



## Stanford eCorner

### Marketing and Learning from Customers

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/432/Marketing-and-Learning-from-Customers>

Estrin explains how it is important not to confuse marketing with reality. Know when you are marketing and know what is real. Make sure you listen to real customer input, she cautions.



#### Transcript

Don't confuse marketing with reality. Marketing's really important and sometimes you have to spin things. In your own mind, don't confuse marketing with reality. Know when you are marketing and know what the real thing is because those are very different things. There are companies whose marketing is so good that they market to the customer and then the customer asks them for what they've marketed and they believe that's really the answer to the problem and it validates their marketing. But in the end, they're not solving the problem the way the problem should be solved. So, if you're going to really build the right foundation, don't confuse marketing with reality. Make sure you're listening to real customer input and listening to it often. But I will say that as a technologist you can't just listen to the customers, because the customers know what they want now. The customers don't know what they're going to want a couple of years from now.

So, the blend is to be customer-responsive while still being able to lead technologically and read those trends. Companies have a hard time with that these days because they want to be so customer-driven. Sometimes what it makes them is too short-sided. There is such a thing as going too fast. I mentioned this before in terms of you do need to make sure you're building the foundation and have everything in place.