driving a car without rearview or side mirrors. In contrast, a design-led approach would entail looking at every aspect of the business. Take for example a bank review — a design-led approach would involve looking at how the bank was organised, its belief systems, revenue generation, customer relationships, product development, how the products were presented and communicated, and how the

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retail experience was designed to shape the customer’s perception.

One may find that the bank does not have an emotional bond with its customers beyond its physical proximity, which limits the bank’s growth. One possible reason may be that the bank’s staff did not know or understand the value they brought to customers (unfortunately, a low-value-creation mindset fairly common across industries in Asia).

A design-led strategy would recommend sessions to help staff question and discuss their role and purpose within the organisation. A new retail banking experience with an emphasis on staff coming across as the customers’ extended family members would be implemented; staff roles redesigned for employees to act more as advisors rather than just customer service providers.

A design-led approach is a far more complex than a straight-up cost- or staff-

cutting experience, and require several rounds of adjustments. Also, as the saying goes, the devil is in the details. For a design-led approach to work, it also requires a comprehensive implementation. In the business management approach, companies spend a lot of time looking at the finances and organisation, then rush the “softer” aspects such as branding and service.

For the beleaguered MAS, the challenge now will be to pay attention not just to the financial and organisational structure, but also other less tangible aspects that can help the company rebrand its experience and service.

One of Apple’s famous taglines is: “Think different”. Our world is shaped rapidly by technological advances, and the increasing speed of information exchange means different schools of thoughts are colliding exponentially. One thing is clear: It can no longer be business as usual.

Today, a company such as Uber does not own any taxis but is one of the world’s largest manager of private drivers; a social network like Facebook has a reach greater than a singular religious faith. And Apple, which was widely dismissed in 1997, is now the biggest company in the world. The question that leaders have to confront is this: How can we redesign our lenses, to provide a new vision for our future? **P**

