

BRAND MATTERS: Your Logo Is Not Your Brand.

EMOTIONAL BRANDING

Great brands don't just happen. They are a result of imaginative and insightful mapping of the outcomes your product produces for your customers' lifestyles.

Your brand must convey a path toward an emotional place where your customers want to go. It isn't about the creative either. A swoosh or an apple with one bite missing are only icons, but the emotional connection to that icon is built around specific outcomes that we all seek.



That swoosh symbolizes athleticism, courage, honor, victory, and teamwork while the apple speaks to uncompromising willingness to be the change we all want to see in the world

The Apple brand is about imagination, design and innovation and it is not just intimate with its customers; it is loved.

In 2021, emotional brands must share three essential principles:

The company underneath the brand projects a humanistic corporate culture and a strong corporate ethic, characterized by volunteerism, support for good causes or involvement in the community.

The company has a unique visual and verbal vocabulary. This is true of Apple. Its products and advertising are clearly recognizable ... to everyone. (So also are Coke, Kleenex, Target and Wal-Mart).

The company has established a heartfelt connection with its customers. This can take several forms, from building trust to establishing a community around a product, and in Apple's case, its products are designed around people.

In this era, characterized by the COVID-19 pandemic and a deeply divided country, with technology accelerating faster and faster, and digital security a mystery to most, people are anxious and confused.

People need to find some grounding, a human touch and a leading hand.

PRODUCTS COME AND GO. BRANDS LAST FOREVER.

People are drawn to brands that create an emotional connection because successful brands are selling their own ideas back to them. They are selling the most powerful ideas that we have in our culture such as transcendence and community and even democracy itself, all of which are expressed in brand meanings today.

Apple expresses liberty regained; Pepsi, youthfulness; Nike, a competitive soul; and AT&T, the promises of the future.

Brands are even more important than products.

Why? Because products have limited life cycles, especially in Cybersecurity where today's threat and solution are rapidly replaced by tomorrow's attack vector and advanced technology. But brands, if managed well, actually can last forever.

Our dreams and desires for a better world are no longer articulated by John F Kennedy speeches nor generated through personal epiphanies. They have now become the intellectual currency of Pepsi and Harley-Davidson. We used to have movements for change. Now we have products.

Apple's famous "1984" Super Bowl ad, for example, was expressly political: It's message was, give power to the masses. The power, of course, was computing power. The message was an ideology and a set of values. It was the democratization of technology and the computer for the rest of us.

And even though the Mac cost substantially more than comparable computing power, the new Apple tribes, consisting of smart men and women, stood in line for hours to demonstrate their loyalty to a brand, and to capture a little of that essence for themselves.



Think different.™

BRAND POSITIONING.

The process of building and managing a brand must carefully develop and implement creative brand strategies. To assist in that planning, we use three interconnected models that provide micro and macro perspectives for the brand.

The first is brand positioning, which designs the company's offering and image in a way that occupies a distinctive place in the minds of the target market.

The key components to competitive positioning are 1) a competitive frame of reference for the target market and the nature of competition; 2) the points-of-difference (POD) in strong, favorable, and unique brand associations; 3) the points-of-parity (POP) in brand associations that negate any existing or potential competitor points-of-difference; and 4) a brand mantra that summarizes the essence of the brand and the key points-of-difference in 3-5 words.

The competitive frame of reference defines the competing brands and their attributes.

Points-of-difference (PODs) are attributes that consumers strongly associate with a specific brand, and believe they could not find to the same extent with a competitive brand. Examples in the automobile market are Volvo (safety), Toyota (quality and dependability), Tesla (conservation and élan), Mercedes-Benz (quality and prestige), BMW (engineering and speed), and Lexus (dependability and luxury).

There are three tests that determine whether or not a brand association can truly function as a point-of-difference:

1. Is it desirable by the consumer?
2. Can it be delivered by the company?
3. Is it differentiated against other competitors?



Points-of-parity (POPs), are associations that are not unique to the subject brand and are in fact shared by competitive brands. Competitive points-of-parity are associations designed to negate your competitors' points-of-difference.

