

I AM MY OWN TRAVEL AGENT

By
Marty Hoskins

I have to admit it made me chuckle. I was on the elliptical machine at the gym. I had my headphones on and plugged into my Ipod. I had acquired a DVD copy of a presentation by Thomas Friedman that was aired on CSPAN2 about his book, “The World is Flat.” I copied the DVD to my computer, clicked and dragged it to Itunes. I synced my Ipod to my computer and like magic, while trying to lose another pound, I was able to review the entire book in just over 30 minutes. When Friedman got to the part where he was talking about the “Triple Convergence,” it was there I had to laugh. He was talking about his experience with Southwest Airlines, describing the changes in the airline industry and how ticketing is done. In Globalization 1.0 there was a ticket agent. In Globalization 2.0 the e-ticket machine replaced the ticket agent. In Globalization 3.0 you are your own ticket agent.¹ As he described his experience he chastised himself for being so, “Globalization 2.0.” He thought he was gaining an edge on the crowd by arriving 95 minutes early but found he was still in the “B” line. If you’ve traveled on Southwest in the past and especially if you brought carry-on luggage, you didn’t want to be in the “B” line. What had happened? He found that Southwest had changed their procedures. If you were willing to stay awake until 12:01 a.m. on the day of your departure, you could check in for your flight from your home computer, print your boarding pass, arrive at the gate 30 minutes before departure and still be in the “A” group. As I was grinding away on the elliptical, I realized that at least when it comes to travel, I am not only my own ticket agent, I am my own travel agent. The tools that are available to me in this era of Globalization 3.0 allow me to book my airline travel, a hotel, and even a rental car if I need it, all from the same web page. I have gotten so adept at this that I now have an aversion to using a travel agency unless I absolutely have to and the reasons for this are becoming fewer. I have to admit I’m not a 3.0 person in all aspects of my life, but I am learning. Friedman addresses the issue of learning at the end of his presentation in a question and answer time. He says the best way we can prepare our children for the flat

¹ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 174

world is to help them learn to be learners. I was challenged by this statement. Am I learning to be a learner? What does that mean for me? I think it means I cannot be satisfied with what I know and how I apply it. It means I have to be willing to let go of the way I do things and let someone teach me new information and then how to apply it. It means I have to be open to change. I heard Dr. Jerry Porter say once, “The only person that likes change is a baby with a wet diaper.” I can identify with that not only as a father but as someone who has had to affect change in many different circumstances. While I believe that I am learning to be a learner, I have to wonder, as a church, are we learning to be learners? Are we paying attention to the changes that are happening in our world? Do we see the changes that are happening at the grass roots level or the changes that are happening with the individual who sits in a Nazarene pew on Sunday morning? If change is happening with the individual Nazarene, sooner or later it will happen in the local church, and then the denomination. These changes are affecting many areas of the church including missions. In missions, are we ready to move into Globalization 3.0? If so, what does that mean? What will the missionary look like in 3.0? What will sending and support look like in 3.0? What will the missionary do in 3.0? Every one of these questions spawns new questions instead of answers. But I do believe we are on a journey of learning. As director of World Mission Mobilization, I have been given the charge to study the new paradigms that are emerging. We have been given permission to experiment with new ideas. We have a mandate, not just from our leadership but from our understanding of the task itself. “Go into all the world” isn’t just for me but for each and every Nazarene and Christian no matter where they live and attend church. We have to find ways to help every nation, every church in fact, to fulfill their potential of becoming the sending church. Can we learn from someone like Friedman? If we are to learn to be learners either as individuals or as a church then yes, let’s see what he can teach us.

Flat World Concepts and the impact on missions.

The focus of Friedman's book seems to be more in the area of business and how one can gain an edge in the global economy. I'm sure a true scholar could do some comparisons and time-line studies to see how missions has developed over the centuries in relation to Friedman's theories of Globalization. I'll not even begin to attempt that in this paper, but I think we can give it a quick glance. Friedman lists three great eras of globalization.

1. Globalization 1.0 From 1492 to around 1800.
2. Globalization 2.0 From around 1800 to 2000.
3. Globalization 3.0 From 2000 to ????

