VELOCITY OF VALUE THEORY (A Theoretical Framework Highlighting Speed as a Strategic Imperative in Value Delivery and Business Scalability.)

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Abstract
Contemporary business strategy literature has extensively examined value creation and competitive advantage, yet has largely neglected the temporal dimension of value delivery as an independent strategic variable. This article introduces the Velocity of Value Theory (VVT), a novel theoretical framework proposing that the speed at which a business delivers its core value proposition to customers is not merely an operational metric, but a primary determinant of scalability, competitive positioning, customer retention, and organic growth through word-of-mouth referrals. Drawing upon and departing from established theoretical traditions including the Dynamic Capabilities Framework (Teece et al., 1997), Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), and Time-Value-Oriented Business Model innovation (Liu et al., 2024), Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) offers six foundational propositions that reconceptualize business worth as a function of its velocity of giving. The theory argues that value is perpetually in motion, that its impact is inseparable from its speed, and that a firm's existential purpose is best measured not by what it creates, but by how quickly customers realize transformation from its outputs. Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) advances a dynamic, kinetic metaphor of value against the prevailing static, stock-based conceptions, offering scholars and practitioners alike a new lens through which to appraise organizational effectiveness and strategic direction.

Keywords: *Velocity of value, value delivery speed, business scalability, customer retention, word-of-mouth growth, time-to-value, strategic management*

1. Introduction

The history of strategic management is, in large part, a history of the search for the sources of sustainable competitive advantage. From Porter's (1985) cost-and-differentiation paradigm to the resource-based view championed by Barney (1991), and further extended by Teece, Pisano, and Shuen's (1997) dynamic capabilities framework, the field has probed inward and outward, structural and relational dimensions of how firms achieve and sustain superiority in their markets. Yet, despite this expansive theoretical architecture, a conspicuous gap endures: the strategic primacy of time, specifically, the speed at which value is delivered to those it is meant to serve.

This article is motivated by a deceptively simple but profoundly consequential question: Does it matter not only what value a business delivers, but how quickly it delivers it? We argue, affirmatively and forcefully, that it does and that this temporal dimension constitutes an

undertheorized source of competitive advantage with direct implications for scalability, retention, referral growth, and organizational worth.

To address this gap, we introduce the Velocity of Value Theory (VVT). At its ontological core, VVT holds that value is not a static asset possessed by firms and transferred to customers; rather, value is a dynamic phenomenon perpetually in motion. Its real-world impact is inseparable from the speed of its emergence in customers' lives and operations. A business's existential worth, therefore, is most accurately measured not by the magnitude of the value it theoretically possesses, but by the velocity at which it delivers that value — its velocity of giving.

This conception represents a deliberate departure from prevailing theoretical traditions. Where Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece et al., 1997) foregrounds the organizational capacity to sense, seize, and reconfigure resources in response to environmental change, Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) foregrounds the customer-temporal interface: the measurable gap between a customer's first engagement with a firm's offering and the moment that customer realizes meaningful transformation. Where Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004) repositions value as co-created through the application of knowledge and skills in service exchange, Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) superimposes a velocity vector upon this co-creation process, arguing that speed of co-creation realization is itself a strategic variable of the highest order.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the theoretical foundations from which VVT draws and departs. Section 3 formally presents the Velocity of Value Theory, including its core premises, six foundational propositions, and the VVT conceptual model. Section 4 discusses implications for practice and future empirical research. Section 5 addresses theoretical limitations, and Section 6 concludes.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Departure Points

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) does not emerge in a theoretical vacuum. It is positioned in deliberate dialogue with and productive departure from several established frameworks in strategic management, marketing theory, and organizational behavior. Understanding these foundations clarifies both the uniqueness of VVT's contribution and its points of genuine theoretical continuity.

2.1 Dynamic Capabilities Framework

Teece, Pisano, and Shuen's (1997) landmark article introduced the dynamic capabilities framework as an explanation of how firms achieve competitive advantage in environments characterized by rapid technological change. The framework identifies three clusters of capabilities: sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring and argues that the competitive position of a firm rests on distinctive processes shaped by its specific asset positions and evolutionary paths (Teece et al., 1997). This framework substantially advanced strategy scholarship by shifting focus from static resource stocks to the organizational processes by which resources are deployed and renewed over time.