If, in the eyes of consumers, a brand can match those areas where the competitors are trying to find an advantage and achieve advantages in other areas, the brand will be in a strong, and maybe even in a dominating competitive position.

POPs AND PODs.

A common challenge in creating a strong, competitive brand position is that many of the attributes or benefits that make up the points-of-parity and points-of-difference are negatively correlated.

It might be difficult for example, to position a brand as affordable, while at the same time claiming a position of high quality. It is the old software dilemma: you can have it fast, good or cheap, but you can only choose two

A simplified example of PODs and POP's could be in the positioning of diet beverages.

At launch, a competitive frame of reference could include Diet Coke against Pepsi and other soft drinks. The POD would focus on sugar-free and zero calories, while the POP would be the same great taste.

After launch of competitive diet soft drinks, the POD and POP will have changed. The POD would have become the same great taste while the POP would have switched to sugar-free and zero calories.

A close-up photograph of a woman's face, looking down thoughtfully. She is holding a can of Diet Coke in her hand. The can is silver with red and black text, including "SUGAR FREE" and "Diet". The background is a soft, warm brown color.

**POINTS OF PARITY
POINTS OF DIFFERENCE**

THE BRAND MANTRA.

To provide focus around the intent of the brand positioning and what will drive consumers to associate with the brand, it is useful to create a brand mantra. It is the articulation of the brand's heart and soul.

Brand mantras are short phrases expressed in very few words that capture the irrefutable essence or spirit of the brand positioning. The purpose is to create a conscious correlation between the brand and what it stands for in the minds of both employees, customers and external marketing partners.

A classic example of a brand mantra is Nike's "authentic, athletic performance". The mantra may not be the external brand slogan but lacking a better expression it often becomes one and the same.

An effective brand mantra has three key criteria:

- 1) Communicate: A good brand mantra should define the category (or categories) of business for the brand, set the brand boundaries, and clarify the unique brand characteristics.
- 2) Simplify: An effective brand mantra should be short, crisp, and vividly memorable.
- 3) Inspire: It should also stake out a position that is personally meaningful and relevant to as many employees, customers and prospects as possible.

JUST DO IT.

RESONANCE.

While good brand positioning has to be somewhat aspirational so that the brand has room to grow and improve, it is important that a POD and POP duality is achieved that include both rational and emotional components, so that the brand appeals to the head as well as the heart.

Resonance determines the path toward intense, active and loyal relationships with customers.

Resonance is a key component of the brand value chain which describes how to trace the value creation process to gain a better understanding of the marketing impact, e.g., what association will the brand have with its market and how much of a connection will the brand make with its customers.



Building a strong brand involves a series of steps, each contingent upon the last and based on the following questions:

- 1) Who are you? (expressed as your brand identity)
- 2) What are you? (what is the meaning of your brand)
- 3) What about you? What do I think or feel about you? (brand resonance)
- 4) What about you and me? (brand relationships)

We are of the mind-set that believes marketing must map directly to revenue. So, for us, it doesn't matter how much resonance a brand creates in its market if it isn't selling product. Nike, Salesforce and Apple are special brands, but they also sell Billions worth of athletic wear, sales performance applications and computers.

Your brand will ultimately define who you are, why you are here, and the thing that connects you to your audience and fan base. Other than delivering high quality products, it is the next most important decision you will make. And because of that, you should expect to invest appropriately in the creation and nurturing of your brand. A great brand will obscure a plethora of product mistakes.



ABOUT US

Cybersecurity Marketing is all we do.

CyberTheory is a full-service cybersecurity digital marketing advisory firm, providing advertising, marketing, content, digital strategy, messaging, positioning, event management, lead generation and media publishing.

Our sister firm, ISMG, has 20+ editors and 33 news, education and information desks around the world producing relevant and timely content 24/7 for its 985,000 subscriber network.

In addition to our resident CISO team and 40 member CISO Customer Advisory Board, our extensive knowledge and exclusive access to the largest Cybersecurity membership network in the world allows us to personalize the targeting of each and every Cybersecurity buyer persona.

With strategic insights from our global education services, media providers, intelligence analysts, journalists and executive leaders, we're always aligned with the latest industry direction and demands.

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