

THE BRAND THIEF®

A DIGEST OF IDEAS TO STEAL MARKET SHARE

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Where Is Your Marketing Advantage?

Do not be quick to blame your advertising agency or marketing department if your business is failing to grab market share. In reality it is a safe bet that your problem is not in your advertising message but in your brand identity and equity.

Stealing Share is a brand development firm, but our work goes well beyond logo and mark creation. We make it our business to develop actionable brand marketing strategies that often change the message that your advertising agency forwards. Agencies see the world in terms of communication, we see the world in terms of equity, belief, and persuasion. Your brand is where persuasion begins, and there within the mind of the consumer lies the real opportunity.

Think about your brand equity like the double helix DNA in a fertilized egg. Everything the baby becomes is determined by that strand of genetic material. Hair color, height, weight, eye color, and if you are a parent, you know that personality too seems to be imprinted at the point of conception. In many ways, the child's development can be considered "lawful" within the genetic code of the DNA. Cell division and growth is all a duplication of that same genetic material.

Your Brand Needs Correction

Genetic engineering is still along way off in human development but not in our brand repertoire. For example, if sales are not meeting expectations, your brand has not been engineered to accept and materialize the opportunity. It needs correction at its very root.

Everything that your brand represents needs to be seen as lawful to its genetic roots, and that same DNA provides the umbrella that encompasses all of your business practices and product innovations, giving them necessary value. All too often the importance of brand equity is seen as an aside to the development of marketing messages. When properly adjusted, your brand strategy will begin to exert influence on the marketing messages and will make your ad-

vertising better. It is as simple as that.

Agency Hopping Is Mild Insanity

Flip through the pages of AD AGE or ADWEEK and see the long list of companies who change advertising agencies like the NBA changes coaches. In three years, if industry averages hold up, the same companies will be back on the same list once more. Companies are satisfied to put a new coat of paint or aluminum siding over a building to conceal the structural termite damage inside.

The reasoning behind this insanity is easy to comprehend because brand has been misunderstood by companies all over the world for years. Hiring a brand development firm like Stealing Share is a top of mind priority only when companies are launching a new product or service. Yet, the vast majority of our busi-

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ness originates from companies that have recognized the treadmill they are on with their advertising agencies and want a real solution. These companies are desperate for something that is more germinal to their success than a new advertising themeline and set of commercials. Our work makes your agencies work better.

How you Influence Customers

There are some simple reasons for this proficiency. We approach companies' brands differently because we are anthropologists at our core. We understand your target audiences' precepts and build your brand around the fundamental beliefs of the very customers you wish to influence. We know that brand attraction is directly proportional to the beliefs and values

of the target audience. If they can see themselves in the promise of your brand, the brand will come to life naturally.

Secondly, we are change agents and insist on telling you the truth. Our relationship is over upon project completion, and as a result, we are free to be more objective. We are not going to tell you things that further or falsely reinforce our relationship. Our relationship is dependent on our results and findings and nothing more. As a result, we are wedded only to what works and give sanctuary to no sacred cows.

Build The Brand Bond

The very worst news you could receive from Stealing Share is that you are doing everything perfectly well. We are hired to find opportunities and to excavate brand problems; it is how we earn our bread and butter. We challenge everything your brand and marketing embodies, and we find ways to inject important links of your customer's DNA into your brand essence.

Armed with such a powerful essence of your customer, your brand will discover how much the customer can literally covet your brand. They are stopped dead in their tracks when they connect to your brand and something inside says..."I need to be THAT." From that point on the customer establishes an unbreakable bond with your brand because it helps them see themselves as alive and important. It makes your advertising more effective. Choosing a different brand to satisfy the same needs begins to feel a bit like suicide to your customer.

Thus, do not jump on the wagon of finger pointing. Your advertising agency or marketing department may actually not be guilty as charged when sales and margins slip. The problem is quite literally in the genes. More radical, internal, and familial corrections are needed then simply conducting an agency review.

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BEYOND THE THEORY