Globalization 1.0 - Friedman says this great era of globalization shrank the world from a size large to a size medium.

Globalization 1.0 was about countries and muscle. That is, in Globalization 1.0 the key agent of change, the dynamic force driving the process of global integration was how much brawn – how much muscle, how much horsepower, wind power, or, later, steam power – your country had and how creatively you could deploy it. In this era, countries and governments (often inspired by religion or imperialism or a combination of both) led the way in breaking down walls and knitting the world together, driving global integration.²

Instantly we recognize the correlations that Friedman's Globalization 1.0 had in relation to missions and the spread of the Gospel message. I am intrigued by his comments in parenthesis above. For better or worse, as countries and governments expanded their territories in the early years of this era, the message of Christ was carried along. Of course in the later years of this era we find the father of the modern missions, William Carey. Enough said.

Globalization 2.0 – This great era shrank the world from size medium to size small.

The key agent of change, the dynamic force driving global integration, was multinational companies. These multinationals went global for markets and labor, spearheaded first by the expansion of the Dutch and English joint-stock companies and the Industrial Revolution.

² Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 9

In the first half of this era, global integration was powered by falling transportation costs, thanks to the steam engine and the railroad, and in the second half by falling telecommunication costs – thanks to the diffusion of the telegraph, telephones, the PC, satellites, fiber-optic cable and the early version of the World Wide Web.

The dynamic forces behind the era of globalization were breakthroughs in hardware – from steamships and railroads in the beginning to telephones and mainframe computers toward the end.³

Enter the Church of the Nazarene. Right in the middle of this great era of industrialization, a denomination is born. I'm thankful that since the beginning of our existence, we have sent and supported missionaries. Mission is part of our DNA. Friedman says that during this era the world was shrunk from medium to small. I'm sure our early missionaries thought they had it made when they could travel to the field in steamships armed with the latest in equipment like the newest typewriter. I think it's in the last part of this era, though, when we begin to see the major changes in hardware and technology having an impact on missions and missionaries. It makes me chuckle again thinking about my own experience.

I am a rare breed of missionary now. During my 10 years as a missionary in South America from 1986 to 1996, we were still using HAM radio for much of our communication not only with the regional office but also with family. I'll never forget how happy we were when my mom and dad met a Baptist man who was also a HAM radio operator. He had what was called phone patch equipment that allowed us to communicate from my radio in Venezuela through his radio near Georgetown, KY where my parents lived right to their telephone. If conditions were right on Sunday afternoon, I would call Bill on the radio, Bill would then call my parents on his telephone. Once they were on the line, Bill would hook up the equipment and instead of paying \$2.00 a minute or more we were talking with mom and dad via a local phone call. Wasn't technology amazing!

³ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 9,10

I was the envy of the other missionaries when I brought back from furlough the first laptop computer with a built-in hard drive. It was a Bondwell brand and I think it had an unbelievable **40 megabytes** of hard drive space. Some of you will laugh when I say I think I'm showing my age but this was just 15 years ago. We were amazed at how small the world had become because of the advances in technology and hardware.

Transportation to and from the field was a few hours instead of days or weeks. I could talk with someone on another continent using my HAM radio. The cost of cell phone usage was coming down. We had FAX machines. Before we left Venezuela in 1996 we were even experimenting with e-mail. We were connected to missionaries in other countries, our regional leadership, and even to Headquarters if needed. We were not alone!

Globalization 3.0 – This new era is “shrinking the world from a size small to a size tiny and flattening the playing field at the same time.”⁴

The dynamic force in Globalization 3.0 – the thing that gives it its unique character – is the newfound power for *individuals* to collaborate and compete globally. And the lever that is enabling individuals and groups to go global so easily and so seamlessly is not horsepower, and not hardware, but software – all sorts of new applications – in conjunction with the creation of a global fiber-optic network that has made us all next-door neighbors.

