

BRANDING VICTORY

Vision

Rationale

Strategy

Identity

Standards

Implementation

Evolution

Developed by Jason Walker



VICTORY

He will win whose army is animated by the same spirit throughout all its ranks.

–Sun Tzu, The Art of War

From The Movie **Blackberry**:



Jim the Marketing Guy: (frustrated with Mike)– Mike, have you ever heard the expression perfect is the enemy of good!

Mike the Product Engineer: Yeah....but good enough is the enemy of humanity.

d **x** **d** **=** **:D**

Difference Design Delight

The central problem of brand-building
is getting a complex organization to
execute a bold idea.

BRAND: Where We've Been.

Brand

How customers currently perceive and describe you* and your* offering.

Branding

The process of applying designed decision making to daily work across the totality of the customer facing experience to shape the customer's perception of your* and your* offering.

Branded

The state of having a perception that exists among the majority of the desired market. You can be branded in a desirable way or an undesirable way.

Brand Identity

The palette of articulated visual, verbal and interactive choices available to a workforce to align individual work into reinforcing patterns of behavior and expression that build the desired customer perception of your and your offering.

Brand Standards

The articulated and recorded patterns of behavior that a workforce uses to hold itself accountable to aligning individual work into reinforcing patterns of behavior that build the desired customer perception of your and your offering.

Brand Promise



We care about you. We will walk with you toward a porn free life of integrity with restored relationships with God, Family and Friends.



To Be Determined

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Branding ~~and~~ **is** Strategy



The Company DNA

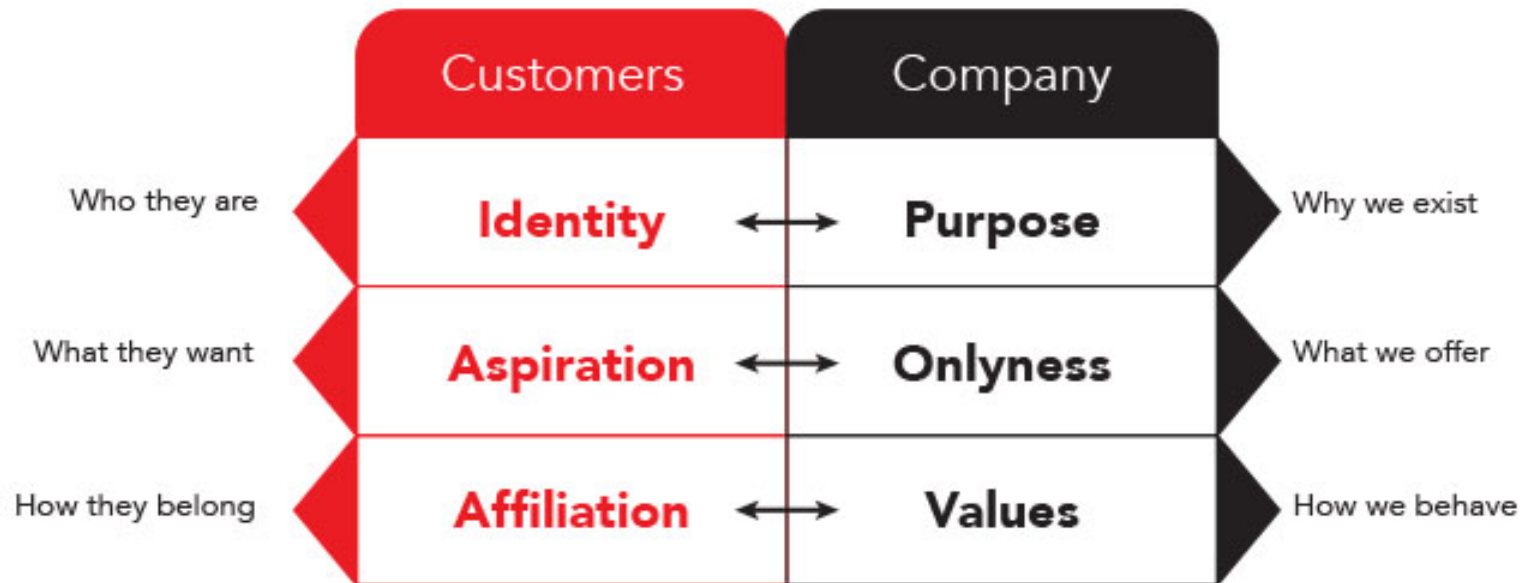
Brand and Business are locked in a perpetual dance.

The Business strand is focused on business centric goals and issues.

The Brand is focused on customer centric goals and issues.

You can't have a strong business without strong customers and you can't have strong customers without a strong business.

Customer/Company **Synergy**



Good brand strategy will bring mutually reinforcing fit between our customer's goals and our strategic anchors.

The Mission

Covenant Eyes

Pornography is corrupting hundreds of millions of people. We exist to change the course of history by enabling the world to overcome porn and be restored and transformed.

Victory: Serves the Covenant Eyes Mission



To be determined.

Hint: Christians are part of those hundreds of millions of people, and they are an influential group in the morality of western civilization.

Christians in the USA

Why? – Business Centric Rationale

Religions develop in their faithful a moral code that eschews lust, anger, and indeed the use of pornography.

This is true of Christianity. That moral code creates a value-set that is deeply aligned with our corporate mission, thus a reinforcing fit for our strategy is to reach religious people first.

Why? – Customer Centric Rationale

Why do Christians matter beyond having a moral code that we exploit to save resources and use to make money.

How do they matter to the mission beyond financing it?

Beyond Making Money

70% of people think companies should play a role in improving lives

Only 24% believe that companies are working hard to do this

The Archetype

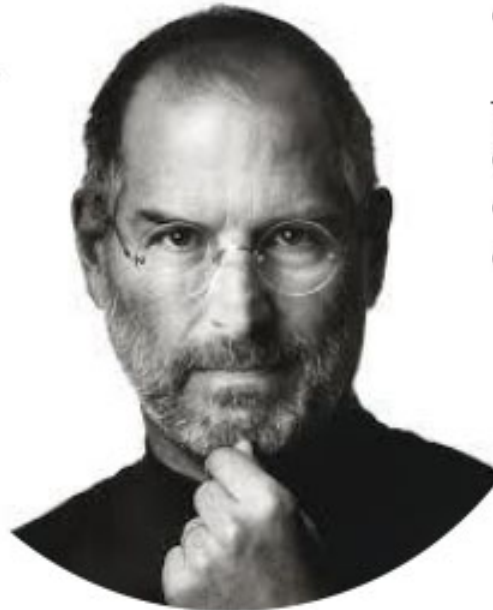
CEO - Business Strategy

What is good or necessary for the business

- **Returned** to Apple in Late 90's
- **Slashed** Meandering Product Lines.
- **Focused** Apple around 4 products.
- Allowed him to **conserve** limited resources.

Consumer	Pro
Desktop	Desktop
Laptop	Laptop

Job's Product Focus Matrix



Steve Jobs

The Original CEO/CBO

CBO - Brand Strategy

What is good or necessary for the Customer

Launched **Think Different** Ad Campaign

- Established **Positioning**.
- Established **Differentiation**.

This created Brand Relevance for

- A Desired Customer **Identity**
- A Desired Customer **Aspiration**
- A Desired Customer **Affiliation**.

For CE, this should be Davin's Picture.

What Good looks like

Good is relative to the criteria you define.

But the market always tells the truth.

What **Good** Looks like– **The Charismatic Brand**

A "charismatic brand" refers to a brand that possesses a unique and compelling personality, attracting customers through its values, story, and overall aura, often going beyond just the product itself, making it stand out from competitors and inspire strong loyalty among its audience, similar to how a charismatic person draws people in with their personality and presence; essentially, it's a brand that people feel a deep connection with and are passionate about, not just because of its features, but because of the identity it represents.

Strong brand story:

A well-developed narrative that resonates with customers on an emotional level, often tied to a mission or purpose beyond just profit.

Authenticity:

A genuine and transparent brand image that aligns with the company's values and actions.

Unique identity:

A distinct personality and visual style that differentiates the brand from competitors.

Emotional connection:

The ability to evoke positive emotions in customers, creating a sense of belonging or shared experience.

Inspiring leadership:

Leaders who embody the brand values and communicate them effectively, creating a strong following.

The Beautiful Solution – Framework

$$\text{Surprise} + \text{Appropriateness} + \text{Elegance} = \text{Beautiful}$$

Surprise

In the absence of surprise you have the predictable derivative. The trite idea that will rarely catch attention and rarely capture it long enough to communicate the value.

Appropriateness

Appropriateness is the catalyzing agent that converts mere provocation into surprising relevance.

Elegance

Managing complexity to create a desirable balance of unity and variety so that the user has enough familiarity to be comfortable and enough novelty to stay interested.

This requires **bold leadership**

Indeed, the search for
the removal of risk more
often than not leads
to mediocrity.

– Chris Hirst –

No Bull\$#IT Leadership

Doctors and Mechanics

**We'll never get anywhere if we have
to stop and examine every opinion
tossed our way.**

A man notices chest pains. He leaves early for the doctor appointment so he can get an oil change on his way. While at his mechanic's shop, he ends up discussing the chest pains with him Mechanic. The mechanic also had a heart issue several years ago and was given a diagnosis. The mechanic says "it sounds like what I had." It was nothing to worry about.

Later, at the Doctor's office, the Doctor diagnosis him with severely clogged arteries that require a triple bypass surgery. This new terrifies the man. He thinks about what the mechanic said.

He has a choice to make.

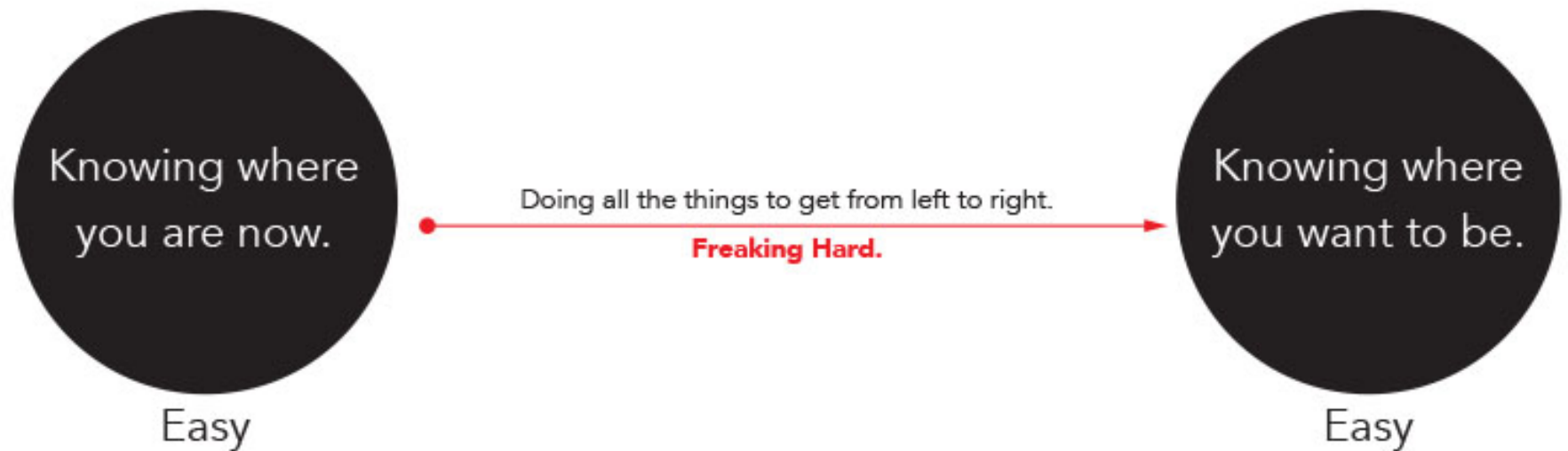
Everyone has an opinion. We have to decide who to listen to based on education and experience which combine to create levels of expertise.

Listening to mechanics will papercut us to death.

**The central problem of
brand-building is getting a
complex organization to
execute a bold idea.**

– Marty Neumeier –
The Designful Company

Leadership in General



**In the absence of knowing
who we want to be, we
become schizophrenic.**

We have too many personalities trying
to be the dominant personality.

It Makes Our **Market Murky**



The tighter we can make this identity, the more surgical we can design for it.

In Branding trying to be everything to everyone is a classic mistake.

Trying to win the hearts and minds of everyone in the market actually costs you marketshare.

**It ties our hands.
It Stops us from making an impact**

**Instead.
Articulate the minimum Viable Market and Build a Monopoly Around It.**

Then scale out with other products.



Muddy Customer Identities Lead To Muddy Brand Identities

It Wastes **Resources**

Passionate people work hard everyday pursuing their own agendas

Work contradicts rather than reinforcing.

Resources and Careers are Wasted.

Premium Talent Leaves

Boldness Is Stifled For The Safe Ambiguity.

**Our Focus is split.
We end up on a
hamster wheel.**

We make and make and make
only to see declining growth.

Maximizing Resources Through Branding

Where we are now from my P.O.V.

Covenant Eyes is composed of a lot of passionate people working with almost complete autonomy to execute our strategic anchors using their best judgment.

The problem with this is that almost complete autonomy means that 200+ identities express their unique version the brand to the market.

Depending on the touchpoint, the customer encounters the worldview and background of the content producer rather than the corporation that is Covenant Eyes or Victory.

Maximizing Resources Through **Branding**

Simultaneously, because we don't understand ourselves and know how we should behave, **we gravitate to inaction rather than action.**

We take autonomy away selectively when someone tries to do something that might actually draw a line in the sand.

Un-Branding becomes a weapon we use against ourselves instead of using branding against our competitors.

The Body

&

The Personality

A metaphor for branding.

The **Body** and the **Personality**

The **Body**

The word "corporation" comes from the Latin word corpus, which means "body" or "a body of people".

The **Personality**

The brand is the personality through which the body expresses itself. You want to be as attractive to the chosen market as possible.

A Personality of **Patterns**

A personality is really just a pattern of repeated behaviors.

These patterns of behavior help us know each other and anticipate future behavior from the person or brand.

We choose and trust people & brands who have agreeable and attractive patterns of behavior. We predict the future based on these patterns.

These people and brands align with our sensibilities

We reject those who don't.

Personality over Product

Brands are important because they build trust and allow potential customers to measure values and congruence and to anticipate the actions of the brand.

When these patterns are broken, the deviation is said to be "off brand."

The **Unintentional Brand**

In the absence of articulated patterns, intuitive patterns emerge and shape the customer's perception.

You still have a brand, but is it the brand you want?

Conception and Birth

Branding is an act of **conception** and **birth**

Where we want to move to with branding is the **conception of two living brands**, Covenant Eyes and Victory who will have their own **identities** and **patterns of behavior**.

Covenant Eyes is the parent and Victory is the first born.

Each person who makes customer facing content and features works in service to that brand and **must align their work for reinforcing fit** to create perceivable patterns of behavior to bring these brands to life in a consistent way.

The Bodily Systems (A Metaphor)

We often lament that we don't know how to work together in the company. We instinctively know that unity would be better, but we don't know how to make it work. I think it is because we're all instinctively trying to influence the brand.

Systems Thinking.

A system* is an interconnected set of elements that is coherently organized in a way that achieves something.

Meadows, Donella H.. Thinking in Systems: International Bestseller (p. 11). (Function). Kindle Edition.

To this end, **departments become organs** within the living brand, **performing jobs in a system** while individual contributors function as **cells with unified purpose** making up those organs.

Self Expression or Brand Expression

SELF EXPRESSION

The expression of one's own personality, feelings, thoughts, or ideas.

