



Stanford eCorner

Constant Readjustment vs Long-Term Commitment

Jensen Huang, *NVIDIA*

January 29, 2003

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/1127/Constant-Readjustment-vs-Long-Term-Commitment>

The company must have a vision and make product choices based on that vision. Once you commit yourself to a product, do not be easily deterred from this decision. Though the product will undergo feature adjustments, the vision should always remain constant.



Transcript

So, the question has to do with the dichotomy between reevaluation, being self-critical, constantly looking at the market and adjusting yourself as needed versus building something of extraordinary complexity that takes two years to do. In order to build anything meaningful, you have to be committed to it. Two years ago, when we started building GeForce Effects, the idea of building GeForce Effects was completely utterly nonsense. Nobody asked us to build it. Not a single customer said they wanted it. And yet you need to have the courage to go forward with executing and doing what you believe is something that you're excited about. I mean, there's a little bit of self-entertaining that goes with building any company; I won't deny that. I built GeForce Effects first for me and then second for my customers. And I hope that they buy some. However, you need to build it, and I mean that not because I'm spending \$300 million of shareholders' money to build myself a toy.

I actually mean that in the sense that you need to have a vision first. And the vision has to start from somewhere. It's very unlikely that your customers were making purchasing decisions 30, 60 days out, is able to tell you to invest \$300 million to build something and when you're done with it, they're coming in to buy it. That's never going to happen. And so, you need to have a passion. You need to have a vision. You need to have some courage to go forward with it. Once you commit yourself to that, unless it's something pretty dramatic, and you don't commit yourself to a \$300 million program lightly. You really have to believe in it. Once you commit to it, it's very unlikely that I see something that is going to cause me to veer away from it.

And so, I think that it's no different than your hobbies or something that you care deeply about. Even though everybody tells you it's the wrong thing to do, you are absolutely convinced of it. You've got to go pursue that. You've got to go after that vision. And so, I think that vision you got to stay focused on. Now, there's all kinds of adjustments along the way. Features, maybe people don't like doorknobs that way anymore. Maybe people would rather have two-seaters instead of four-seaters. You got to make those kinds of adjustments. But you need to also be clear that features are features and your vision is your vision, that features is not something you get religious about.

Features is not something you get so wrapped up around that you can't possibly let go of a screw or the color of the package or whatever happens to be. So, you just have to make sure that you distinguish that and then you balance that as you go.