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) draws upon the dynamic capabilities tradition insofar as it treats organizational agility and process design as strategic assets. However, VVT departs from dynamic capabilities in a crucial respect: whereas dynamic capabilities theory is primarily firm-centric, concerned with internal processes of sensing and seizing market opportunities, Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) is customer-temporal in its orientation. It asks not whether a firm can reconfigure its capabilities, but at what speed the customer feels the consequences of those capabilities. The unit of competitive analysis in Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) is the time-to-value interval: the elapsed time from a customer's first contact with a firm's offering to the moment of realized benefit.

2.2 Service-Dominant Logic

Vargo and Lusch's (2004) seminal reformulation of marketing, the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic) repositioned value from an embedded property of goods to a phenomenon co-created through service exchange. Their foundational premises assert that service, defined as the application of competences for the benefit of another, is the fundamental basis of economic exchange, and that value is always co-created by multiple actors, including the customer (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). The concept of "value-in-use" as opposed to "value-in-exchange" is central to S-D Logic: value emerges when and as the customer employs the service offering in the context of their own life or operations.

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) affirms and extends this insight. If value is indeed co-created in use, then the temporal pathway to that use becomes strategically critical. A firm that shortens the journey from service provision to value-in-use realization is, in VVT's terms, maximizing its velocity of giving. The co-creation process does not merely happen; it happens at a pace, and that pace has measurable consequences for competitive performance. S-D Logic tells us value is co-created; VVT asks how quickly it is co-created, and with what strategic consequences.

2.3 Time-Value-Oriented Business Model Innovation

Liu, Sun, Zhou, and colleagues (2024), writing in Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, documented the strategic importance of time-value orientation in business model innovation among life-services enterprises. Their research demonstrated that, in an era marked by accelerating life pace and heightened customer time-scarcity, enterprises that design their business models around the explicit proposition of time savings and immediate need fulfillment achieve superior customer perceived value (Liu et al., 2024). Their empirical evidence from firms such as JD.com, which deployed diversified delivery options including extreme express delivery and next-day delivery to offer faster shipment speeds than competitors, directly supports VVT's core claim that speed of delivery functions as a differentiator with real market consequences.

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) draws upon this work while broadening its theoretical scope. Liu et al. (2024) focus on specific business model innovation pathways within a defined sector; VVT advances a generalizable theory applicable across industries and value types, proposing speed of value delivery as a universal strategic variable.

2.4 Customer Success Management and Value Realization

Brock Smith and colleagues, building on emerging B2B marketing practice, have theorized the role of customer success management in driving retention through proactive attention to value realization (Brock Smith et al., 2023). Customer health metrics — tracking relationship quality, product usage, and customer value realization represent the operationalization of a concern for whether and how quickly customers achieve the benefits they were promised (Brock Smith et al., 2023). This scholarship is foundational to VVT's Proposition III (discussed in Section 3), which holds that the speed of success is measured by how quickly customers realize value from a firm's product or service.

2.5 Where Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) Departs: The Kinetic Turn

The collective contribution of these frameworks, rich as it is, remains largely static in its metaphor: value is a stock to be created, co-created, managed, or protected. Even dynamic capabilities, despite its name, centers on organizational capacity rather than the temporal customer experience

of delivered benefit. Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) introduces what we term the kinetic turn in strategic theory: the proposition that the primary metric of a firm's strategic position is not the stock of value it holds or even its capacity to create value, but the rate at which value flows from the firm into the experienced reality of its customers. Speed, in Velocity of Value Theory (VVT), is not a means to an end; it is the measure of the end itself.

3. The Velocity of Value Theory: Formal Presentation

3.1 Ontological Premises

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) rests on three ontological premises that together constitute its foundational worldview:

Premise 1 — Value is perpetually in motion: Value is not a static property possessed by firms and transferred to customers as in a goods-dominant transaction logic. Value is, at all times, dynamic. It exists in the movement from latent possibility (a product's designed capability) to actualized impact (a customer's experienced transformation). Stillness which describes the delay in this movement represents value decay, not value storage.

Premise 2 — Speed defines impact: The impact of any given unit of value is inversely related to the time elapsed before that value is realized by the intended recipient. A medication delivered promptly heals; the same medication delayed may leave the patient irreparably worse off. The principle generalizes: speed is not merely an efficiency metric; it is a determinant of impact magnitude.

Premise 3 — A business's worth is quantified by its velocity of giving: If value is always in motion and speed defines its impact, then the measure of a business's worth cannot be adequately captured by its balance sheet, market capitalization, or even customer satisfaction scores at a single point in time. A truer measure is the velocity at which the firm delivers value; its rate of giving — integrated over its customer base and sustained across time.

