

## **Branding: Bottom-line Vanguard**

Oscar Wilde once described a cynic as “a man that knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.” It’s a quote that sometimes reminds me of Branding: companies understand how much it costs them but can lose sight of its positive effect on the bottom line.

I was thinking of that as I read a recent front page story in Advertising Age titled “Moving to Margins in a New Marketing Age”. Also in the Marketplace section of the Wall Street Journal was an article titled “Celebrity Fatigue”. Two stories which on the face of it tackled two disparate subjects but actually pointed to the importance of that one basic marketing tenet; Having a Strong Brand.

In the Ad Age article it was reported that across a broad swath of consumer markets, companies are seeking to increase revenue by shunning low-price/high volume tactics and instead simply raising per unit prices. One ingredient that is absolutely necessary for this to work is the ability to lean on a strong brand.

Any decision maker wants to feel safe that a correct course of action has been chosen. That holds true whether choosing partners or choosing peanut butter. A strong brand offers your customers that decisional safety. It also makes it less likely that customers will leave you. As Guy Gabriele (our award-winning Creative Director) has written, “the Brand Identity is the Strategic DNA of a Company”, it really transmits what a company stands for and permeates every facet of a company's business practices and outward projections. A brand that is clearly and effectively communicated gives your customer something to bond to, and that bond can survive price increases and competitive price undercutting.

For the upcoming fashion year many of the large fashion houses are dumping their celebrity shills and are returning to having Supermodels tout their wares. The conclusion was reached that it was the celebrity not the product that was sucking up all the marketing wattage. And although Supermodels such as Naomi Campbell and Kate Moss are somewhat celebrities in their own right, their celebrity is purely fashion oriented so it stays on-message. One strategy masks the brand; the other polishes it.

Without a strong brand strategy in your arsenal how will you be able to mount a strong marketing offense or defense? Luckily the provision of such is the business Idea Engineering is in. Take a look at the branding we provided for Gorilla Glue, GoToMyPC and KX Gym amongst others and then let’s talk about what we can do for you.

Wishing you a great fourth quarter.

Simon Dixon  
CEO  
Idea Engineering