

next tuesday afternoon

June 24, 2008

Branding is at best an art and at worst, a difficult task that leaves many companies with questions. For many companies, finding the right position within the marketplace is also a time-consuming and frustrating task. If companies want to position their brand, they need to find out where it presently sits in consumers' psyches. They need to discover their Brand's Truth.

"While there are a handful of well-known examples of Brand Truths that have evolved, in general a Brand Truth "is what it is. Knowing a Brand's Truth means finding the "edges" of a brand - what it is and what it can never be. The sooner companies learn it and work with it, the better their marketing messages will become," argues Isabelle Albanese, a nationally known brand consultant.

Here's a quick, simple and straightforward exercise that takes less than 15 minutes and will yield results far beyond the time invested.

Question One: What is the brand, and what is it not? This tells right away what the "edges" of the brand are within the category, and the limits of consumer acceptance. It also provides a kind of roadmap for where the brand can credibly be taken.

Question Two: What does the brand stand for, and what does it stand against in the minds of consumers? This begins to get at emotional connections, the underpinnings of loyalty, and longstanding beliefs and their origins. This touches on a brand's iconic status, potential toward status, or lack thereof.

Question Three: What is the brand an expert in and what does it know nothing about? This tells the true brand equity as well as an inherent lack of credibility. It also begins to get at brand differentiation and elements of ownability.

Think about the stark differences between coffee at Dunkin Donuts and coffee at Starbucks. It's all coffee, but the differences define the brand and the appeal to consumers. With the answers to these three questions, you can begin creating honest marketing messages that will connect with customers--because they reflect the Brand's Truth. When the messaging is right, consumers listen.

I'm Lisa Davis. Let me know if I can help you in any way, please feel free to visit at OneAlliance.com and I'll be back next Tuesday afternoon.

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