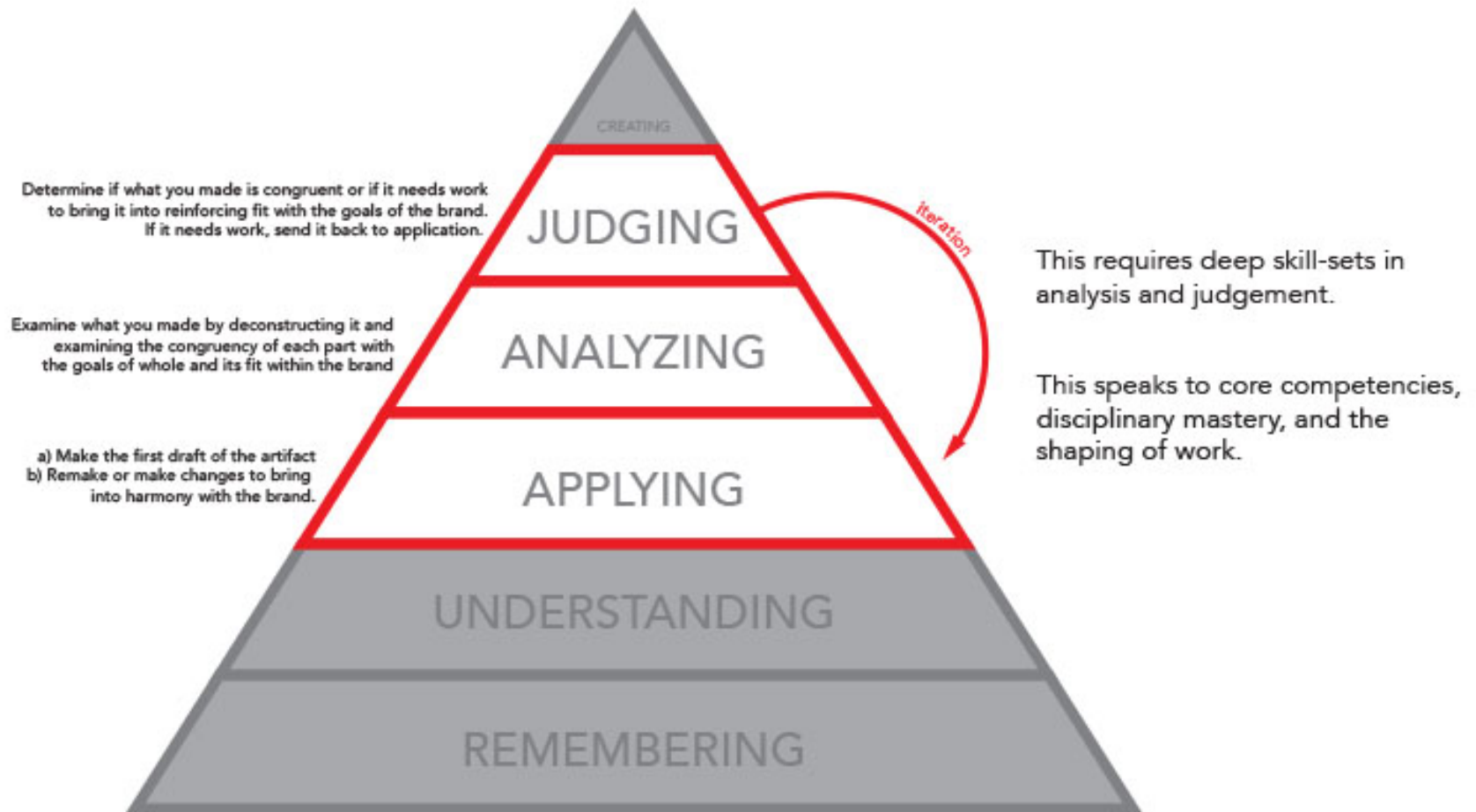
vs.

BRAND EXPRESSION

The expression of the brand's personality, feelings, thoughts, or ideas.

*This is where the company will feel pain and a threat to autonomous work, if we aren't careful.
It is in my opinion an area of immaturity in the company that we must overcome.
It is also a great opportunity for us to fuel our growth and leave competition behind.*

Designful Thinking



Bloom's Taxonomy

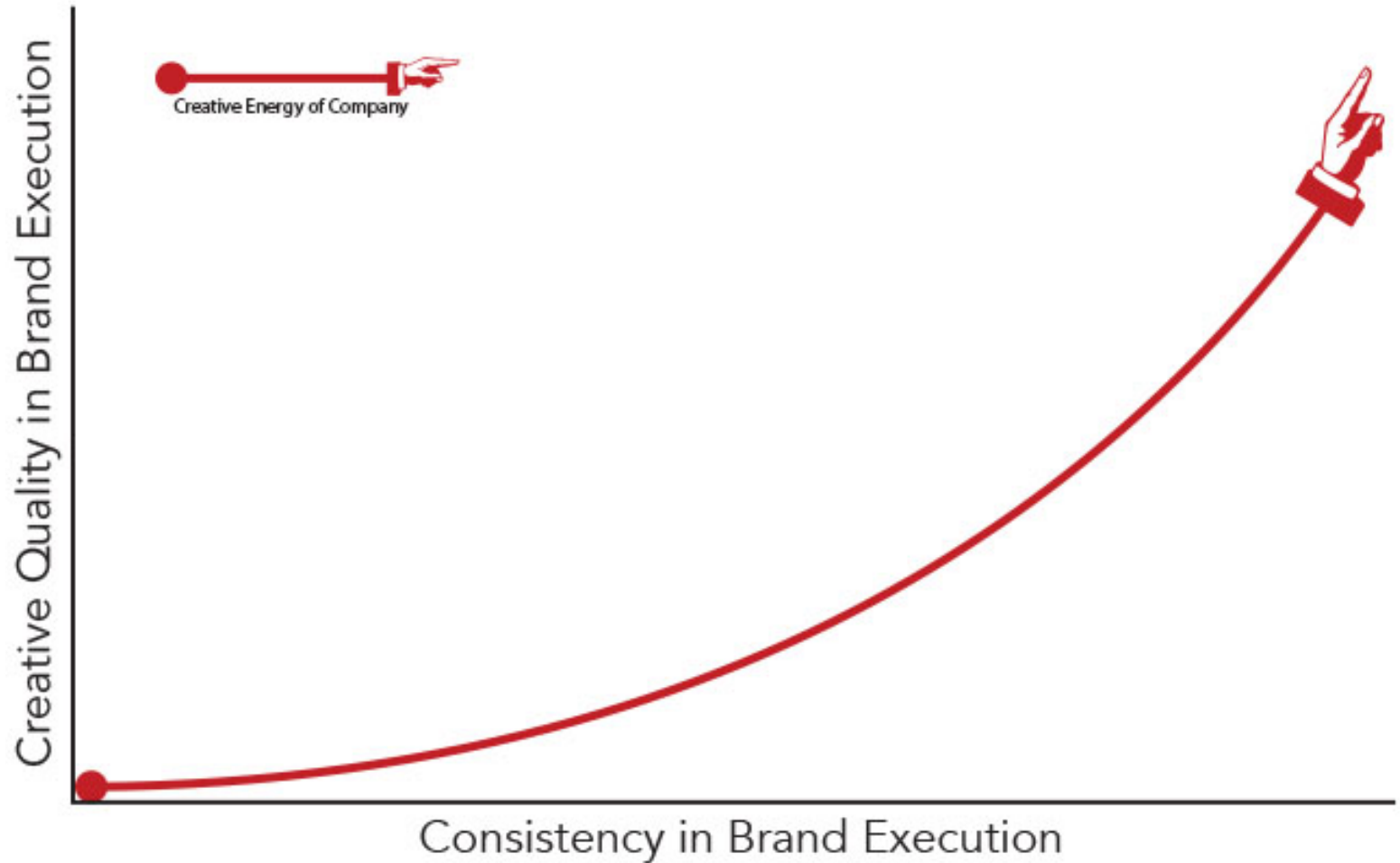
Structured Autonomy

Brands bring structured autonomy to production. We want our teams to have autonomy to produce and we want to decentralize command so teams can level expertise on their part of the customer experience. But we also want to create brand expression and mitigate self-expression.

Brand standards install a minimal set of creative constraints and establish the criteria for good work. Good work aligns with the patterns of behavior that are established in the brand standards. It tightens the breadth of expression which keeps people from meandering from one batch of low hanging fruit to the next, changing the flavor of the brand with each new campaign.

Instead, people climb higher in the brand tree and harvest the higher quality and more creatively juicy fruit that tastes better to the market.

Creative Direction



What Great Brands **Do!**

Micro-Case Studies of Apple/Coke/Nike

Brands that Depend on Their Brands



Three of the most popular and profitable brands in the world

Other brands idolize these brands why?

Why does everyone want to be



or



or



There are so few good brands. Plenty of brands have pretty corporate identities
but very few have any real meaning behind them. They are interchangeable.

Interchangeable is bad in branding. Beloved brands command higher prices and get more repetitive customers.

Why doesn't everyone want to be

Walmart  or **EXXON** or **BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY INC.**

These brands are highly profitable, and among the top profiting brands in the world, but they don't have a lot of emotional meaning behind them. Walmart sells cheap stuff. Exxon sells gas, and Berkshire Hathaway is an investment firm. Warren Buffet has a bigger brand IMO than his company.

I'm not loyal to Walmart. I avoid it if I can. I go to whatever gas stations is closest.

Emotional Value.

This is what Jonh Parkinson might call “Complementary Value”



These brands move people at the emotional level.

The other brands compete on something else.

Unique **Value.**

It means a benefit you deliver to your customers, which they can't get anywhere else, which lots of them want or need, and which is big enough to animate an entire brand.

Smith, Alex M H. No Bullsh*t Strategy: A Founder's Guide to Gaining Competitive Advantage with a Strategy That Actually Works (p. 21). (Function). Kindle Edition.



With Great Brands the Emotional Value is Almost Always More Important Than the Core Value

How I feel about myself choosing and using this product is the experience.

If Functionality is all that matters, **why do people pay 650% more** for a Macbook Pro?



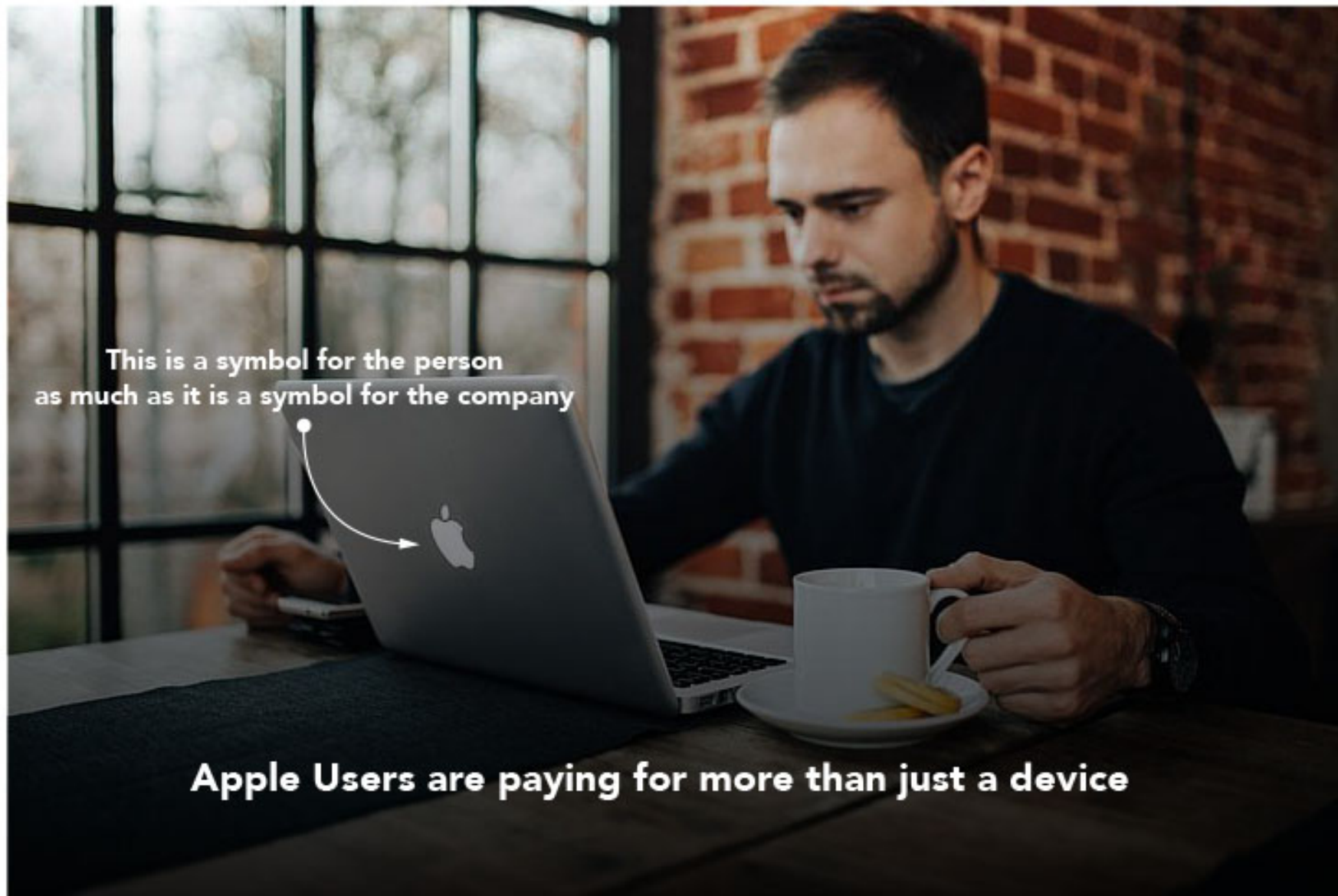
Acer Aspire 3 14"

Full HD Display, Intel Core i3-N305,
Intel UHD Graphics, 8GB LPDDR5 Onboard Memory,
128GB NVMe SSD
\$247.00



MacBook Pro 14"

10-Core CPU/10-Core GPU
16GB Unified Memory
512GB SSD Storage¹
\$1599.00



Apple Users are paying for more than just a device

Most people will never slam a basketball goal, yet **people**
line up to pay 543% more for Air Jordan Sneakers every year.



Air Jordan 1 Mid Shoes

Black/White/Gym Red

\$124.99



FUBU Men's Heritage Basketball High-Top Sneakers

Black/White/Red

\$23.00



**The Swoosh is a symbol for something
bigger than a shoe company**

Apple Embraces **Storybranding**

When Apple began **filtering their communication to make it simple and relevant**, they actually stopped featuring computers in most of their advertising. After all, nobody at the time knew why they would need a computer.

Instead, they understood **their customers were all living, breathing protagonists in stories they felt were uninteresting**. Jobs invited those heroes into a better story, one in which **they could be different, productive, artistic, and recognized**. The offer was clear: if you want to be different, choose Apple.

Miller, Donald. Building a StoryBrand 2.0: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen (pp. 22-23). (Function). Kindle Edition.

The Best Copywriting **Ever**



Think Different as a commercial, and a print campaign immediately created an identity (the creative), aspiration (someone capable of changing the world) and affiliation (see the great people above) and spoke to one of the seven primal desires that exist in all humans, self-actualization.

Think Different.

Here's to the crazy ones. The misfits.
The rebels. The troublemakers.
The round pegs in the square holes.

The ones who see things differently.
They're not fond of rules, and they have
no respect for the status quo.

You can quote them, disagree with them,
glorify or vilify them.
About the only thing you can't do is
ignore them.
Because they change things.

They push the human race forward.

And while some see them as the crazy ones,
we see genius.

Because the people who are crazy enough
to think they can change the world, are usually
the ones who do.

From Functional Value to **Emotional Value**

In 1983, Apple launched a computer called Lisa, the last project Jobs worked on before he was let go. Jobs released Lisa with a nine-page ad in the New York Times spelling out the computer's technical features. It was nine pages of geek talk nobody outside NASA was interested in. **The computer bombed.**

When Jobs returned to the company after running Pixar, Apple became customer-centric, simple in their product offering, compelling, and clear in their communication. The first campaign Jobs released after returning from his time at Pixar, then, went from nine pages in the New York Times to just two words on billboards all over America: **Think Different.**

Miller, Donald. Building a StoryBrand 2.0: Clarify Your Message So Customers Will Listen (p. 22). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Apple doesn't care about appealing to everyone.