3.2 Formal Definition: Velocity of Value

Velocity of Value (VoV) is formally defined as the rate at which a business's core value proposition manifests as realized customer benefit, measured from the moment of initial customer engagement to the moment of tangible value experience.

In notation:

VoV = ΔCustomer Benefit Realized / Δ Time-to-Value Interval

Where Time-to-Value Interval (TtVI) is the elapsed time from a customer's first meaningful interaction with the product or service to the customer's first substantive experience of the promised benefit. A higher VoV corresponds to a shorter TtVI for a given magnitude of customer benefit or an amplified benefit for a given time interval.

3.3 The Six Foundational Propositions of VVT

From these ontological premises and the formal definition of Velocity of Value, Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) advances six empirically oriented propositions:

Proposition I: Scalability is Directly Tied to Value Delivery Speed

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) proposes that a business's scalability is directly and causally linked to the speed with which it delivers value to its customers. Scalability, in the VVT framework, is understood not merely as operational capacity to expand but as the market's willingness and eagerness to invite a business into more areas of customer life and to more customers. A business that delivers value swiftly creates a self-reinforcing scalability loop: rapid value realization increases customer confidence, accelerates repurchase cycles, shortens customer acquisition timelines (as satisfied customers refer others), and reduces churn-related drag on growth.

This proposition finds empirical grounding in research demonstrating that firms deploying AI-enhanced delivery frameworks such as integrating predictive analytics, route optimization, and personalized customer engagement achieve not only improved delivery speed and accuracy, but also enhanced customer retention and loyalty that directly enables scale (Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence, 2025). Similarly, Liu et al. (2024) empirically documented that time-value-oriented business model innovation — designing the entire business architecture around speed of value delivery is directly associated with improved customer perceived value, the primary antecedent of scalability.

Proposition II: Faster Value Delivery Amplifies Scalability Potential

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) further proposes that the relationship between speed and scalability is not merely positive but exponential in character: faster value delivery does not proportionally increase scalability potential, it amplifies it. This proposition follows from the compound dynamics of customer trust, market reputation, and referral behavior. When a firm consistently delivers value ahead of customer expectation, it does not merely satisfy, it surprises. The emotional valence of positive surprise is disproportionately powerful as a driver of referral behavior and brand advocacy (Fan & Dong, 2021). This sets in motion an accelerating growth cycle in which high velocity begets referrals, referrals reduce customer acquisition cost, and reduced acquisition cost frees organizational resources to further accelerate value delivery.

Gershon and Jiang (2025) provide robust empirical support for the referral amplification dynamic, demonstrating that referred customers make between 31% and 57% more referrals than non-referred customers conditional on purchase activities. If high velocity drives referral behavior (via enhanced satisfaction and positive surprise), the referral cascade compounds the scalability gains predicted in Proposition I, producing the amplification dynamic asserted in Proposition II.

Proposition III: The Speed of Success is Measured by Time-to-Value

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) proposes that the most meaningful metric of business success is not revenues earned, customers acquired, or market share captured, but the speed at which customers realize value from the firm's product or service — the Time-to-Value Interval (TtVI). Success, in this formulation, is not a state achieved by the firm; it is an experience achieved by the customer at a particular temporal moment. The firm's role is to minimize the distance between customer engagement and customer transformation.

This proposition reorients managerial attention from firm-level financial outcomes to customer-temporal experiences as the primary locus of strategic measurement. It is directionally consistent with the customer success management literature, which identifies customer value realization not mere product adoption, as the central driver of long-term retention in B2B contexts (Brock Smith

et al., 2023). A short TtVI signals effective customer success; a long TtVI signals risk of churn regardless of the product's theoretical capability.

Proposition IV: Continuously Increasing Delivery Speed Creates Competitive Advantage

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) proposes that sustained competitive advantage accrues to firms that continuously improve their velocity of value delivery, not merely to those that deliver quickly at a point in time. Competitive advantage in Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) is a dynamic, iterative achievement, not a static position. Firms that institutionalize the acceleration of their value delivery mechanisms like building organizational routines, technologies, and cultures oriented toward reducing TtVI as a continuous improvement objective will progressively outpace competitors who treat speed as a fixed operational parameter.

