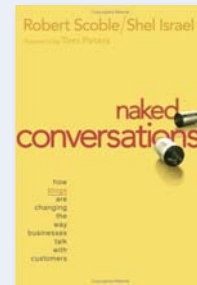
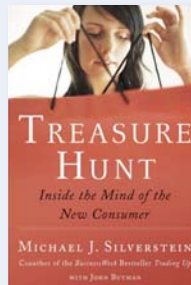
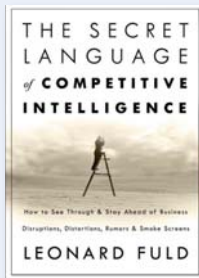


BOOKS WE ARE READING



THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE

by Leonard Fuld (Crown Business)

Leonard Fuld has been in the business of developing and teaching methods of competitive intelligence for over twenty-five years. In his latest book, Fuld continues to prove the value of gaining knowledge about competitors—their strategic thinking, cost structure, new product plans, and so forth—and applying that knowledge to create near-term and far-term advantages. Using an easy-to-read style, Fuld illustrates his teachings with real-world anecdotes involving Visa, Campbell's, Corning, Virgin, Dell, and others. He also discusses ways of protecting your own company's information from prying eyes and eavesdropping ears. The bottom line: companies should complement consumer intelligence with competitive intelligence to maximize the potential of their market strategies.

TREASURE HUNT:

INSIDE THE MIND OF THE NEW CONSUMER

by Michael J. Silverstein (Portfolio)

How do we reconcile “the new luxury,” on the one hand, and the popularity of warehouse stores on the other hand? Is there any rhyme or reason to consumer decision making these days? In his bestseller *Trading Up*, Silverstein sheds light on the growing popularity of such high-end phenomena as Victoria's Secret and Panera; but now he says that was only part of the story. *Treasure Hunt* is just that—a tour through the fascinating, often conflicting motivations of today's “new consumer.” Silverstein looks at how specific companies, from Marriott to eBay to Fleet, have catered to their often fickle customers, and he provides profiles of specific consumers—divorcees, waiters, and plumbers—who are emblematic of consumers' widely varying shopping needs and strategies.

NAKED CONVERSATIONS:

HOW BLOGS ARE CHANGING THE WAY BUSINESSES TALK WITH CUSTOMERS

by Robert Scoble and Shel Israel (Wiley)

According to some, blogging is the opposite of marketing—raw, unfiltered, and spin-free; and it is blogging's perceived authenticity that makes it valuable to consumers and marketers—for very different reasons. Can companies leverage this powerful new form of communication (“word of mouth on steroids”) without undermining the very things that make it so potent? Scoble and Israel look at the rise of blogs and how they have already affected businesses of all sizes (employee blogs have accelerated Microsoft's adaptation to change—and been banned at Apple). The authors also provide much-needed guidelines for “doing it right,” such as using blogs to tell your company's story and build a bigger footprint in the offline world.