Bill would buy an



Acer Aspire 3 14"
\$247.00

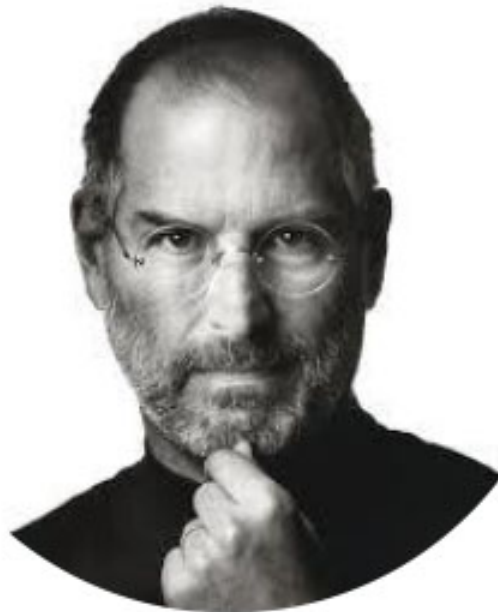
Mac
vs
PC
RUTHLESS
MARKET
CURRATION

Steve would buy an



MacBook Pro 14"
\$1599.00

They just want all these people.



Steve Jobs

The Original CEO/CBO

Apple has a lot of reasons to be successful,
but their products don't function 650% better than other computers.

"Just make us look like Apple"

a very opinionated and long-tenured Covenant Eyes employee.

The image features the iconic Coca-Cola logo, rendered in its classic white script font. The logo is centered horizontally and vertically against a solid, vibrant red background. The letters are fluid and connected, with a registered trademark symbol (®) at the end of the word "Cola".

The Real Thing.

Feature vs. **Brand**

The Pepsi **Challenge**

Beginning in the Mid 1970's Pepsi launched a what initially looked like a brilliant campaign to put taste to the test with Coca Cola, the dominant brand for decades prior and the category leader for colas.

In 1981, they launched a commercial featuring then relevant TV star Gabe Kaplan showing people tasting pepsi and coke and choosing Pepsi "more" times than they chose Coke.

Coke responded hastily with a new sweeter formula because on the surface this looked like a ship sinking marketing campaign. People were seen actively choosing Pepsi and saying it tasted better. (Testimonials)

Coke changed it's formula. **Coke drinkers hated it.** Coke renamed it "New Coke" and brought back "Coke Classic." This created an internal war with Coke fans evangelizing their favorite coke instead of rejecting pepsi.

Eventually Coke killed New Coke, kept Coke Classic and began reinvesting in an earlier campaign around "the Real Thing" which originally launched in 1968 and **attached coke to "a new dream of America**, in which divisions between young and old, counterculture and mainstream, Black and white, poor and rich, liberal and conservative had been resolved."

Feature vs. **Brand**

The Pepsi **Challenge** (continued)



Pepsi marketed a feature "**Better Taste.**"

You don't actually want people thinking about the **features of a soft-drink**, particularly how much **sugar** is in it.

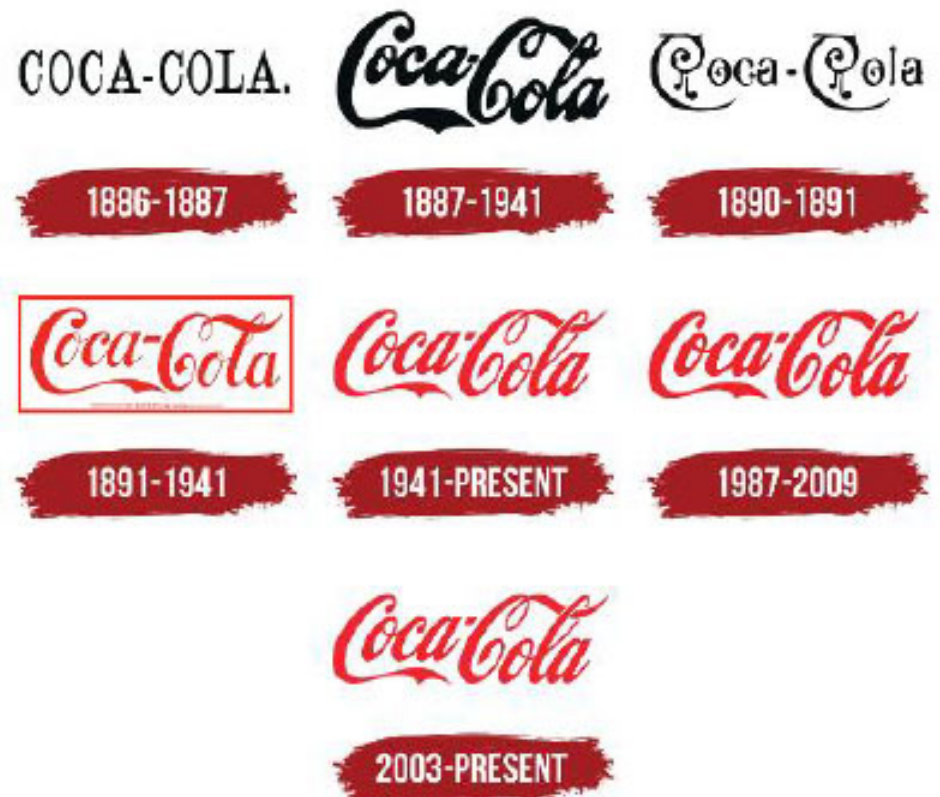


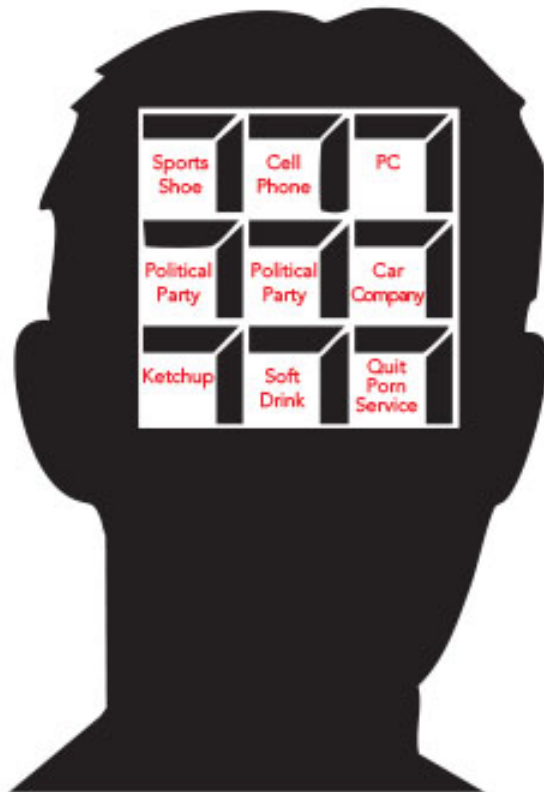
Coke Marketed a desire... "**Real Connection**"

It continues to build the **customer perception** of Coke around **connection & unity** at a variety of level from mass culture to intimate family events.

So How Did it **Work Out**

Identity Crisis: The last time Pepsi improved their brand by changing it was **when they renamed it from "Brad's Drink."**





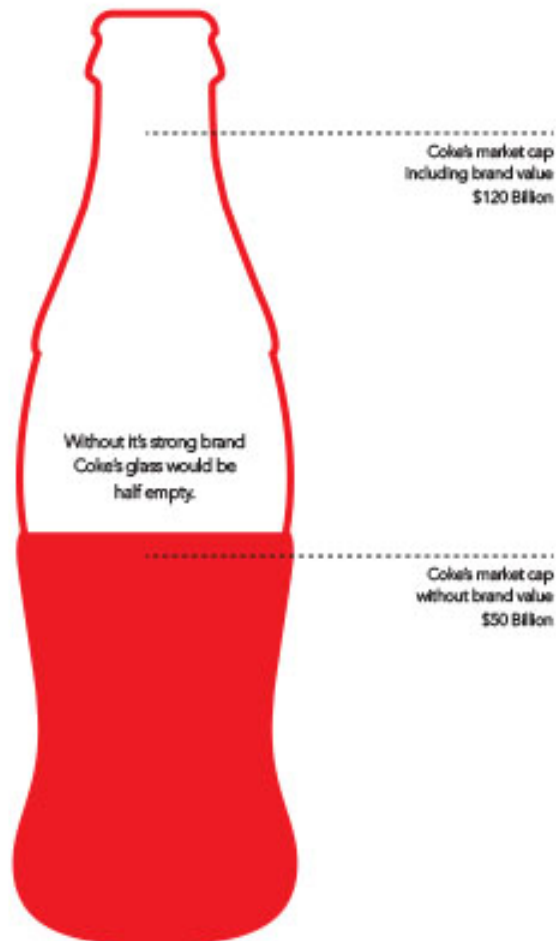
People Taste What They Want To Taste

Once a brand holds a position in the customer's mind, it is incredibly difficult to move that brand out and replace it with a new brand.

It usually requires some sort of catastrophic behavior by the dominant brand, or category disruption.

These brands also influence the customer's identity, align with their values and aspirations and signal them out to their tribe.

Brand Value – An intangible asset



Market Share of US Softdrinks	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2023
Coke	20.8 %	20.2 %	17.6 %	17.5 %	18.7 %	19.5 %	19.2 %
Dr. Pepper	5.7 %	6.3 %	5.7 %	6.5 %	7.2 %	8.0 %	8.3 %
Pepsi	15.0 %	13.5 %	11.2 %	9.8 %	9.1 %	8.7 %	8.3 %
Sprite	5.1 %	6.6 %	5.7 %	5.8 %	6.6 %	7.8 %	8.1 %
Diet Coke	8.8 %	8.6 %	9.8 %	10.2 %	8.6 %	7.9 %	7.8 %

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/visualizing-the-market-share-of-u-s-soft-drinks/>

Coke Spends 4 billion per year just on Advertising.

History shows that the first brand into the brain, on the average, gets twice the long-term market share of the No. 2 brand and twice again as much as the No. 3 brand. And the relationships are not easily changed.

Ries, Al; Trout, Jack. Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind (p. 43). (Function). Kindle Edition.

The Coca-Cola Facebook page has more than 17 million fans and 42 million likes, the most of any other brand in the world today.

Americans drink an average of 399 servings of Coke products per year, with 63% of those servings being Coca-Cola Classic.

With 7.3 billion humans on the planet, each one of them will consume at least 1 Coca-Cola product every 4 days.

There are 33 brands of non-alcoholic beverages in the world today that generate at least \$1 billion in annual revenues. Coca-Cola owns 15 of them.

\$74 billion. That's the estimated brand worth of Coca-Cola. In comparison, combining PepsiCo, Starbucks, Red Bull, and Budweiser would bring a combined brand worth of \$50 billion.

<https://market.us/statistics/food-and-beverage-companies/coca-cola-company/#:~:text=Coca%2DCola%20Sales%20Statistics%3A&text=Coca%2DCola%20has%20a%2042.8,within%20the%20Coca%2DCola%20brand.>

Measuring Brand – More than Wishful Thinking.

Brand is measured using three criteria.

Position: measure of a brand in relation to other brands.

Reach: measure of a brand in terms of number of people affected.

Reputation: measure of a brand in terms of attributes people assign to it.

JUST DO IT.

Nike was a floundering fledgling brand until it did two things:

It Signed Michael Jordan

It Created Just Do It.

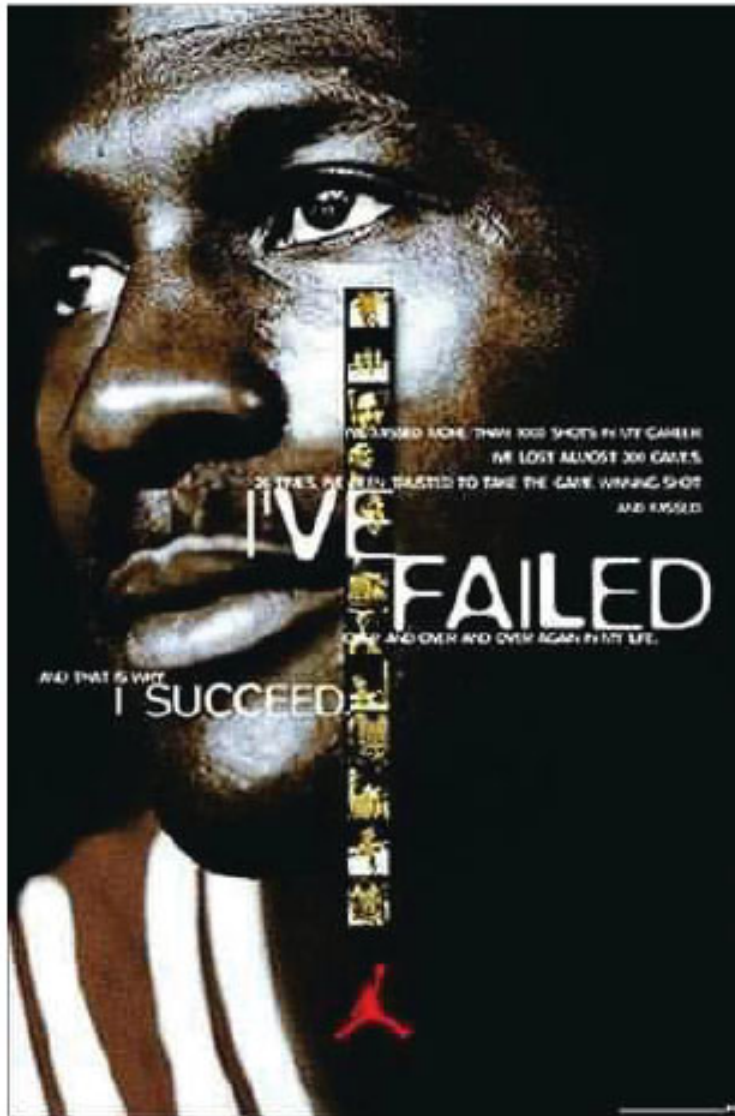
What do you do when you **JUST DO IT?**

Nike is the brand for people who show up when the only accountability they have is their own aspiration.

Nike, unlike most of the other brands we've talked about here, **have a very "brand-focused" strategy** – meaning that they're fairly generic in other parts of their business, **choosing instead to load all of their strategic leverage into their brand reputation.**

...the strategic territory they have tried to own for decades is one which we might call **"the struggle"**. Whilst other athletic brands (when they launched) were obsessed with winning, glory, and all the fun parts of the athletic experience, Nike chose to be **the brand for the darker moments. The pain and sweat of practice. The monotony of repetition. The fear of failure.** This is what "Just Do It" is all about: **overcoming these barriers and doing it anyway.** Whether you win or lose is not the point. The enemy you're trying to overcome is yourself.

Smith, Alex M H. No Bullsh*t Strategy: A Founder's Guide to Gaining Competitive Advantage with a Strategy That Actually Works (p. 132). (Function). Kindle Edition.



I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career.
I've lost almost 300 games.

26 times I've been trusted to take the game winning
shot and missed.

I've failed over and over again in my life.
And that is why
I succeed.

Why is failing ok in everything except quitting porn?

Because we've said over and over that it isn't



The Millennial Generation rejected previously idealized standards of beauty and physical fitness. Nike evolved "the struggle" to embrace this new audience.

Find Your Greatness

helped a new generation embrace a brand that had built it's brand with GenX on proximity to exceptional athletes.

If Nike Built its brand around features, it would be Reebok.

During the early 90's shoe wars, Reebok and Nike went head to head competing for market dominance.

Reebok Pump



The innovative **Reebok "Pump"** feature combined with a heavy endorsement initiative gave Reebok a temporary boost to Reebok's market share in the 1990's allowing them to move to **#2 in the category with 24% of the athletic shoe market.**

Nike Air Pressure



Nike was #1 in the category with 30% of the market share and quickly copied the pump feature and applied better branding to it with the more relevant Nike Air Pressure naming. It then continued to invest in identity/aspiration/affiliation with with clever copywriting and an aggressive endorsement strategy that included stars like Jordan, Agassi, Bo Jackson, and Gretzky.

