

Finding growth in complex markets



By [Leigh Harris](#)

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In today's hyper-competitive conditions, where change is the only constant, the 'grow or die' mandate has never been more apt for organisations battling it out for share of consumers' minds, hearts and wallets.

But complex markets, comprised of complex consumers faced with more choice than ever, can make achieving sustainable, profitable business growth seem, well, complex.

Brand-led

Finding real growth doesn't have to be complicated. In fact, the growth journey can be pretty uncomplicated, if approached in the right way.

Business growth needs to be brand-led. But brand-led growth is not possible unless it is steered by consumer demand.

Finding growth starts with slicing through market chaos to identify the consumer demand spaces that define any given landscape. [Microsoft](#) and [Sony](#) recently did just that when they got to know their consumers and their needs better through segmenting their markets.

The next step is understanding how your brand portfolio measures up against both consumer demand and your competitive set.

Pinpointing strengths & weaknesses

After creating a clear map of your market, you can pinpoint your brand's strengths that will enable credible brand stretch to find relevance with new audiences or demand spaces, just like [La-Z-Boy](#) when it leveraged its brand equity of being the ultimate in comfortable furniture to move into a more emotional positioning that also appeals to female audiences.

You can tweak your brand or portfolio strategy to counter weaknesses you never knew existed. You can uncover 'white spaces' where consumer demand is left lacking and identify innovation opportunities that are beautiful in their simplicity and more importantly, *actually work*.

A prime example is [Ryvita](#) which gave consumers an easy solution for eating their products in out-of-home lunch occasions.

Demand spaces

You can also learn how to be selective in your brand extensions, choosing only those opportunities where your brand has the natural right to play.

The classic example here is [Moleskine](#), which has achieved growth by stretching into bags, pens and pencils, all of which are linked to their core product and build on the original notebook brand properties.

But it all starts with demand. Each market is made up of its own unique demand spaces. The better your brand can deliver against these demand spaces, the more it will grow.

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ABOUT LEIGH HARRIS

Project director at Added Value South Africa
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