Because it is flattening and shrinking the world, Globalization 3.0 is going to be more and more driven not only by individuals but also by a much more diverse – non-Western, non-white – group of individuals. Individuals from every corner of the flat world are being empowered. Globalization 3.0 makes it possible for so many more people to plug and play, and you are going to see every color of the human rainbow take part.⁵

This almost sounds like a fulfillment of the mandate I mentioned earlier. Every nation a sending nation. Every church a sending church. The driving force that Friedman talks about, the power of the individual, almost sounds anti-Christian. This force is changing

⁴ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 10

⁵ Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat*, 10,11

our lives once again in ways that we could never have imagined. Just a few minutes ago I had a communication experience with my 79-year-old mom. I was sitting in my truck waiting for my son to finish a piano lesson. While working on this paper I realized I had picked up a wireless signal on my computer. I clicked on Skype, double clicked on my mom's screen name and right there in the middle of Olathe, KS, I was connected to my mom in Kentucky via point-to-point videoconference. I have connected to my family this way from many different areas of the world. While in Singapore in January, after getting up in the morning, Debbie, Caleb, and I were able to have prayer time together via Skype video before they headed off to bed. How much did this cost? No more than the monthly broadband service charge. But that gives unlimited usage and unlimited access to individuals around the globe. While 3.0 is affecting our personal lives, how is it affecting missions and missionaries? I think we can understand it better by looking at Friedman's "flatteners."

Ten Forces that Flattened the World

1. 11/9/89 – When the Walls Came Down and the Windows Went Up.
2. 8/9/95 – When Netscape Went Public
3. Work Flow Software
4. Open-Sourcing – Self-Organizing Collaborative Communities
5. Outsourcing
6. Offshoring
7. Supply-Chaining
8. Insourcing
9. In-Forming – Google, Yahoo!, MSN Web Search
10. The Steroids – Digital, Mobile, Personal, and Virtual

We won't dig into all of the flatteners. If you haven't read the book, pick up a copy. Or try to get the video presentation from CSPAN2. It is fascinating to see how these 10 forces came about and the impact they have had on globalization and how business is done. The point I want to make after looking at the different eras of Globalization and

after glancing at the 10 flatteners, is that change is happening and it's happening at a rapid pace.

Change is happening in businesses and corporations as they learn to survive in the flat world. People work for businesses and corporations. If people are to survive the changes in their work place, most likely they will also be changed. Changed in their world views, in the ways they communicate, and in their relationships. People are what make up our church. People are what support our mission efforts. People are the driving force of missions in our movement. If people are changing, then little by little, missionaries should be changing too. First, because they are people being formed and changed in this new environment. Secondly, because the people they serve are changing and if missionaries don't adapt or "learn to be learners," they will be left behind to wonder what happened. And if missionaries are changing that has to mean that missions, or how we do missions, will also change.

Are we ready as a denomination to embrace 3.0? Are we ready to explore new systems and structures that will empower the individual to be more involved in missions? It might be interesting and maybe even helpful to identify some Nazarene flatteners. The list will not be comprehensive by any means, but I think we can get the idea.

- Work & Witness – a grass roots movement that changed the mission involvement options from being only a lifetime of service to being able to fulfill your call two weeks at a time.
- Nazarenes in Volunteer Service – NIVS was the next step for many people after W&W. As lay Nazarenes became more involved in missions, our strategies began to change as well.
- College and University Students – a new push by some of our visionary field personnel in partnership with our schools to create unique strategies for church development using the energy and creativity of students. New works were even started in places like Bulgaria with the use of students as the missionary force.

- Friedman’s 10 Flatteners – We don’t have to look very closely to see how the dynamics of Globalization 2.0, especially in the last two decades of the 20th Century have impacted us greatly as a mission organization.

What excites me when I look at these few flatteners I’ve listed, is to see how the Church has embraced these changes. I know it’s not as simple as that. But if we just look at the example of Work & Witness we can see the process of change and adaptation that has taken place and is taking place even today. This process of change continues to come from the participants themselves, the individuals, as they are changed by the world around them. They are the ones demanding new systems and structures that will facilitate, in a greater way, the work that needs to be done.

