

# next tuesday afternoon

october 2, 2007

Here's a quick test that I use to kick off one of my branding speeches ... it starts by asking each person to write down their three favorite animals. Don't over think it. What does it mean? The first one reveals how you perceive yourself. The second reveals how others perceive you. The third reveals how you really are. There are lots of ooh's, aah's and giggles.

I go on to share that while this is true for individuals, it is also true for businesses.

Apply this test to your business and sometimes you'll find that most problems associated with a brand are because it mirrors itself too much, or that it mirrors its customers too much. The ideal place is to represent both.

Once you know this, it's easy to spot companies that only mirror themselves, or that only mirror their customers. You can take this to the bank - consumers cannot build a brand by themselves. You have to bring something to the party. So that means that the development of successful brands requires a company pointing the mirror at itself and saying, "We're good at (fill in the blank), we can make your life (better, easier, etc.) and we can offer this to you at a fair market price.

I always use a Hershey's bar to describe this ideal. No matter where you buy a Hershey's bar, it looks the same, smells the same and most importantly it tastes the same. How long do you think it took Hershey's to perfect this? They know what they're good at and what their customers like, as customers have continued to support this brand for more than a century. And to think that prior to Milton Hershey's creation, chocolate was a delicacy reserved for the rich.

As we all head into 4th quarter, it's an ideal time to do a brand personality test. Does your marketing reflect you and your customers in the right way?

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

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