The Rest of **the Story**

Today despite an exponential increase in competition, **Nike remains #1 in the category and owns 27% of the athletic shoe market.** They reported 2024 profits of 51.36 Billion across their combined offerings in athletic shoes, apparel and equipment.

Meanwhile

Reebok has fallen to #10 in the category from #2 and reported just 2 billion in revenue in 2024. Today, you can find **Reebok products for sale in Wal-Mart**

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/30/business/nike-colin-kaepemick-nfl-just-do-it/index.html#:~:text=Nike%20has%20had%20an%20endorsement,kneeling%20during%20the%20national%20anthem.>

The Curious Case of Colin Kaepernick



Nike Evolved “the Struggle” again in 2018 when it began to feature Colin Kaepernick in ads that referenced his own suspension for protesting during the national anthem in the midst of the social justice movements that were dominating the zeitgeist.

Nike’s core market is young males ages 14-22.

They announced a realignment in 2017 to focus most of their

advertising efforts on 12 cities which it expected to represent

more than 80% of its growth through 2020: New York, Las Angeles, London, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Paris, Berlin,

Mexico City, Barcelona, Seoul, and Milan.

“those younger customers in cities are more likely to support Colin Kaepernick.”

Ruthless Market Curation



GEN X

Millennial

Zoomers

With each evolution of its brand narrative that re-orientes "the struggle" to the prevailing zeitgeist, Nike re-centers itself around the core market that buys its products, (14-22 Year Old Males), even if that reorientation alienates the old sweet spot. Previous generations with different sensibilities and less disposable income become less relevant and less desirable.

This is how Nike stays relevant to the desired demographic with the most disposable income, and the identity driven motivations to purchase.

Resonance

Apple, Nike and Coke are masters of **emotionally charged messaging**.

Resonance is the intensity of an **emotional connection** between the messaging and the user.

Resonance describes the **reverberation** of messaging within the consumer's life and work.

Reverberation is an **echo or repercussion**. With messaging, it is a **profound agreement within the person**. They agree so much that it keeps coming back to them.

Messaging resonance **connects your company** and product **to your prospective customers**.

Branding is **Emotional**

The most beloved brands build their experience around the emotional states of the customers, not the rational.

Nike, Coke and Apple **sell us a desired future** that transcends wearing a shoe, taste or using a computer or phone.

Coke sells us a **desired present**, that transcends taste or health issues.

In most cases they never deliver, **but we buy again at premium prices anyway.**

Feature < Benefit < Value

The core functionalities of a product that provide value to end-users. Having the right features can make or break a product's success, as these differentiate it from other options in the market.

a benefit is the immediate value that the feature provides to the customer related to the immediate problem the product claims to help solve.

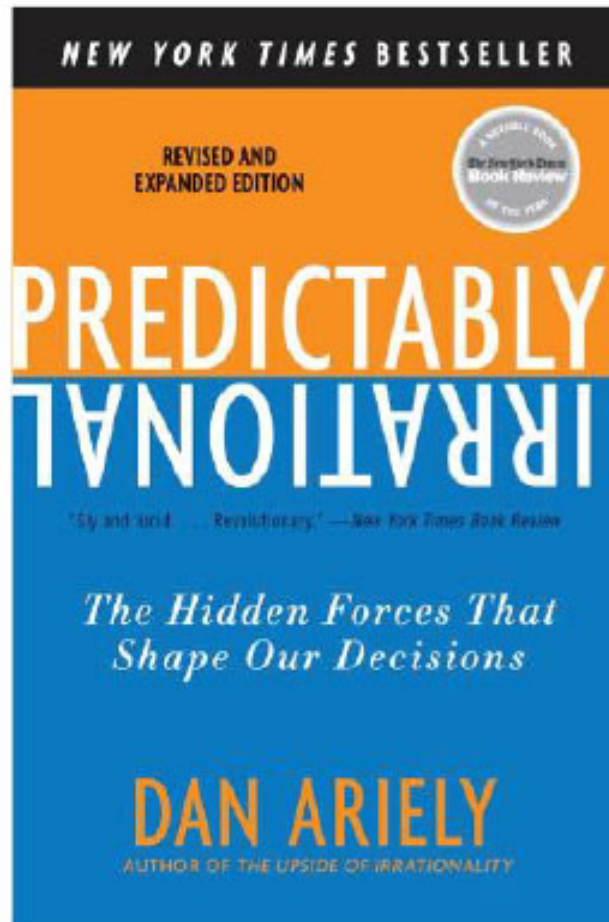
The mapping of the immediate benefit of the feature to the longterm goals or self-actualization of the customer.

<Unique Value>

A benefit you deliver to your customers, which they can't get anywhere else, which lots of them want or need, and which is big enough to animate an entire brand.

Smith, Alex M.H. No Bullsh*t Strategy: A Founder's Guide to Gaining Competitive Advantage with a Strategy That Actually Works (p. 21). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Branding Systematizes Execution to Account for the Irrationality of People.



Standard economics assumes that we are rational—that we know all the pertinent information about our decisions, that we can calculate the value of the different options we face, and that we are cognitively unhindered in weighing the ramifications of each potential choice. The result is that we are presumed to be making logical and sensible decisions. And even if we make a wrong decision from time to time, the standard economics perspective suggests that we will quickly learn from our mistakes either on our own or with the help of “market forces.”

On the basis of these assumptions, economists draw far-reaching conclusions about everything from shopping trends to law to public policy. But, as the results presented in this book (and others) show, we are all far less rational in our decision making than standard economic theory assumes. Our irrational behaviors are neither random nor senseless—they are systematic and predictable.

We all make the same types of mistakes over and over, because of the basic wiring of our brains. So wouldn't it make sense to modify standard economics and move away from naive psychology, which often fails the tests of reason, introspection, and—most important—empirical scrutiny? Wouldn't economics make a lot more sense if it were based on how people actually behave, instead of how they should behave?

Ariely, Dan. Predictably Irrational, Revised and Expanded Edition: The Hidden Forces That Shape Our Decisions (p. 317). (Function). Kindle Edition.

One of the **great insights of the 20th Century.**

**They don't think
it be like it is,
but it do.**

– Oscar Gamble

People think they are in control, but they are really mostly at the whim of their emotions, and corporations and politicians know this best.

More Sad **Truth**

People will do anything for those who
encourage their dreams, justify their failures,
allay their fears, confirm their suspicions,
and help them throw rocks at their enemies.

Warren, Blair. The One Sentence Persuasion Course - 27 Words to Make the World Do Your Bidding (pp. 11-12). (Function). Kindle Edition.

In a test of strength between logic and emotion, **logic rarely wins.**

Most people act emotionally,



**Strength of
Our Emotions**

And use logic to justify, retroactively



Frailty of Our Logic

Why am I telling you this?

**They don't think
it be like it is,
but it do.**

**We have to orient our work less around
how customer should act and more around how they do act.**

Anyone in a heightened emotional state becomes irrational

Paul Knew **People.**

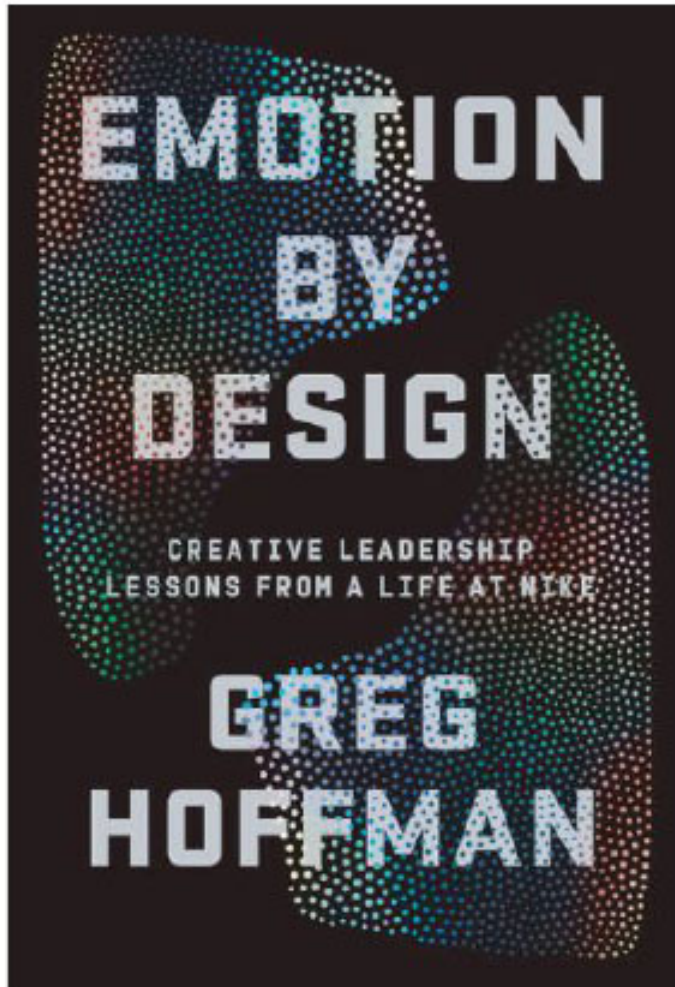
For I do not do the good I want,
but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing
Romans 7:19.

Addicts are almost if not completely at the mercy of emotion.

Lust, Fear, Anger, Shame

Healthy People don't have the capacity to be consistently rational in most things.

We have to learn to design messaging, content and features for what our customers actually do....not what they should.



**Good Branding Manages the
Emotional State of the Customer
and Shapes the
Quality and Intentionality of the Work
across the Organization.**

Given the resources
(time, money, vision, talent, intelligence, experience)
we could intentionally
design a total customer
experience that attracts
the right customers,
sets them up for success
from first impression
and converts them into
brand evangelists as they
move through the
customer journey.

Reebok Pump



Nike Air Pressure



These shoes are made of the same materials but inspire two different experiences.

What is customer experience made of?

Neurochemicals.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

People can't focus on higher level needs until lower level needs are met.

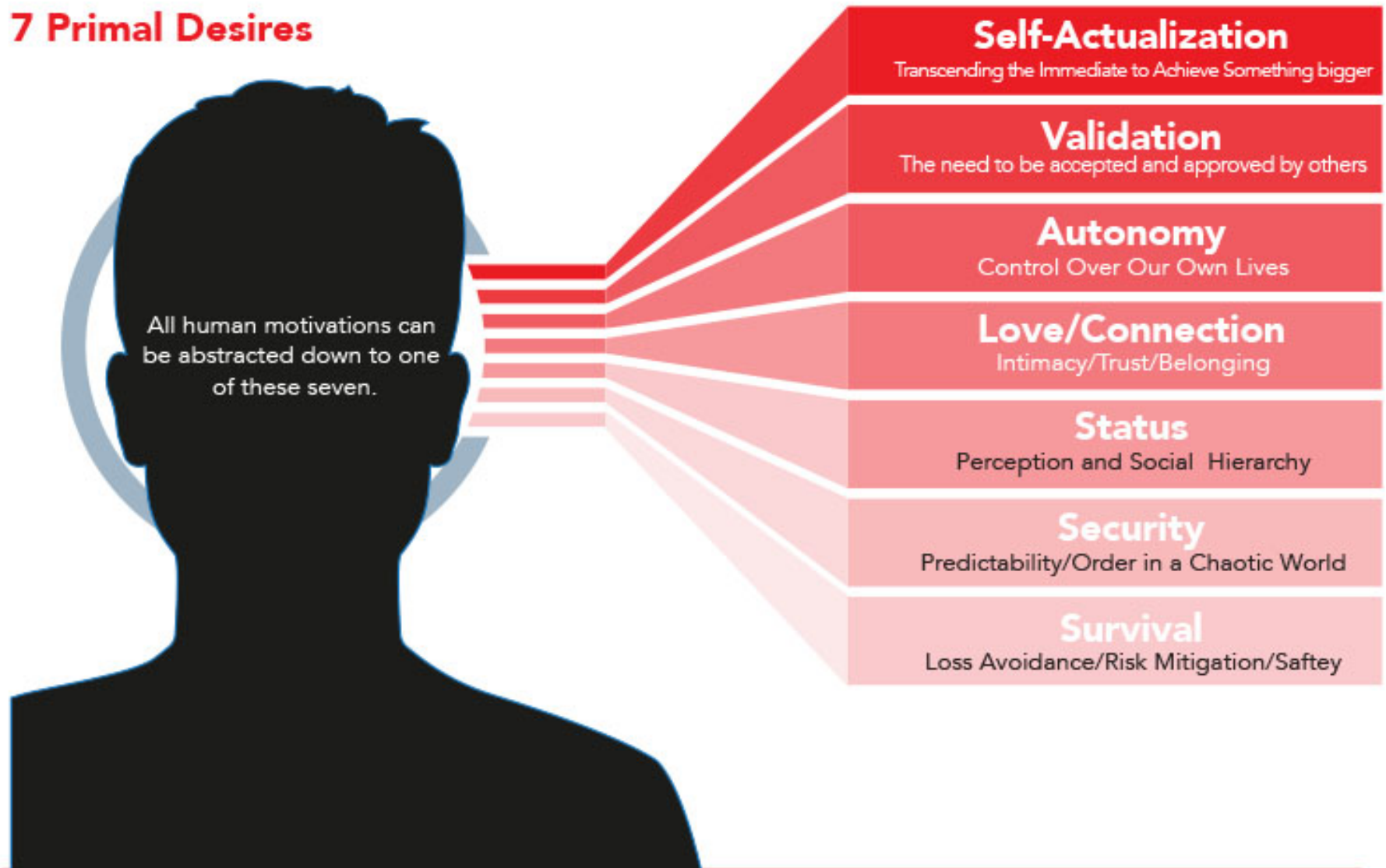
Where do we put our customers with our customer experience?

Is this intentional or intuitive?

Does it have to be that way?



7 Primal Desires



Primal Desire	Neurochemical/s	How it works
Survival	Cortisol	Elevated levels of Cortisol triggered by stress push people toward risk averse behavior. This might have been advantageous when survival meant dodging predators, but in today's world, it can drive people to cling to situations that keep them trapped in mediocrity. This is the survival instinct at play, pulling you toward the familiar—even if the familiar is toxic, limiting, or downright harmful.
Security	Serotonin	Elevated levels of Serotonin are closely linked to feelings of safety, and stability, influencing our tendency to choose safer, more predictable options. When Serotonin levels are high, we feel grounded, stable and secure. We lean toward decisions that maintain this sense of equilibrium even if they are not the best for our long-term growth. We choose the path of least resistance even when taking a chance might lead to something better.
Status	Serotonin	In the digital age, status has become a more potent driver than survival for many. The pursuit of status through accolades, recognition, or public admiration has eclipsed basic survival needs for many individuals, creating a landscape where status-seeking behaviors drive decision-making and social dynamics.
Love/Connection	Oxytocin	Oxytocin plays a critical role in trust and social bonding, making it essential for forming meaningful relationships. When oxytocin levels rise during social interactions, people are more likely to trust others, form stronger relationships and feel a sense of safety within those connections. Trust is the emotional component and neurological response embedded in the brain's wiring that influences how people make decisions.

Primal Desire	Neurochemical/s	How it works
Autonomy	Dopamine	Dopamine levels spike when people perceive that they have control over their own decisions. This is why autonomy feels so satisfying—it's both a psychological state and a physiological one. When you make a choice, Dopamine floods your brain, reinforcing the pleasure of being in control. It's the same reason we feel satisfaction when we successfully overcome a challenge or make a decision that aligns with our desires.
Self-Actualization	Dopamine	Unlike the primal urge, self-actualization is about transcending the immediate and striving toward something bigger—growth, fulfillment, and full realization of one's potential. Dopamine plays a role in pleasure but also in the pursuit of a reward. Dopamine levels spike when we're actively pursuing the goal. This is why we are addicted to the hustle, the grind, the constant push toward the next milestone. The more you achieve the more you crave the next goal.
Validation	Oxytocin	Oxytocin plays a critical role in trust and social bonding, making it essential for forming meaningful relationships. When oxytocin levels rise during social interactions, people are more likely to trust others, form stronger relationships and feel a sense of safety within those connections. Trust is the emotional component and neurological response embedded in the brain's wiring that influences how people make decisions.