Work & Witness – A Catalyst for change

I heard Dr. Gustavo Crocker say not long ago, “W&W was the last truly radical thing we have done in missions in the Church of the Nazarene.” I think I know what he means. W&W was not a program started by the denomination or by World Mission. W&W started because individuals and groups of individuals began to feel they could use their time, resources, and talents for the Kingdom even though they didn’t fit the traditional missionary mold. Many were questioning though whether these “short-termers” were adding value to the mission effort or were they taking the time away from the “real” missionary work? Fortunately the denomination made the right decision as the movement started to gain momentum. Look at what happened:

- A program was identified. Work & Witness.
- An office was created in World Mission.
- A coordinator was hired.
- Guidelines and safeguards were put into place to ensure the future of the program.
- Training materials were created.
- Systems and structures were established to facilitate communication and flow of money.
- Missionaries were deployed to help facilitate the work of W&W teams.

W&W was a true “grass roots” movement that caused the Church to reorganize itself to facilitate the ministry. The benefits to missions are really incalculable but look at some of them.

- Every year, thousands of Nazarenes are involved in missions.
- Millions of dollars are invested in Kingdom work above and beyond WEF.
- Missions education has changed from hearing about missions to telling about their own mission experience.
- Missions giving to WEF increases when people experience missions first hand.
- Mission involvement is modeled to the local Nazarenes.

You see, we are a 2.0 moving toward being a 3.0 church! We have continued to adapt and change in W&W as the dynamics of 2.0 have been thrust upon us by the participants. It’s been fun in my role as W&W Coordinator, NIVS Coordinator, and now as WM Mobilization director to watch the changes that have taken place just in the last 10 years. When I first started as W&W Coordinator in World Mission, most individuals and churches didn’t even have FAX machines. If a church or team leader wanted to take a team to work on a project, in most cases they would call the W&W Office in Kansas City, the coordinator would help them choose an approved project based on the amount of project funds they had available, how much they wanted to spend on travel, housing, and food, and lastly, where they might like to go. The coordinator would then contact the field and let them know of the team’s interest and after that contact, help set up communication between the field and the team. With the advent of e-mail and the World Wide Web, all of that has changed. I’ll have to admit that the changes were not instigated by our office but rather were requested by the team leaders, participants, and even our field personnel as they embraced new technologies and helped us to create new systems and structures. Most contact now is done between individuals and the field personnel directly. They use web tools to look at approved projects, they use e-mail and Skype to communicate with field personnel, and then after dates and projects are decided they contact the W&W Office to inform us of the team. Many of them are even booking their own tickets either online or directly with the airlines. You see, I’m not the only one that is my own travel agent! Work & Witness is moving quickly into 3.0 and I’m excited to see what it’s going to look like.

NIVS – A different kind of Catalyst

Like W&W, NIVS follows some of the same patterns. I won't use too much space to expound on NIVS because it is so similar in its development to its predecessor. NIVS blossomed out of the W&W movement as people saw they could engage in missions for longer periods of time. Most of the early NIVS were stereotypical in that they were thought to be retirees or early retirees. They came with experience and resources. They were added to our missionary force without draining much from WEF. Again our denomination embraced these new missionaries and put into place some of the same systems and structures as for W&W. However, NIVS moved quicker towards 3.0 than W&W. As more and more people saw they could be involved in missions for more than two weeks at a time, the profile of the NIVS began to change even if the stereotype didn't. Today we have almost an even spread of longer term volunteers. One third are usually retirement age or are early retirees. One third are in the 30 to 50 year old range. One third are from 20 to 30. These last two groups have created unique challenges to our thinking and understanding of the NIVS program. Many of these do not have the resources available to them and have to raise their own support funds. Some have small children they are taking to the field. Many do not have much experience. But, guess what? They are doing it! Today they have the tools to make connections with a field, district, local church, or even a para-church organization almost anywhere in the world. These individuals are operating in a 3.0 world and it's not happening only from the U.S. but from places like Brazil, South Korea, Guatemala, Holland, and the list goes on. There is an incredible desire around the world to be engaged in missions like never before. The question is, as a church, are we ready to move with them? I believe that if our answer is yes, the proverbial floodgates will open and we can see our current missionary force double or even triple in the next five to ten year. What will it take for us to move with them? I would like to think that in the WM Mobilization Office we are making the move. I realize we have a long way to go but we have taken some of the first steps:

1. A Name Change from NIVS to Mission Corps. With the numbers growing in the younger groups we recognized that many of them were not true volunteers as fit the stereotype. By changing the name hopefully we can change the stereotype.