This proposition resonates with Teece et al.'s (1997) dynamic capabilities logic while redirecting its application: where dynamic capabilities theory focuses on the firm's capacity to reconfigure itself in response to market change, VVT's Proposition IV focuses on the firm's capacity to reconfigure its customer-value interface in response to customer time expectations. Woodruff (1997) presciently noted that the next major source of competitive advantage would come from outward orientation toward customers and superior customer value delivery; VVT specifies the temporal mechanism by which that outward orientation translates into measurable advantage.

Proposition V: Speed and Quality Must Be Balanced; High-Impact Value Delivery Must Be Prioritized

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) recognizes that velocity without quality produces a form of hollow speed — the rapid delivery of value that fails to materialize as genuine customer benefit. Proposition V therefore specifies a critical qualification to VVT's speed-centric logic: speed is strategically valuable only insofar as the value being delivered is substantively impactful. Firms must resist the temptation to optimize for surface-level speed metrics at the expense of value depth. The goal is not rapid delivery of marginal benefit but the fastest possible delivery of high-impact value.

This proposition introduces what Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) terms the Quality-Velocity Balance (QVB) imperative: firms must invest simultaneously in accelerating delivery and deepening impact, ensuring that speed improvements do not erode the substance of what is delivered. Research on service quality and customer retention consistently demonstrates that the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty and, through loyalty, customer retention; is significant and positive (Harriet et al., 2024). High speed in delivery of low-quality value will produce temporary satisfaction at best and swift churn at worst. Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) thus positions speed and quality not as trade-offs but as co-requisites of high-velocity strategic performance.

Proposition VI: High Value Velocity Increases Customer Retention and Word-of-Mouth Growth

Velocity of Value Theory's final proposition synthesizes the preceding five into a comprehensive claim about the downstream performance consequences of high value velocity: firms with sustained high VoV will exhibit disproportionately superior customer retention rates and will generate organic word-of-mouth growth that compounds over time. This proposition rests on the causal chain from rapid value realization to customer satisfaction, from satisfaction to loyalty and advocacy, and from advocacy to referral-driven acquisition.

The empirical foundation for this causal chain is substantial. Fan and Dong's (2021) research, published in Frontiers in Psychology, establishes the direct pathway from customer value improvement to enhanced word-of-mouth behavior. Lee, Lee, and Feick (2006) empirically quantified the contribution of word-of-mouth to customer lifetime value, demonstrating that word-of-mouth (WOM) effects represent a systematically undervalued component of CLV — one that becomes significant as customer satisfaction levels rise. The Influence of Perceived Value, Customer Satisfaction, and Trust on Loyalty study (Appl. Sci., 2024) demonstrates that satisfied customers evolve into brand advocates whose recommendations contribute substantially to positive word-of-mouth marketing; precisely the dynamic Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) predicts will follow from high velocity value delivery.

4. The VVT Conceptual Model

The six propositions of Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) integrate into a unified conceptual model that can be described as the Value Velocity Cycle (VVC). The Value Velocity Cycle (VVC) identifies four sequential stages through which velocity of value delivery produces compounding strategic returns:

Stage 1 — Value Velocity Activation: The firm reduces its Time-to-Value Interval through deliberate process design, technological investment, and organizational capability building (Propositions I and IV).

Stage 2 — Realized Customer Benefit: The shortened TtVI produces earlier and more vivid customer benefit realization, increasing the perceived magnitude of value delivered (Proposition III).

Stage 3 — Satisfaction, Loyalty, and Advocacy: Rapid, high-impact value realization generates elevated customer satisfaction, which converts into loyalty and active advocacy behavior; the willingness to recommend and refer (Proposition VI).

Stage 4 — Scalable, Compounding Growth: Advocacy behaviors reduce customer acquisition costs, expand the addressable customer base, and create network effects that amplify the firm's growth trajectory beyond what would be achievable through product quality or pricing strategy alone (Proposition II).

The VVC then feeds back into Stage 1: as growth provides additional resources and organizational learning, firms with high Velocity of Value (VVT) orientation invest those gains in further reducing TtVI, perpetuating the cycle. Firms that allow their TtVI to grow through bureaucratic accretion, operational complacency, or misaligned incentive structures initiate a corresponding deceleration cycle in which slower value delivery produces lower satisfaction, higher churn, reduced referrals, and ultimately diminished scalability.

Proposition V — the Quality-Velocity Balance imperative operates as a regulatory condition throughout the VVC, ensuring that the acceleration dynamic does not degrade the quality of delivered value in ways that would undermine the satisfaction and advocacy behaviors upon which the cycle depends.