Our customer experience is inevitably going to be an experience. Do our customers enjoy it or hate it. If reality is ultimately determined by the neurochemical content of our brains in the moment, then there is an opportunity to shape the customer experience to be better and more effective by designing our messaging, content and features to solicit higher levels of Dopamine, Oxytocin and Serotonin than they do Cortisol.

There is a level of intentionality that we can bring to our design across content/messaging/features that the majority of our production staff has no concept of. It can differentiate us. **Branding can help them get there.**

How we message & Design, **determines how our customers feel about us.**

The neurochemical state we design for each moment of the experience influences choice, grace, evangelism, retention.



Cortisol



Dopamine/Oxytocin

Part II

"If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles.
If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat.
If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

—Sun Tzu, The Art of War

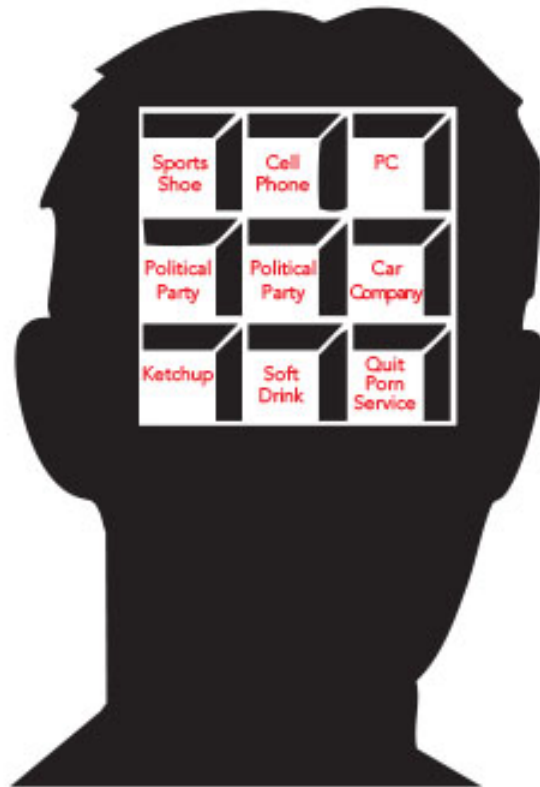
THE TWO BATTLES

Help them choose us. Help them love Us

Battle One: **Choosing Us.**

Being chosen is a matter of appearing to **be the most clearly relevant** when the customer enters the buying journey, **relative to** his or her relationship with **the problem** they are trying to solve.

Position + Differentiation = Relevance



Getting into one of these little boxes first is critical. If you can own this position, customers will likely never look at competition again

Position

The market perception of your brand and product value proposition relative to its competition across the category.

What you offer compared to all your competition.

Positioning

The hard work of influencing the market to see your product as you wish relative to your competition.

Making yourself look good and your competition not so much.

Position + Differentiation = Relevance

Being **The One**

Positioning works by giving the customer a **perceivable descriptive association** with the product that the majority of the market would share. This helps them narrow options quickly. Having a strong position means you **own an adjective** in the category and the customer's mind.



Volvo
The Safe One



Tesla
The Cool Electric One



Wrangler
The Freedom One



BMW
The Engineered One

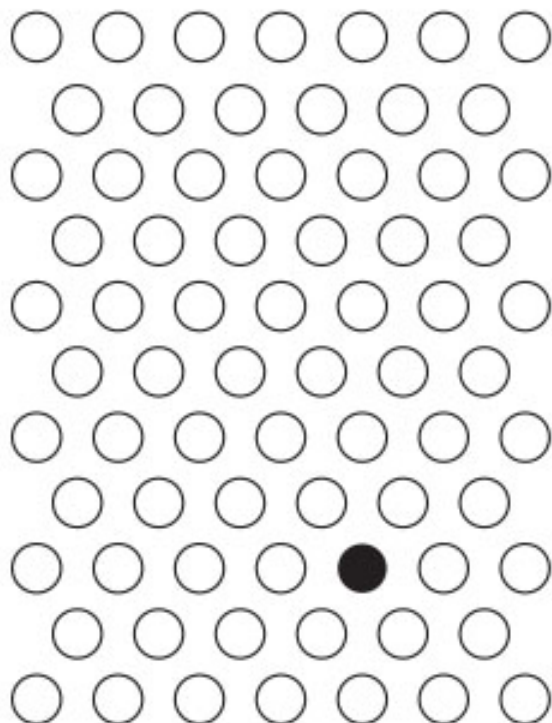


Chrysler Pacifica
The Soccer Mom One



Mercedes Benz
The Luxurious One

Zagging



We are hardwired to notice
what is **different**.

Differentiation

The ways in which your product and brand are different and how those differences make your offering uniquely beneficial to the customer and their relationship to the problem they want to solve.

Zagging

Looking at what your competition is doing and then doing the opposite of it. When everyone else zigs, we zag.

Zagging creates contrast. Customers need contrast to perceive unique value.

Position + Differentiation = Relevance

The Category and Sub-Categories

Category		PORN AS A PROBLEM MACRO						
Sub-Category		Software & Apps			Content Offerings		Counseling/Support/Rehab	
Sub-Category	Relevant	Standard Behavior Change	Premium Behavior Change	Filtering	Books On-Site Seminars	Digital Courses Etc.	Therapy Marriage Counseling Support Groups ETC	In-patient Rehab Etc.
	Not Relevant	Parental Controls	Law Enforcement					

SOFTWARE AND APP SOLUTIONS MICRO		
Standard Behavior Change (Behavior Change Techniques we'd give away for free) • Check-Ins • Journaling • Community Access • Content • etc.	Premium Behavior Change (Behavior Change Techniques we'd charge for) • Monitoring & Reporting • Filtering • Coaching • Accountability Partner Facilitation	Competition that we lose market share to even though we offer similar value. • Filtering • Parental Controls

Victory

integrates from all three of these sub-categories into a two-phase journey.

Is that enough to make it a new sub-category that is unique and not easily copied? if so, let's name it, frame it, and claim it.

If not, what can we add or emphasize in the **feature set** or the **brand** that will **make it feel unique and not easily copied?**

There are two types of competition in the category of “Porn as a Problem.”

Direct and Indirect Competitors.

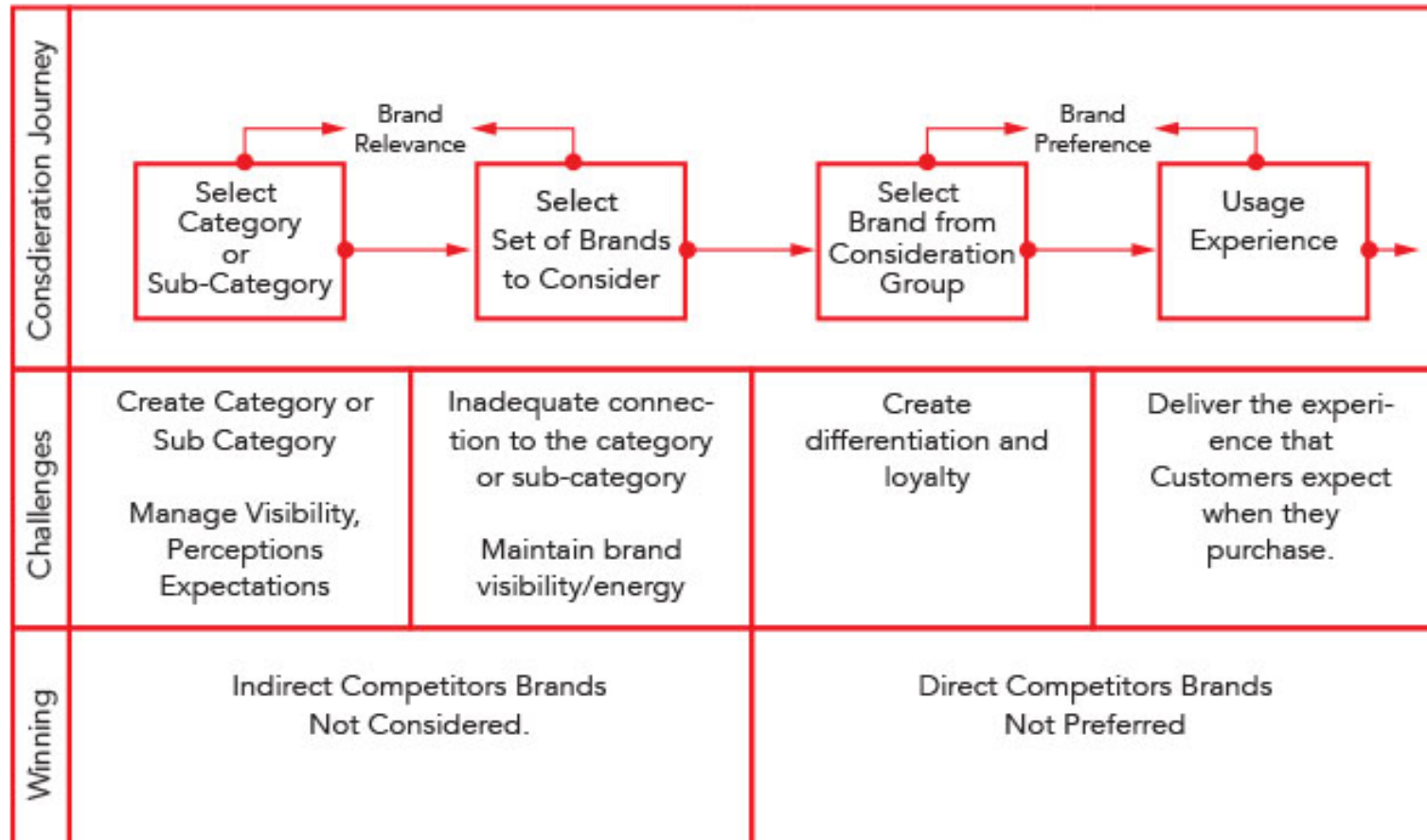
Good Positioning should eliminate **indirect competition**

Name it/Frame it/Claim it.

Good Differentiation should eliminate **direct competition.**

Add or Emphasize in the Feature Set or the Brand

The Brand Relevance Model



I bet this will make me more attractive...



When price is not an obstacle, Relevance is determined by factors like customer identity and aspiration.

Relevance

Relevance is the degree of fit that a product offers in the customer's life relative to their position to the problem the category and all competitors within are meant to solve. When products aren't relevant, they aren't considered. Sometimes the person fails to select the right category. This is the case when an adult who needs accountability selects a parental control app instead, or vice versa.



Winning Feature: **More Room**



That Muscle Car worked better than I ever expected.



Losing Feature: Form over Function

Position + Differentiation = Relevance

Purchasing **Criteria**

Customers bring purchasing criteria to the purchasing journey. Their identities at the time influence the purchase.

Who they are will determine what they consider.

Good positioning and differentiation helps them see offerings and identity affirming differences when considering the category.

Gut Perceptions of Competition

Our competitors aren't any better at branding than we are. That is why I think branding is a real opportunity to put more distance between us and the rest of the category.



The Brain
Rewiring one.
The Science One



The Science One
The it's not your fault one.



The Hyper-Masculine
One



The defender of purity
and integrity one
??The heavy handed Christian one??



The quit porn/quit guilt
accountability one.

Relevant **Relevance**



Husband needs to quit porn.



Teen needs to quit porn.



Mom needs to control children's activity online.

Breaking Up With The **Homeschool Moms**

While getting that **sweet homeschool mom** money is nice in the **short term**, in the long run, it is **detrimental** to our market positioning.

You want crystal clear positioning and differentiation so the right customers can choose us and actually get value from our service.

Those customers will stay around longer and spend more money.

Core Messaging



Quit Porn Service For Christians



Brainbuddy
Brain Reboot App to help you
quit porn forever



Fortify
Lasting Healing from Sexual Compulsivity



Jumbled messaging
experience across
touchpoints.

Christian Couple
Husband needs to quit porn.
Chose Victory because it
offers accountability and/or
integrates Christianity which is
vital to their identity.
Not Current Homepage Headline



Emphasize Science
in deeper messaging

Couple (Possibly Christian)
May have chosen Brainbuddy
because they either identify with
the metaphor of a brain as a computer
that needs rebooting or because they
are hostile to Christianity



Emphasize Science
in deeper messaging

Couple (Possibly Christian)
May have chosen Fortify
because they either identify with
the atmosphere and language of the brand
May have rejected Victory because of
it's ties to Christianity

Core Messaging



Sexual Self-Mastery Courses and Coaching



Emphasize Science
in deeper messaging

Single/Unmarried Guy

Chose Remojo because he wants to bring his A-Game to relationships/life/work. Wants to be a beast in the boardroom and the bedroom. IMO This guy is a unicorn and that's why Remojo failed despite being well funded.



Accountable to You
Defend Purity. Live with integrity



More Overt
and frankly, Cheesy
Christianity.
If your closet is on
fire and you want to
fight it with a sword
and a shield, this is apparently
your best bet.

Couple (Likely Christian)

May have chosen A2U
because of price or a recommendation
or they encountered it first or because
they perceived some meaningful
advantage in it.



Ever Accountable
Quit Porn/Guilt for Good



Emphasize Science
in deeper messaging

Couple (Possibly Christian)

Science backed software that helps you
avoid porn and other dangers on the internet
with the power of accountability

Core Messaging



Realtime AI that prevents you from seeing porn.
Quit porn by not seeing it.



Emphasize
Preventative
filtering

Couple

Chose canopy because they believe the best filter is what they need for him to quit porn. Don't realize that if he is addicted filters will only starve him until he finds a way to circumvent the app.

These two brands are indirect competitors who regularly compete for our market. They bid on our keywords, and compare their feature sets to ours in an effort to look superior. They count on a naive market to be impressed with a higher quantity of irrelevant features and we do lose customers to them.

They also run up our marketing costs and strain our budget. Much of our ad spend ends up going to help us tread water, rather than make progress.



Parental Controls



Labeled as Parental Controls, but regularly bid on our keywords and distribute feature comparison graphics to poach marketshare.

Couple

Though Bark is clearly labeled as parental controls, the couple might choose them because of a perception of more comprehensive feature set. This speaks to naivete in the category audience.

Poaching and Self-Flagelation



Vs



Because we’ve not resolved naming, this is a visualization of the communication experience our new customers are getting.

Compare the Features

Bark vs. Covenant Eyes		
Create screen time schedules Read More	✓	✗
Custom blocking rules Read More	✓	~
Location tracking Read More	✓	✗
Content monitoring Read More	✓	~
Alerts for sexual content, cyberbullying, depression, online predators, and more Read More	✓	~
Annual subscription under \$100 Read More	✓	✗

Battle Two: Helping Customer's **Love Us.**

Beyond Strong Clear Positioning and Differentiation, beloved brands like Apple, Nike and Coke sell a desireable **identity, aspiration** and **affiliation** to their customers.

Customer Identity: **Who am I because I use this product?**

The concept of identity is a complex one, shaped by **individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors, and social and political contexts.**

Who am I?



The answer **depends in large part on who the world around me says I am.**

Who do my **parents** say I am? Who do my **peers** say I am? **What message is reflected back to me in the faces and voices of people in my life?**

What do I learn from the media about myself? How am I represented in the cultural images around me? Or am I missing from the picture altogether?