2. Training. Our Cross Cultural Orientation has served us well for the last few years since we began holding these events at Nazarene Colleges and Universities. We are now in the process of evaluating the next type of training. We are looking at the possibilities of training trainers and exploring on-line resources. This would allow us to reach a larger group of people.
3. Technology. We are trying to adapt our systems by taking advantage of new technology. We are moving toward web-based databases that will facilitate a global movement.
4. Fund-Raising. We are exploring available resources that will help our Mission Corps participants with the daunting task of funding their mission.

What do we need to do as a church to help facilitate the growth of this movement? These are my opinions. Hopefully they are valid.

1. Educate the Church about the growing need for Mission Corps-type missionaries.
2. Implement aggressive recruiting models.
3. Develop flexible assessment and training models.
4. Allocate resources to develop systems and structures that will facilitate the growth.
5. Look for resources outside of the local church that could be used to help fund the mission.
6. Train our field personnel in how to develop strategies for using these new and developing types of missionaries.
7. Learn to be learners.

A Global Movement

Let me pause here to say that what I've been writing about is happening all over the globe in the Church of the Nazarene. In my role as WM Mobilization director I have the awesome privilege of working alongside regional leadership and local Nazarenes who have a passionate desire to be engaged in missions. For the last six years, we have been very intentional in identifying and facilitating the growth of grass roots missions movements. We have worked hard in training trainers and trying to connect resources to need. Most of all, we have given permission to contextualize and experiment. Work & Witness in the MAC region goes by the name Maxima Mision as one example. This year we'll see the launch of the Isaiah/Caleb Project. I believe as we continue to facilitate the grass roots mission models that are developing, they will teach us how to do missions in this new era.

Conclusions – The Role of the missionary in the flat world.

Currently, our WEF based missionary is called the Global Missionary. There are other missionary contracts that are also funded by WEF such as Regional and Specialized Assignment. But by and large the majority are Global. Whatever we call them, I first want to say I believe in order to have a good mission strategy it must be built on long-term people as the base. If our short-term programs have worked over the last 30 plus years, I believe it has been because we do have a good system and structure in place that we have built upon. But what does the Global missionary look like in 3.0? If I understand what is happening around me. If I believe there will be a huge wave of “missionaries” of all types from everywhere serving from two weeks to a year and beyond. If we truly believe that it is no longer command and control, but it is connect and collaborate. Then I believe the role of the Global Missionary needs to continue to develop and change. Here are some identifiers:

The New Global Missionary

- Catalyst
- Strategist
- Connector
- Communicator
- Multi-Cultural Team Coach
- Facilitator
- Visionary
- Inspirer
- Servant

Many of our Global Missionaries are already functioning in this manner, maybe not by desire but out of necessity. Can one person learn to do all of these things? Probably not. But if I understand 3.0, the key is not to try to do everything myself. The key is to identify those who are able, then connect and collaborate with them so together we can accomplish the task. As an organization, how are we going to help each of our Global Missionaries move in this direction? How do we “update” our mindset from missionary-

sent-to-faraway-land-and-responsible-for-entire-mission-work to missionary 3.0 able to connect and collaborate, able to create a team using every kind of missionary who is valued for their distinct contribution to the successful work of the mission. I love the role in which God has placed me in this time. I'm excited to be a small part of the Global movement. I have faith in my church. I am very optimistic that as we learn from each other, together we will move into Missions 3.0. I just wonder what 4.0 is going to look like.

3.0 Thought Provoker Bonus Material

- What systems and structures need to change to allow mission to happen?
- What funding sources will work in a world of Globalization 3.0?
- Could we continue to have a growing WEF that supports our foundational mission but also experiment with a "faith based" missionary model too?
- How would we invest our resources in Mission 3.0?
- Do we need to change from missionaries being contracted to being recognized?
- Should we change missionary titles from Global, Regional, Specialized Assignment, etc., to Missionary on a General Board contract or Missionary on a Regional contract?