5. Implications for Practice and Future Research

5.1 Managerial Implications

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) has several immediate and actionable implications for organizational strategy and management practice. First, firms should develop explicit TtVI metrics for each of their core product and service offerings, treating TtVI as a leading indicator of customer retention risk and growth opportunity. Just as Net Promoter Score emerged as a proxy for customer advocacy, TtVI can serve as a proxy for value delivery effectiveness.

Second, organizational design should reflect Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) priorities. Cross-functional processes that contribute to value realization from onboarding and implementation to post-sale support and service delivery should be evaluated not only on quality metrics but on temporal efficiency metrics. The question "how good is this process?" must be accompanied by the question "how fast does this process produce customer benefit?"

Third, innovation investment should be evaluated partly on the basis of its TtVI impact. Technologies, processes, and capabilities that accelerate value realization whether through automation, predictive analytics, streamlined onboarding, or proactive customer success management represent high-VVT investments with compounding returns.

5.2 Research Agenda

VVT opens a rich agenda for empirical inquiry. Future research should seek to:

Operationalize and validate TtVI measurement instruments across diverse industry contexts, establishing cross-sectional benchmarks and longitudinal TtVI tracking methodologies.

Empirically test the relationship between TtVI and customer retention rates, controlling for product quality, price, and customer demographics.

Examine the amplification dynamic proposed in Proposition II, testing whether the relationship between value delivery speed and scalability is indeed exponential rather than merely linear.

Investigate moderating variables that affect the VVT propositions, including industry clock speed, customer time sensitivity, and product complexity.

Explore the Quality-Velocity Balance condition (Proposition V) empirically, identifying the thresholds beyond which speed optimization produces diminishing returns or negative consequences for value quality.

Examine cross-cultural variations in time-to-value sensitivity, as customer expectations for speed may vary significantly across national and cultural contexts.

6. Theoretical Limitations

As a nascent theoretical framework, Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) carries several limitations that honest scholarly engagement requires acknowledging. First, the propositions advanced in this paper are primarily theoretical and conceptual; they await rigorous empirical validation across diverse organizational and industry settings. The Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) model should be regarded as a framework for hypothesis generation rather than a system of confirmed empirical laws.

Second, VVT's emphasis on speed may, if misapplied, encourage organizations to prioritize temporal efficiency at the expense of relational depth and service quality; precisely the concern addressed by Proposition V. Practitioners must be cautioned against treating Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) as a mandate for speed at all costs.

Third, the Time-to-Value Interval, as defined in Velocity of Value Theory (VVT), is a unidimensional temporal construct that does not fully capture the complexity of customer value

experiences, which are multidimensional, subjective, and context-dependent. Future theoretical development should explore richer, multi-dimensional conceptions of TtVI that account for variation in the nature of value delivered.

Finally, Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) is presented here as a general theory; it may require modification or contextual adaptation when applied to specific industries, including those characterized by inherently long value realization cycles (e.g., education, healthcare, complex infrastructure projects), where the temporal dynamics predicted by Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) may manifest differently than in fast-cycle consumer or technology markets.

7. Conclusion

This article has introduced the Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) as an original theoretical framework positioning the speed of value delivery as a primary strategic variable with direct implications for business scalability, competitive advantage, customer retention, and organic growth. Building upon, yet decisively departing from, established frameworks including Dynamic Capabilities Theory (Teece et al., 1997), Service-Dominant Logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), Time-Value-Oriented Business Model Innovation (Liu et al., 2024), and Customer Success Management (Brock Smith et al., 2023), VVT advances three ontological premises, a formal definition of Velocity of Value, and six empirically oriented propositions unified in the Value Velocity Cycle model.

The central insight of VVT is both simple and profound: value that arrives late is value diminished. The existential purpose of a business, fully realized, is not merely to create value, it is to deliver value at the speed at which that value can make the greatest difference in customers' lives and work. Firms that master this velocity do not merely serve their customers well; they build momentum which implies the compounding force of rapid benefit, loyal advocacy, and scalable growth that constitutes the deepest form of business worth.

Velocity of Value Theory (VVT) invites scholars to look not only at the magnitude of what firms create and deliver, but at the rate of that delivery, and at the cascading strategic consequences of getting or failing to get value to customers with the speed that transforms service into impact, and impact into enduring competitive advantage.

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