<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/exploring-concept-identity>

Customer Identity: **Facets**

Ethnicity

Gender

Ancestry

Birthplace

Religion

Politics

Family

Personal Values

Social Class

Sexuality

Nationality

Personal Identity

Language

Career

Education

**Personal
Appearance**

Personality

Life Experiences

Self-Esteem

Hobbies

Disability

Birth Order

Skills

Philosophy



Different Brands and Campaigns **Focus on different Facets**

Ethnicity

Gender

Ancestry

Birthplace

Religion

Politics

Family

Personal Values

Social Class

Sexuality

Nationality

Personal Identity

Language

Career

Education

Personal Appearance

Personality

Life Experiences

Self-Esteem

Hobbies

Disability

Birth Order

Skills

Philosophy



Nike: **Colin Kaepernick Campaign**

Different Brands and Campaigns **Focus on different Facets**

Ethnicity

Gender

Ancestry

Birthplace

Religion

Politics

Family

Personal Values

Social Class

Sexuality

Nationality

Personal Identity

Language

Career

Education

Personal Appearance

Personality

Life Experiences

Self-Esteem

Hobbies

Disability

Birth Order

Skills

Philosophy



Apple: **Think Different Campaign**

Different Brands and Campaigns **Focus on different Facets**

Ethnicity

Gender

Ancestry

Birthplace

Religion

Politics

Family

Personal Values

Social Class

Sexuality

Nationality

Personal Identity

Language

Career

Education

Personal
Appearance

Personality

Life Experiences

Self-Esteem

Hobbies

Disability

Birth Order

Skills

Philosophy



Victory

Case Study: Keeps–Hairloss Solutions for Men



Conventional Category Customer Identity:

Most baldness brands associated going bald with old age. This created shame for the younger men who were losing their hair.

Keeps Market:

Younger men who still have their hair but are beginning to lose it.

Their message:

Their hair loss treatments are effective but you have to start early before you lose it. Start and keep what's left.

The Obstacle:

Shame associated with premature oldness kept young men from taking action.

The New Identity:

The Man of Action. He doesn't let silly things like fear and shame get in the way. He takes control of his hair and his destiny. He's getting ahead. **He's on top of it.**

What about us? **What identities do we sell?**

Covenant Eyes/Victory

Before: Porn Addict/One who struggles with porn.

After: Former Porn Addict/One who struggled with porn.

Apple:

Before: Utilitarian Computer User - Cookie Cutter Mediocrity

After: A Creative who can change the world.

Flipping the Script: **We are leaders. Let's Lead.**



Shame doesn't have to dominate the category
Other issues where shame was a factor have been
mitigated by branding. It's been done before.

Victory offers us a rare opportunity to impact the whole category and the customer's ability to courageously come forward and get help.

We can impact the way churches view the problem, spouses view their partners and the way strugglers view themselves.

In rebranding our product, we can also rebrand the customer for it.

Vision + Commitment



"If you don't like what is being said, change the conversation."

– Don Draper

We are the category leader. Most of our competitors mirror us in their aesthetics and messaging.

Zagging looks like changing the conversation and the perception of the user. When it works, they'll follow and we will have changed the conversation around porn use.

**We've wounded shame with
our free experience.
Now Let's Kill It.**

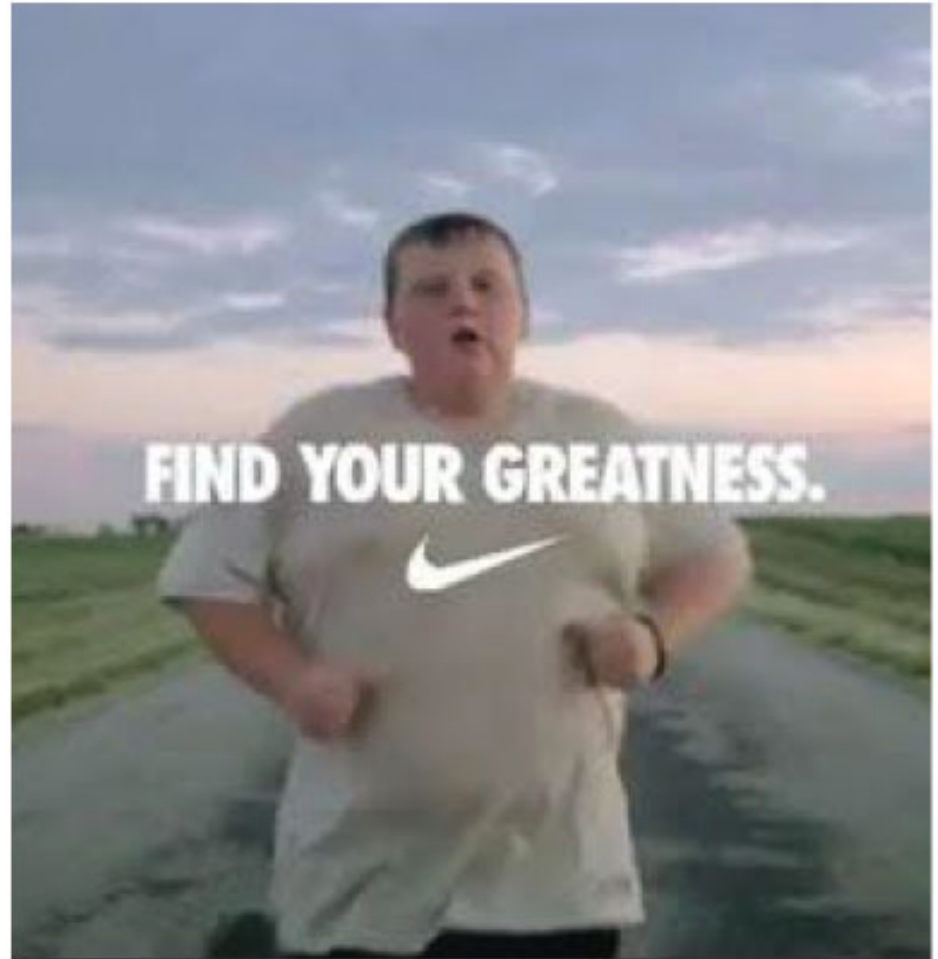
**Rebrand the product so you
can rebrand the customer.**

If our customer is still a porn addict after conversion...we've failed.

Someone **had to lead**



Pointing



Partnering

Walk This Way/**Talk** This Way



This is how a brand makes you believe that it **"will walk with you."**

**We've Already
Started.**

We just didn't realize it.

The Word "Victory" has an overwhelmingly positive connotation.

Framing



A frame is a linguistic device that
shapes the way we perceive.

Because of the frame, we can only project meanings that are congruent with the frame, while those that aren't are kept outside.

Metaphor



In it...to win it.



A metaphor is a conceptual tool that helps us make sense of complex ideas.

Victory immediately installs a model of thought for customers. The **name Victory** implies they are in **a win or lose situation.**

Implications of Battle

Metaphor



A metaphor is a conceptual tool that helps us make sense of complex ideas.

Covenant Eyes implies some kind of agreement. Agreements are mutual willingness between two parties to hold to a **set of actions or limits.**

Implications of Restriction

Customer Aspiration: What can I accomplish because I use this product?

Great aspirations align with **customer values** and **transcend the immediate** functional value of the product.

People who wear Nikes aren't concerned about protecting their feet.
They want to **"be like Mike."**

Quitting Porn is a means to an end.

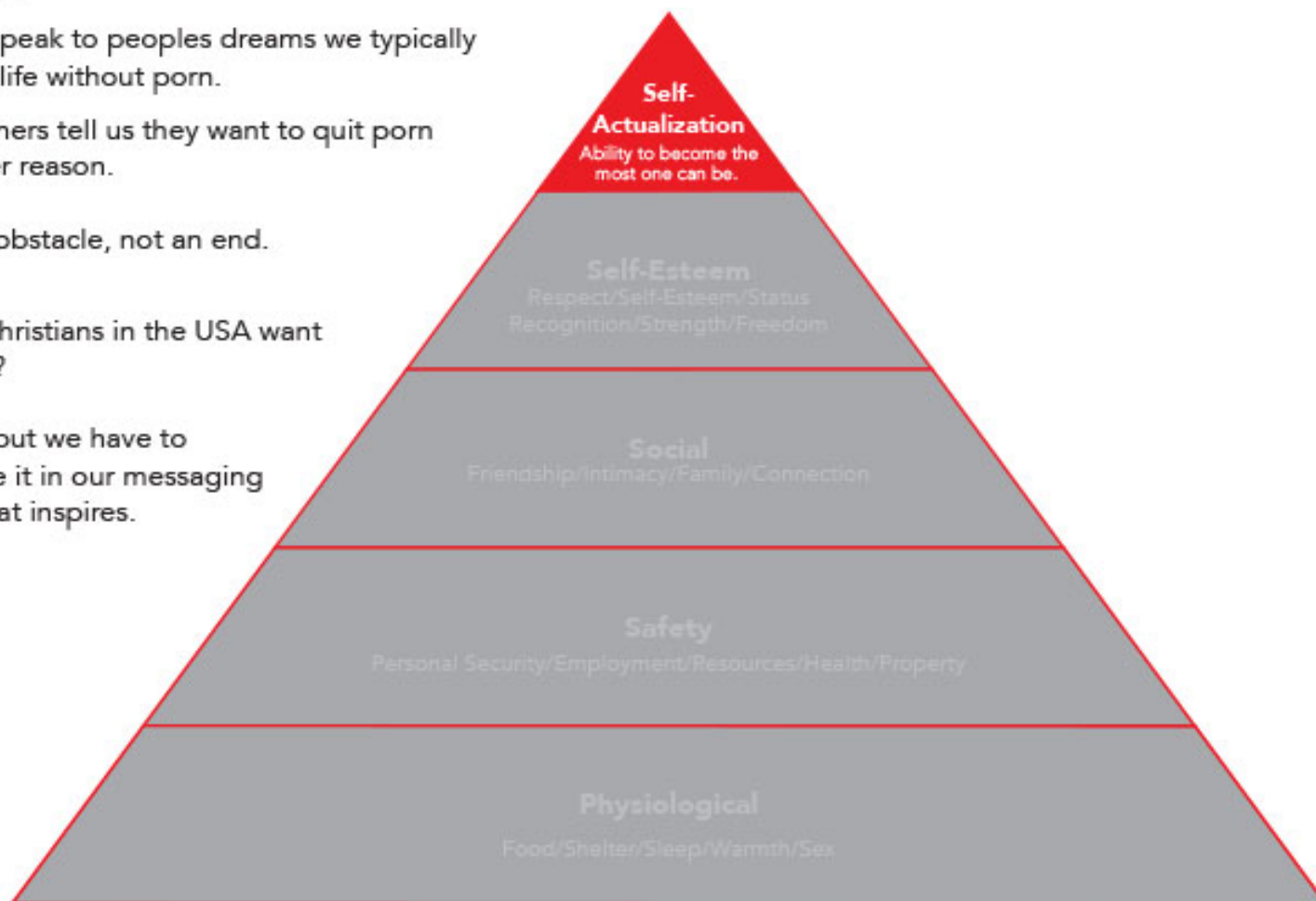
When we speak to peoples dreams we typically focus on a life without porn.

Our customers tell us they want to quit porn for a bigger reason.

Porn is an obstacle, not an end.

What do Christians in the USA want to achieve?

We know, but we have to standardize it in our messaging in a way that inspires.



I want to quit porn **so I can**_____



Strengthen my
relationship
with God

Stop Porn from
destroying me
any longer.

Stop Porn from
Shaping my View
Of Women

Strengthen my
Ability to be an
example to others.

Stop being so
distracted by
Porn.

Strengthen my
relationship with
my spouse

Strengthen my
relationship with
Friends and Family

Other
(Please Specify)

From "Getting to know you survey." Customers picked all aspirations that applied. (Ordered from greatest to least)

I want to use Apple products **so I can**_____



Change the
World

Express my
creative self

Surround myself
with good
design

Be seen as
someone who
"thinks different"

Separate myself
from the
Status Quo

...

...

...

From "Getting to know you survey." Customers picked all aspirations that applied. (Ordered from greatest to least)

I want to Wear Nikes **so I can** _____



Achieve My
Potential

Show up when
others don't

Perform when
the time comes

Transcend
Mediocrity

Be like the
the people I
most admire.

Express my
unique will to
succeed

...

...

From "Getting to know you survey." Customers picked all aspirations that applied. (Ordered from greatest to least)

I want to drink Coke so I can_____



Connect
with Family
and Friends

Make the most
of time with my
community

Be a happier
person and share
it with others

Bring joy to
the ones I love
most.

Escape the burden
of modern life

Taste Life.

...

...

From "Getting to know you survey." Customers picked all aspirations that applied. (Ordered from greatest to least)

Customer Affiliation: Who is my tribe?

Great brands build tribes. **Modern society is tribal now.** We've been separated into micro-groups by the politicians and and the corporations

People use brands to signal to others like them their values and worldviews **so they can attract them and feel community.**

A Conversation **Between Friends**

George Carlin:

When fascism comes to America, it will not be in brown and black shirts. It will not be with jack-boots. It will be Nike sneakers and Smiley shirts. Smiley-smiley. Fascism—Germany lost the Second World War. Fascism won it. Believe me, my friend.

Bill Maher:

And actually, fascism is when corporations become the government.

George Carlin:

Yes.

Goldberg, Jonah. *Liberal Fascism: The Secret History of the American Left, From Mussolini to the Politics of Meaning* (p. 1). (Function). Kindle Edition.

Remember

**They don't think
it be like it is,
but it do.**

– Oscar Gamble

The mass-American identity has been replaced by a collection of micro-identities determined by the products we buy.

Customers don't buy brands—**they join them.**

- Customers are not only the object of brand-building, but key players
- They want a vote in what gets produced and how it gets delivered
- Loyal customers are willing to promote the brand to their friends
- They're happy to contribute content, volunteer ideas, and even sell
- In a very real sense, customers are co-leading companies
- **Customers no longer buy brands; they join brands**



Why Can't we **be friends?**



Logos become tribal identifiers in modern branding. They signal to others that you share similar values and identities

The **Sales Tax**

People don't want to be sold—they want to buy, and **they buy in tribes**
Selling implies persuasion, whereas **buying implies enrollment**

In some ways, **the sales function is a tax** imposed on bad branding

The harder we have to **work to sell** our product, the **worse our brand** is.



Good Branding **Attracts Customers**



Most products in a sub-category **appear identical at first impression.**

Battle One is about **helping them see how you offer unique relevant value** that they can't get elsewhere.



We all compete on basic behavior change with an upsell to a premium behavior change technique. We all at least sell a red lollipop with stick. The signifiers we put in those first impression will shape perception and choice and determine which funnel a new customer wants to explore first. We have a better chance of converting if we get them in our funnel first.

Every tribe has it's own values, it's own language, it's own symbols, it's own unique pragmatic knowledge set.
The more you can use these correctly, the more they will believe you are authentically aligned with them.

Communication Theory

Semantics/Syntax/Pragmatics

Pragmatics, Semantics, Syntax

Pragmatics

The shared knowledge between sender and receiver of communication that allows them to apply meaning to semantic carriers in the context of the communication.

Meaning requires previous learning.

In order for someone to understand Words, Symbols and Images, they must have had previous exposure to the meaning of these words, symbols and images. In the absence of that, the meaning of the communication is inaccessible to them and a waste of resources. Within groups, we find unique and valued lexicons of semantics that are almost tribal.

Massimo Vignelli

Whatever we do, if not understood, fails to communicate and is wasted effort. We design things which we think are semantically correct and syntactically consistent but if, at the point of fruition, no one understands the result, or the meaning of all that effort, **the entire work is useless.**

Pragmatics, Semantics, Syntax

If you can't speak Baluchi, this is meaningless.

gán tu é want kan ay gadhá trá hamá amali zánt hast kah chah
balóchi ay wánag o gapp jang ay zánag á pédák ent

If you can read this, you have the pragmatic knowledge that comes from knowing how to read and speak Baluchi



The Heart

In US culture, this is a symbol for love



The Akoma

In Adinkra culture, this is a symbol for patience or tolerance



The Color Red

In the US, red means everything from love to hate, to anger to Coca-Cola.



The Color Red

In the context of an octagon, it means "Stop"

Semantics, Syntax, Pragmatics

Semantics

the branch of linguistics and logic concerned with communication of meaning.

The physical carriers of meaning.

