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THE INNOVATOR'S SOLUTION

CREATING AND SUSTAINING
SUCCESSFUL GROWTH //

The
Bestselling
Handbook for
Disruptive
Innovators
Everywhere

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TABLE 2-2

Disruptive Strategies and Companies

Company or Product	Description
Wireless telephony	Cellular and digital wireless phones have been on a disruptive path against wireline phones for twenty-five years. Initially they were large, power-hungry car phones with spotty efficacy, but gradually they have improved to the point where, by some estimates, nearly one-fifth of mobile telephone users have chosen to "cut the cord" and do without wireline telephone service. The viability of the wireline long-distance business is now in jeopardy.
Xerox	Photocopying has been a new-market disruption relative to offset printing, enabling nonprinters to make copies in the convenience of their workplace. Xerox's initial machines were so expensive and complicated that they were housed in corporate photocopy centers manned by technicians.

Notes

1. We mentioned in chapter 1 that in early stages of theory building, the best that scholars can do is suggest categories that are defined by the attributes of the phenomena. Such studies are important stepping stones in the path of progress. One such important book is Richard Foster, *Innovation: The Attacker's Advantage* (New York: Summit Books, 1986). Another study predicted that the leaders will fail when an innovation entails development of completely new technological competencies. See Michael L. Tushman and Philip Anderson, "Technological Discontinuities and Organizational Environments," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 31 (1986). The research of MIT Professor James M. Utterback and his colleagues on dominant designs has been particularly instrumental in moving this body of theory toward circumstance-based categorization. See, for example, James M. Utterback and William J. Abernathy, "A Dynamic Model of Process and Product Innovation" *Omega* 33, no. 6 (1975): 639–656; and Clayton M. Christensen, Fernando F. Suarez, and James M. Utterback, "Strategies for Survival in Fast-Changing Industries," *Management Science* 44, no. 12 (2001): 207–220.
2. Demanding customers are those customers who are willing to pay for increases on some dimension of performance—faster speeds, smaller sizes, better reliability, and so on. Less-demanding or undemanding customers are those customers who would rather make a different trade-off, accepting less performance (slower speeds, larger sizes, less reliability, and so on) in exchange for commensurately lower prices. We depict these trajectories as straight lines because empirically, when charted on semi-long graph paper, they in fact are straight, suggesting that our ability to utilize improvement