

THE BRAND THIEF®

A DIGEST OF IDEAS TO STEAL MARKET SHARE

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New Brands Don't Need New Names

What Are You Trying To Do?

If your goal is to grow your market share and your category is relatively mature then re-evaluating your brand is as important as your advertising messages. Eighty percent of our clients change their brand but never change the name of their product, service or company. The only other thing that changes is their bottom line.

Think about the dollars that you spend on marketing and advertising and compare that to the allocation you have made on your brand strategy. If your fiscal goals are not being met it is possible that the problem is not in your ad copy, media mix or sales force but in your brand permissions. In the DNA of your brand resides its permission to be important to the customer you wish to influence. Without a full and complete understanding of your brand, much of your marketing dollars are being wasted.

The Brand Charter's A Contract

Because we are all business executives, we understand that more often than not, the profit we will make on a new business deal is decided when the contract is signed. For this reason, we have our legal departments pour over the fine print before we affix our signatures and we sign it only when we are sure that every "i" is dotted and every "t" is crossed. Your brand has the same importance as that legal contract in influencing your marketing fortunes. As a matter of fact, it would be helpful to think about your brand charter in exactly

those terms — a contract — because it is a contract with your target market. If you don't have a brand charter my point has already been made.

Being Different and Better

Your brand is an umbrella and all that you can rightfully promise to the target market needs to fit nicely under that umbrella. Your advertising certainly needs to be different and it needs to be important but it also needs to be believed as "lawful" within the permission of your brand.

"EXCLUSION is the price of brand clarity and it is the currency you need to bank on..."

Lexus Is A Case In Point

Think about Toyota— they have enjoyed long reputation as a reliable builder of solid automobiles and they have successfully marketed low cost vehicles all the way up to the pricey 4Runner. However, when they decided to build a luxury automobile they realized that the Toyota brand could never command its rightful price-point if it was sold as a Toyota.

The brand did not have permis-

sion to sell it. As a result, they launched Lexus, a new brand with permission to do exactly that and in less than a decade, Lexus has gained entry into the considered set of luxury car purchases right next to Mercedes and BMW. The same Toyota designers might very well design the Lexus automobile and it might even be built in the same factory but from a brand perspective it is "a different beer."

Your Brand's Permission?

If you can gain a clear understanding of your brand from the perspective of your target audience and if you can define your brand's permission in stark and definite terms, you will come face-to-face with all of the opportunity and limitations that are inherent in your brand today and limitations are important.

What Does A Brand Mean?

EXCLUSION is the price of brand clarity and it is the currency you need to bank on. A great brand tells the target audience who it is for AND whom it is not for — because a brand that is for everyone is not a brand at all; it is a description of your category. Clarity is your ally and brand management is its cost. Get it right and you can grab market share right out from under your competitor's nose. Miss it and you might just as well change your name.

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