All languages (verbal and visual), have a palette of elements that combine to form words or images that carry meaning from sender to receiver. To design communication is to carefully select and augment these elemental choices so that the connotation (received message,) aligns with the denotation (intended message).

Massimo Vignelli

The very first thing that I do whenever I start a new assignment in any form of design, graphic, product, exhibition or interior is to search for the meaning of it.

Semantics, Syntax, Pragmatics

Verbal Semantics

Angry:

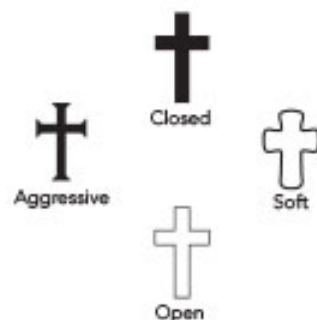
Mad, Furious,
Enraged, Wrathful
Exasperated, Aroused
Enflamed

Choosing the appropriate and best words to carry meaning to the unique audience.

Most words have synonyms that mean the same thing. Some words are preferable or unique to an audience. Some choices are made for the sake of overall composition of the verbal communication. Good craftsmanship in verbal communication means making articulate word choices for the sake of the audience and the communication artifact.

Visual Semantics

The same symbol, icon, index or image can carry nuanced or even polar meanings base on the visual elemental characteristics of that image.



Images are macro constructions of the elements of design. These elements are the same across many sub-disciplines of design and include line, shape, color, value, texture, space, time and motion. Choosing and applying particular applications of these elements to the image can drastically alter it's perceived meaning with an audience.

Shaping Symbolism – The Phoenix

The Phoenix Symbol

The phoenix symbolizes rebirth, renewal, hope, and the possibility of a fresh start. It is often depicted rising from the ashes of its previous life.

Shaping Meaning

Symbols are images that don't look like what they represent. The meaning of rebirth can be "shaped" or contained in a shape to create a nuanced perception of that meaning.



Graceful Calligraphic Lines
Flowing, liquid, sharp tapers



Heavier Shapes, more clunky
comically aggressive



Juxtaposed angles and curves
Softer and less threatening



Sharp angles contained in
smooth edges. Uniform
Direction of flow



Sharp angles pointing in
random directions. Not much
rhythm or predictability.
Angular and aggressive.
Almost comical.



Sharp angles juxtaposed with
smooth curves. Regal direction of
the birds gaze. Presence of secondary
symbol in flame composed of
negative space.

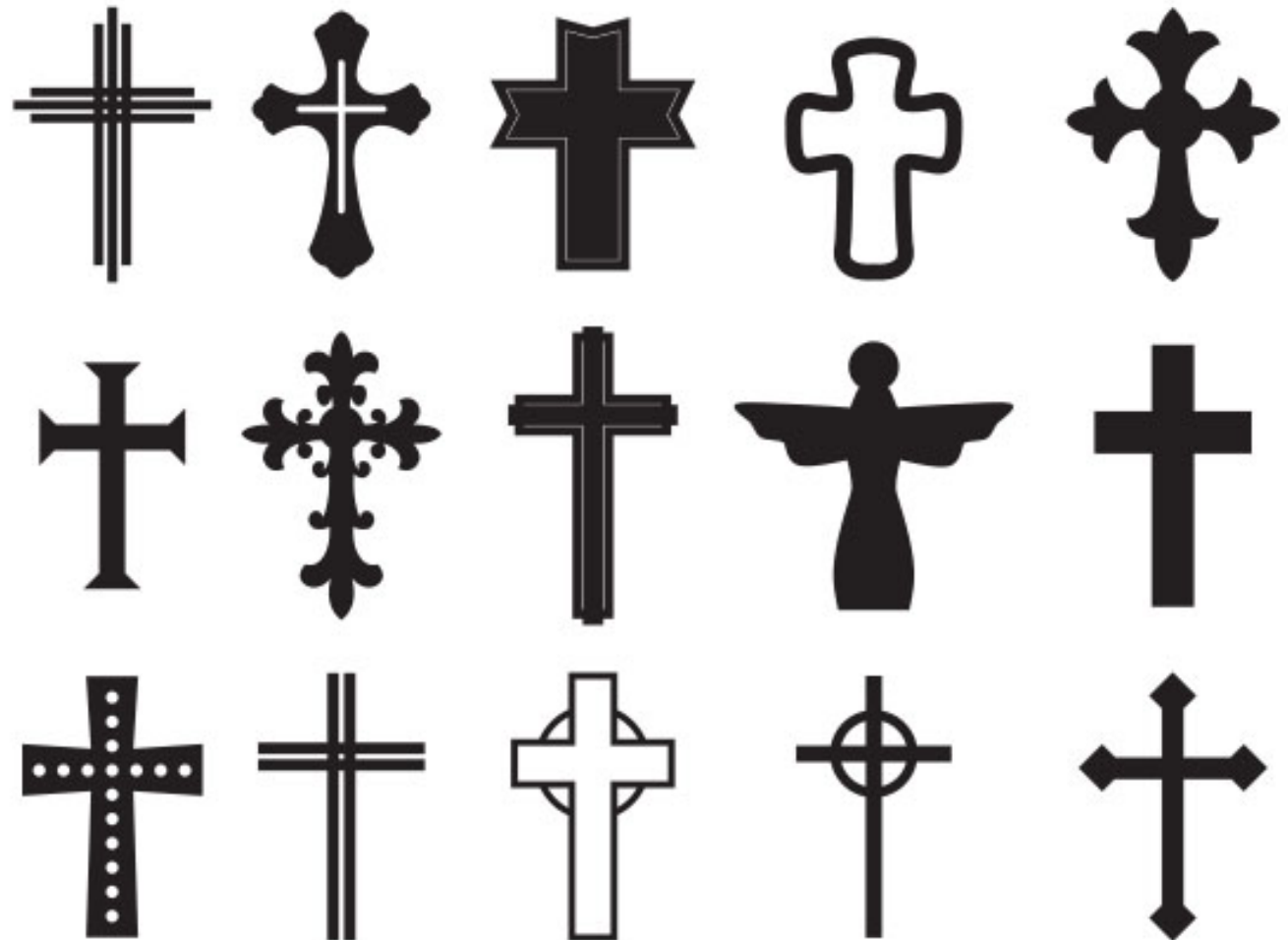
Shaping Symbolism – Christianity

The Cross Symbol

The cross is a symbol for Christianity. But there are as many different connotations to the word Christianity as there are versions of the cross.

Battle Two

Shape the entirety of the customer experience to communicate our brand's version of that. Hopefully it will be a version that **honors God**.



Syntax, Semantics, Pragmatics

Syntax

Syntax speaks to the arrangement of the semantic elements in a language. In verbal language we call this grammar. In visual language we use the principles of design.

Semantics must be informed by previous learning and arranged to create meaning.

If letters or words are arranged arbitrarily, the sentence will have no meaning even if each word is understood. The user could rearrange them to decypher the meaning but most rarely bother in a world as information dense as ours is. Visual language requires the same care. The principles of design provide the techniques to order visual semantics so that communication is clear.

Massimo Vignelli

The consistency of a design is provided by the appropriate relationship of the various syntactical elements of the project: how type relates to grids and images from page to page throughout the whole project. Or, how type sizes relate to each other. Or, how pictures relate to each other and how the parts relate to the whole.

Noise

Anything that gets in the way of or distorts, a signal and potentially alters the understanding of the message.

Noise is everything from the competition in the channel for user attention to unnecessary information left in the communication that complicates rather than clarifying.

With any kind of communication in the modern world, we must earn the attention of our audience and endeavor to deliver meaning as efficiently as possible. Attention spans are short so messages must be crafted with clarity and economy. The goal is to earn the attention so that all competing noise is grayed out while we communicate with the customer.

Massimo Vignelli

There are no hierarchies when it comes to quality. Quality is there or is not there, and if it is not there we have lost our time.

Redundancy

A feature of a message that could be left out, but which helps the message to be understood.

Abstraction is the removal of information toward simplification in form until you reach a point where the thing being abstracted can no longer be identified. The last thing removed is the necessary redundancy that must be added back to give the thing its intended meaning.

Abstraction is the removal of information toward simplification in form until you reach a point where the thing loses its identity. The last component removed is the necessary redundancy that must be added back in to give the thing its intended meaning.



**Gray Octagon
Could Mean Stop**

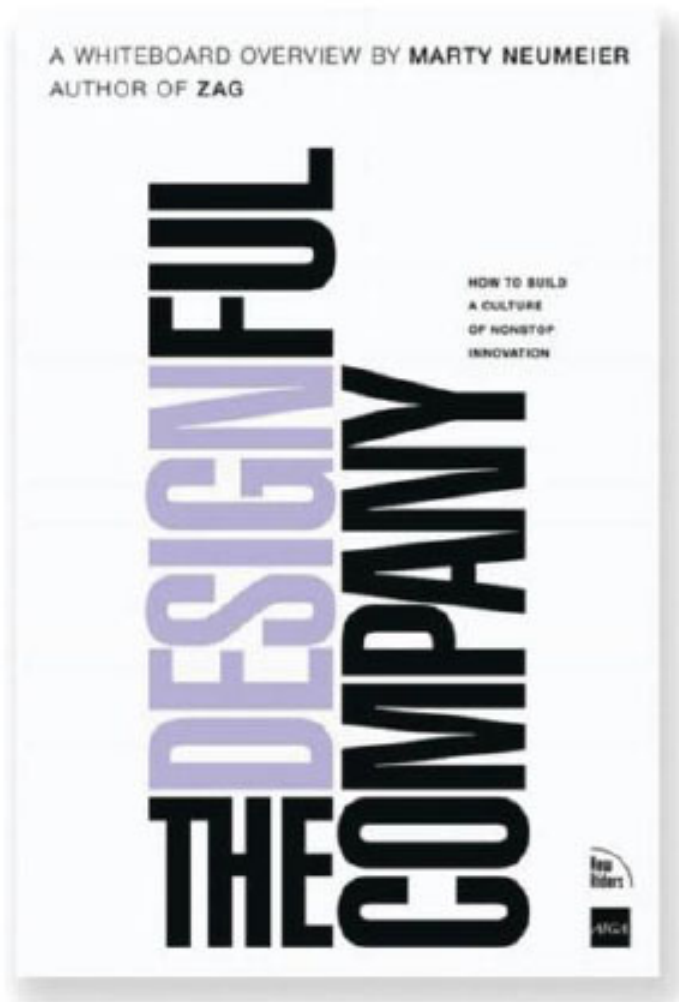


**Red Octagon
Does Mean Stop**



**Red Octagon
Definitely Mean Stop**

Moving To A **Design Led Organization.**



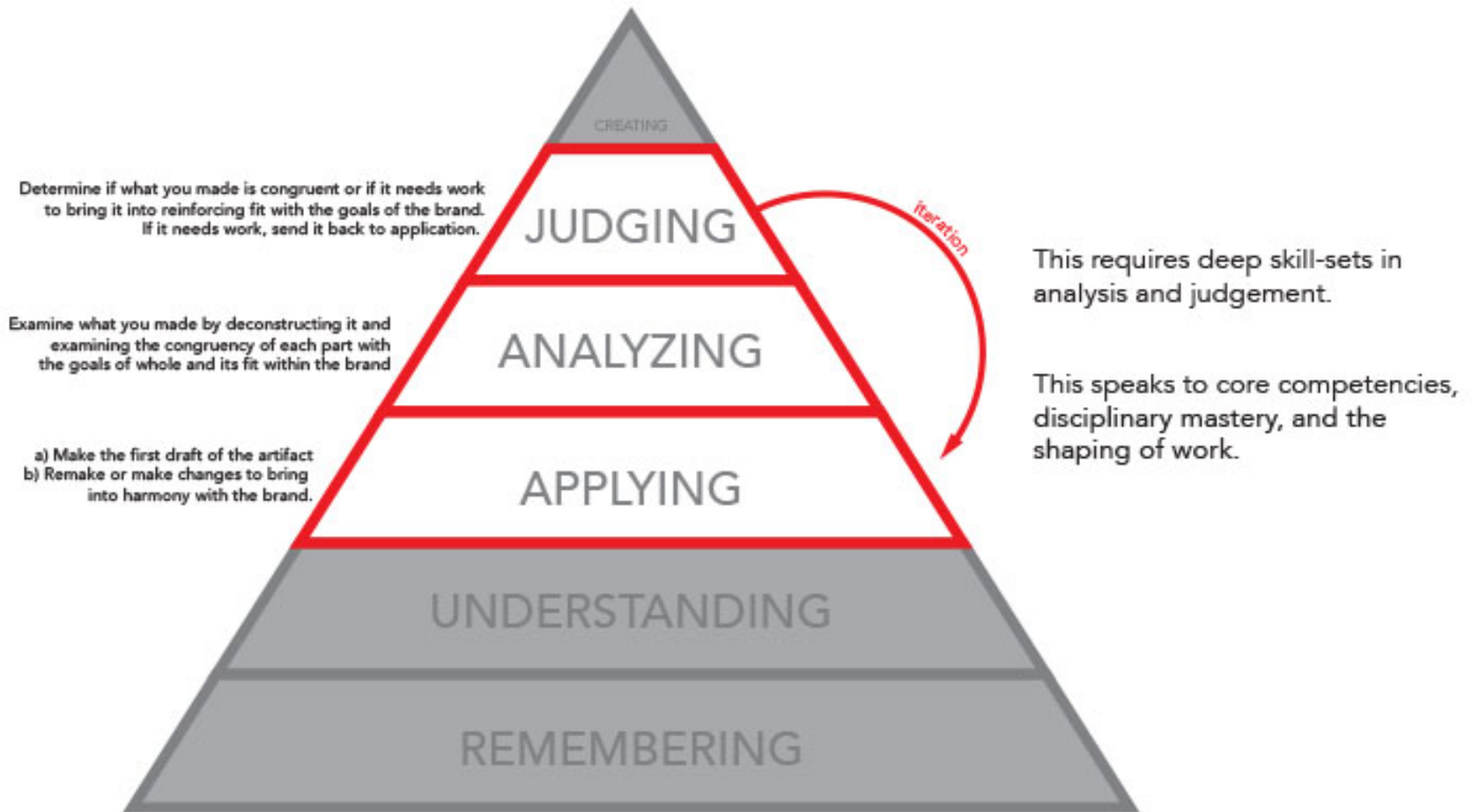
**If You Aren't Doing Multiple Iterations
You Aren't Designing.**

- Davin

Having a Brand Means People Have
A New Set of Criteria for Measuring
Their Work Against.

Just Being Done, Is No Longer Enough
For Work To Be Good.

