

Saving the world through better choices

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Innovator and thought leader, Roger Martin, named the third most influential business thinker in the world in 2013, chooses Cape Town and the Nasdaq at Media24 to launch his latest book, which calls on managers and leaders to embrace integrative thinking to create new value for the world.

In the world of business, being decisive is often held up as being one of the great virtues of a good leader. But, argues Roger Martin global thought leader and author, in rushing to make a decision, business leaders miss the opportunity to explore and find better options that may create more value for more stakeholders.

Speaking at the global book launch of his new book - co-authored with Jennifer Riel - *Creating Great Choices: A Leaders Guide to Integrative Thinking*, Martin said when it comes to our hardest choices, it can seem as though making trade-offs is inevitable. "But what do we do when the choices in front of us don't get us what we need?" he asks. "In those cases, rather than choosing the least worst option, we can use the models in front of us to create a new and superior answer."

Martin, who was in Cape Town as a guest of the UCT Graduate School of Business and The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design Thinking to deliver an exclusive two-day strategy masterclass, calls this approach integrative thinking. He believes it is a discipline that anyone can acquire and apply to improve their ability to make good strategic choices for their organisations.

Giving managers and leaders the tools to create better choices rather than settling for weak compromises, he argues, has the power to produce new value for the world and transform the future for the better.

"In an age where society tends more and more to lock in on one line of thinking, Riel and Martin give us the tools to break away from our prejudices and eliminate our blind spots, giving us the chance to arrive at a different and better conclusion. A critical tool in both business and life," says Lowell McAdam, Chairman and CEO of Verizon Communication, in an endorsement of the book.

Martin believes integrative thinking is a powerful tool that is underused because putting it to work makes most people anxious. "Most of us avoid complexity and ambiguity and seek out the comfort of simplicity and clarity. We often don't know what to do with fundamentally opposing and seemingly incommensurable models," he says.

Speaking at the book launch, director of the GSB, Associate Professor Mills Soko, said the school was honoured that Martin had chosen Cape Town to launch his new book. "The GSB aligns with many of the philosophies Martin has pioneered around systems thinking and innovation. My colleague at the GSB, Associate Professor Kosheek Sewchurran, has described him as 'one of the most effective concept makers in business education in the 21st century' based on the number of successful new concepts he's introduced to revitalise business education alone. We are excited to have this opportunity to expose a greater community to his level of thought leadership."

The launch event was sponsored by Media24 and took place on their Nasdaq, described as one of the hottest rooftop venues in Cape Town.

CEO of Media 24 Esmare Weideman said that Roger Martin calls on business people to become designers, designing UX and business models to create something new and fantastic. "This perfectly suits how we at Media24 think about this massive transformation we, and the entire media industry worldwide, are currently navigating – from print to digital, from the tried-and-tested business models of the past which have become pretty much broken to entirely new ones, diversified revenue streams, and the opportunity of connecting virtually on a one-to-one basis with customers on their mobile phone,"

she said.

A former dean of the Rotman School of Management from 1998 to 2013, Roger Martin is the Institute Director of the Martin Prosperity Institute and the Michael Lee-Chin Family Institute for Corporate Citizenship at Rotman. He also holds the Premier's Chair in Productivity and Competitiveness in Toronto, Canada. He has authored and co-authored more than 11 books including *The Rise and Likely Fall of the Talent Economy*, *Getting Beyond Better*, *The Future of the MBA*, *Fixing the Game*, and *Playing to Win*.

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