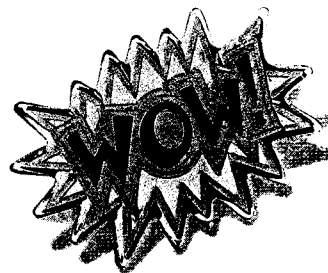


Now That
We Live in A
Tom Peters World ...



Has Tom Peters Gone Crazy?

*Once a counsel to
business titans, guru
Tom Peters now lobbs
exclamation points
at middle managers.
How did he get here?*

BY MARK GIMEIN

IF YOU KNOW ONE THING ABOUT TOM PETERS, YOU KNOW about his first book, and if you know two things, the second is that he hasn't written a book as good as that since, and if you know three things, the third is that sometime in the 18 years since that first precious book, he's gone bonkers.

That's the line on Tom Peters. That somewhere along the way, somewhere between telling business people that they had to face up to the need for a management revolution and posing for photographs in his boxer shorts, somewhere in the movement from Thomas J. Peters, McKinsey partner, to Tom Peters, business guru at large, to "!"—the ever present red exclamation point logo that identifies him as he barnstorms through the shiny new convention centers of America's edge cities—Tom Peters has lost his mind.

You hear it in the reviews and the biographies, in the invariable verdict that the latest book has yet again failed to live up to the legacy of the first. You hear it in the awkward pauses of the corporate chieftains who profess to be influenced by Peters. You even hear it echo quietly in the elaborate compliments of his closest friend and mentor, Warren Bennis: "Tom is the incarnation of the Emersonian celebration of the American insouciant self—he is Emerson and Thoreau and Whitman." Sure, it's a beautiful line, but in the vocabulary of American business, Peters' chosen milieu, doesn't "Whit-

INSPIRATIONAL?

Peters promotes "Wow" projects. And sells the pins (above) too.

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JESSICA WECKER