Designful Thinking



Bloom's Taxonomy

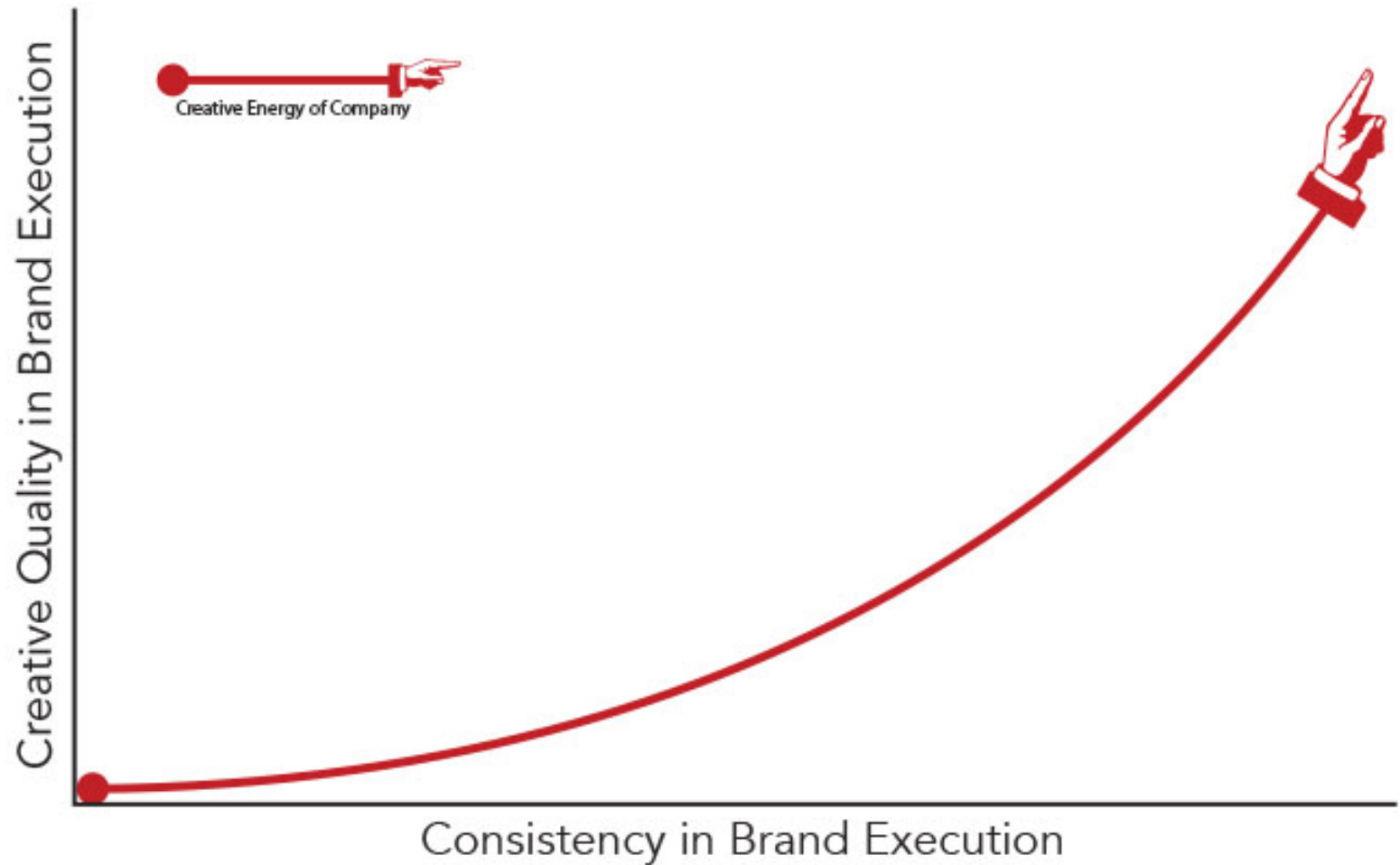
Structured Autonomy

Brands bring structured autonomy to production. We want our teams to have autonomy to produce and we want to decentralize command so teams can level expertise on their part of the customer experience. But we also want to create brand expression and mitigate self-expression.

Brand standards install a minimal set of creative constraints and establish the criteria for good work. Good work aligns with the patterns of behavior that are established in the brand standards. It tightens the breadth of expression which keeps people from meandering from one batch of low hanging fruit to the next, changing the flavor of the brand with each new campaign.

Instead, people climb higher in the brand tree and harvest the higher quality and more creatively juicy fruit that tastes better to the market.

Creative Direction



Victory doesn't need a brand because we need to separate it from Covenant Eyes or because we want to put an appropriate paintjob on it. It needs a brand so the right customers can find it, understand what they've found and fall in love with being part of it.

Stacks of Work

Strategy/Identity/Standards/Implementation/Refinement/Evolution

Four Levels of Design Achievement

Aesthetics < Form Follows Function < System < Experience

Aesthetics: A surface level paintjob. The goal is aesthetic revelry or aesthetic novelty

Form Follows Function: The aesthetics are designed to facilitate the function of the thing.

System: All parts work together to facilitate a function greater than the individual functions of the parts.

Experience: The system works and the customer draws emotional value as well as functional

Brand Strategy: Help Them Choose It & Help Them Love It

Battle 1

Define

Position: Which one is it relative to competition.

Differentiation: How is it meaningfully different from competitors

Position + Differentiation = Relevance

Battle 2

Define

Identity: Who am I because I choose and use Victory?

Differentiation: What can I do because I choose and use Victory?

Affiliation: Who is my tribe that also chooses and uses Victory?

Agree to die together on this hill.

Design Brief & Team Curation

The design brief will hold the strategy and dictate the deliverables for the brand identity work.

There will be three sets of **patterns of behavior** that need to be designed for specific kinds of communication then synced together and standardized

Verbal Patterns + Visual Patterns + Interactive Patterns

The goal will be to **express Victory** to our Market.

These are the **brands patterns of behavior**, not the patterns of any one person in the company. What we agree on should transcend personal taste.

Pick Teams and do the work.

Verbal Branding

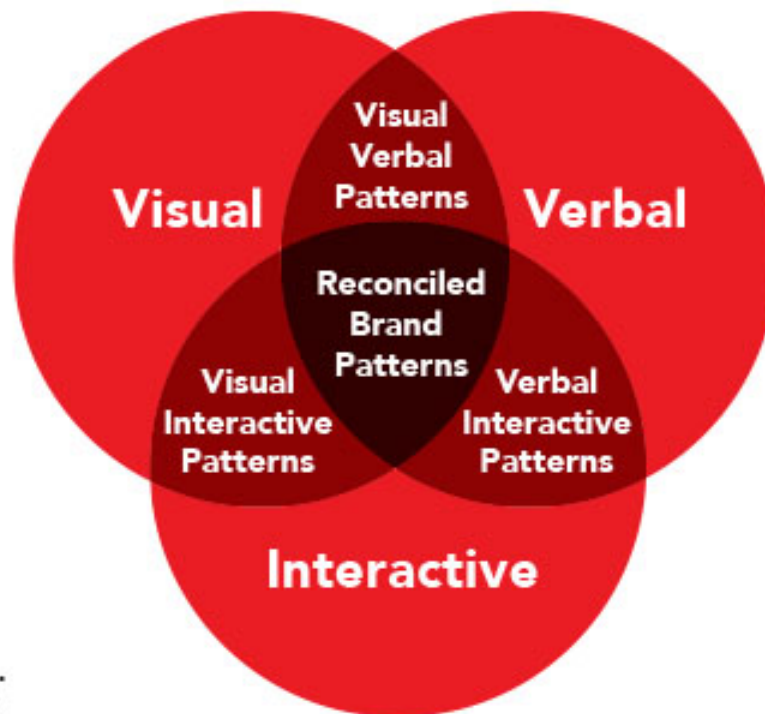
Writers from each
writing context
across the company

Visual Branding

Visual Designers
from Product & Comm
Design for the product
and augment for
Marketing & Member Care.

Interactive Branding

Visual/Verbal/Interactive Designers.
People from Comm Product Web and
Member Care doing visual and verbal
design with a focus on person to
person and person to interface design



Project Management

Keeps teams moving
Keeps teams talking
Removes Impediments

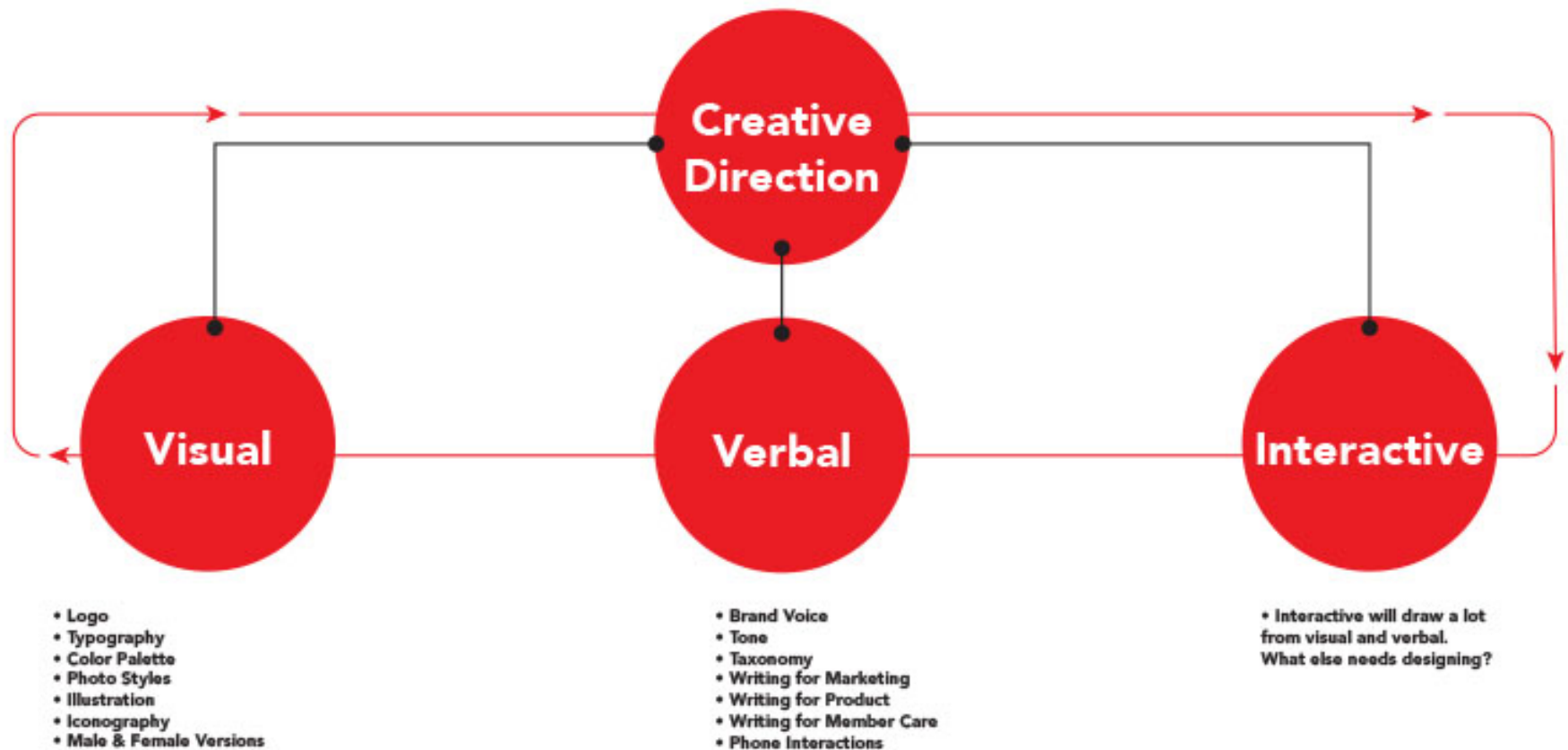
Creative Direction

Analyzes and Judges
Work and helps team
reconcile toward the
communication goal.
Writes Standards

Stakeholder Prioritization.

Provides Resources
Evangelizes to build
Company Buy-In

Design the Patterns



What **Good** Looks like– **The Charismatic Brand**

A "charismatic brand" refers to a brand that possesses a unique and compelling personality, attracting customers through its values, story, and overall aura, often going beyond just the product itself, making it stand out from competitors and inspire strong loyalty among its audience, similar to how a charismatic person draws people in with their personality and presence; essentially, it's a brand that people feel a deep connection with and are passionate about, not just because of its features, but because of the identity it represents.

Strong brand story:

A well-developed narrative that resonates with customers on an emotional level, often tied to a mission or purpose beyond just profit.

Authenticity:

A genuine and transparent brand image that aligns with the company's values and actions.

Unique identity:

A distinct personality and visual style that differentiates the brand from competitors.

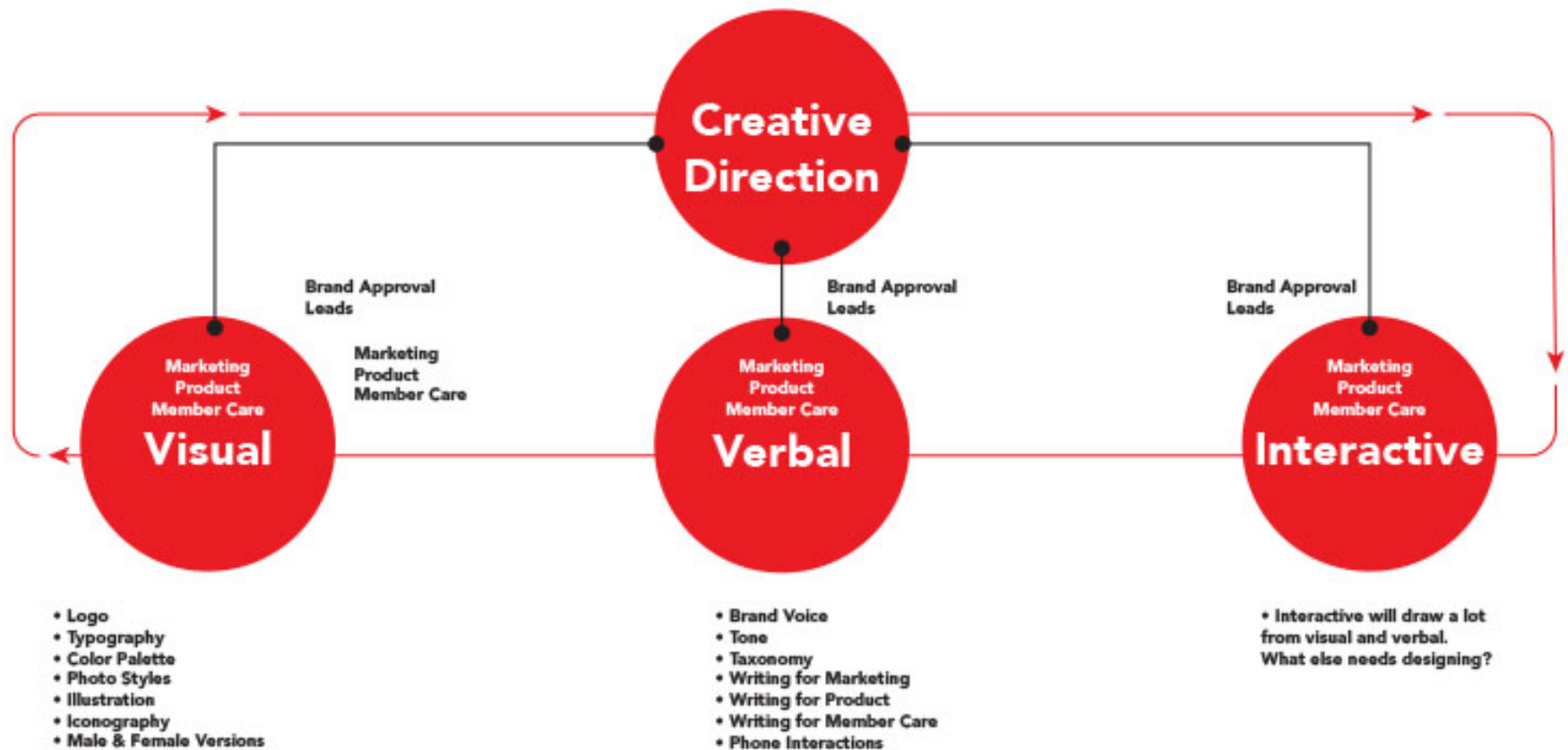
Emotional connection:

The ability to evoke positive emotions in customers, creating a sense of belonging or shared experience.

Inspiring leadership:

Leaders who embody the brand values and communicate them effectively, creating a strong following.

Write the Standards



Implement & Refine the **Standards**

- Roll the brand out at Employee Summit.
- Provide each employees with a printed Brand Standards Manual.
- Set expectations for growing pains and challenge process.
- Establish Brand Approval and Brand Question Processes across depts.
- Creative Direction works with each Brand Approver to clarify and record.
- Standards evolve from year to year as problems are encountered.
- New Standards manual supplied with updated standards annually.
- Brand Measured Annually for Position/Reach/Reputation

Evolve the **Brand**

The Market and the Product will change over time. If we've done our job well and built our brand around a core idea that can be evolved to stay relevant with the changing sensibilities of the market and the ever changing limitations and opportunities with software then we can evolve the brand through advertising and features to stay relevant with the most viable market.