

BUILDING BUSINESS BRANDS

Every business has a brand—Are you building yours intentionally?



*WRITTEN BY: John Jantsch
Jeff Bullas
Georgie Gallagher
Alan Twelkemeier
Alex Boyer
Chris Bibey
Mark Di Somma*





If asked, most business owners would probably say that their brand is defined by something as simple as their logo. Ask any potential customer, however, and you'll probably get a different answer.

The truth is, when a customer thinks about their favorite brands and businesses, they usually think about the people that work there, the buying experience or even culture. Their view of your business and product goes far beyond your logo.

There is a lot to consider when you address your branding, and it can be difficult. That is why we have collected this eBook, to help you think about your brand and identity in a different way. We have collected valuable posts from the Duct Tape Marketing blog, Duct Tape Marketing consultants and other thought leaders in marketing, all in one place. In this eBook you will learn:

- The Duct Tape Marketing definition of branding
- How to make your business' branding better
- How to make your employees happier and engage them in your branding efforts
- How to effectively brand yourself to assist in your business branding
- How to make your brand stand out from the competition

Enjoy!

The Definition of Branding

By John Jantsch

One of my readers pointed out that they really appreciated the definition of marketing that I use throughout [Duct Tape Marketing](#). **Marketing is getting someone who has a need to know, like and trust you.** Most small business folks, exposed only to more academic definitions, really seem to appreciate the truthfulness of that characterization.

This same reader (Eddy) also asked then for my definition of branding (as it might relate to marketing)

So, here you go. **Branding is the art of becoming knowable, likable and trustable.**

Taken in that light it's not much of a stretch to see how the two are related, yet separate. Every small business has a brand – either accidentally or intentionally, because it's a lot like a personality – everyone has one, like it or not. So, the question then becomes, what should you do to create a brand that enhances your marketing efforts and rings true for you?

With this definition in mind marketing then becomes the act of taking the elements of that personality and exposing them to the ideal customer at the ideal time in the ideal setting. Elements like a company name, logo, images, metaphors, colors, words, look and feel, dress, attitude, networks, consistency and vision.

If marketing is doing then branding is being. Often the two are so integrated strategically and tactically that it's hard to say one comes before or is more important than the other.

A small business that understands branding and marketing and the relationship between the two will find that attracting and retaining customers is not really that hard. The struggle in marketing often comes from the belief that branding is just for products or big companies. This leads to the disconnect between who your company is being and what your company is doing.



The market we live in today gives us so many avenues to use to brand ourselves and our businesses. Sometimes it is difficult to keep it all straight. Jeff Bullas, one of the world's leaders in online marketing, shares with us the ABC's of personal online branding.

26 Tips for Creating a Powerful Personal Brand Online

By Jeff Bullas

The social web is a game changer.

It's not a fad but an evolving ecosystem of web technologies that allow any individual to publish, promote and engage with a global audience. The real power of this is that it has put the tools in your hands should you choose to use them. No longer do you have to pay the mass media gatekeepers to be published or to gain attention.

Passionate and creative individuals that understand how this works can go from zero to hero. One great example is [Bethany Mota](#) who started a fashion oriented YouTube channel for fun (also read passion) in 2009 when she was just 14! In 2014 her videos have over 209 million views and she is estimated to earn over \$40,000 per month or nearly half a million dollars per year from YouTube.

Bethany is just one of many who have used the social web to make a difference to their lives and inspire and influence others.

Build your online platform

It doesn't have to be YouTube.

Build your own online platform such as a blog or website that you own, then amplify your content and engage with your audience on social networks. Use LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter or even Pinterest and Instagram. You have options. Find what social network resonates with you.

The secret. Don't wait to be perfect. Just start.



Here are 26 tips for creating a powerful personal brand online.

- 1** Be authentic
- 2** Launch your platform online with a blog or website
- 3** Create content
- 4** Define your audience
- 5** Build an email list
- 6** Focus
- 7** Memorable design
- 8** Help others
- 9** Seek out online influencers
- 10** Join online groups
- 11** Use keywords and phrases that people will use on Google to find you and your topic
- 12** Learn to use LinkedIn effectively
- 13** Get to understand how media works both online and offline
- 14** Network
- 15** Opine - State your opinion
- 16** Photo - create a visual brand with a great caricature or photo of “you”
- 17** Ask questions
- 18** Recognise people who have helped you - Shine the light on others
- 19** Create a memorable slogan that expresses your mission and purpose
- 20** Teach
- 21** Understand and use emotional triggers
- 22** Develop your unique voice
- 23** Get to understand the essence of influence. Dale Carnegie’s book “How to Win Friends and Influence People” is a good place to start.
- 24** Examine and analyze your analytics to see what works and doesn’t
- 25** Forget about you and remember its all about your readers and viewers
- 26** Have zeal (also known as passion)

In the infographic below are some more details on the steps to creating online success.

PERSONAL BRANDING

INFOGRAPHIC PRESENTED BY creative Placester

An effective personal brand wields influence and with it you're likely to enjoy:

THE BENEFITS OF A POWERFUL PERSONAL BRAND

- 1 A steady stream of ideal clients
- 2 Rewarding partnerships
- 3 Leadership opportunities
- 4 Greater mindshare
- 5 Association with a market niche
- 6 Greater credibility
- 7 Recognition and prestige
- 8 Higher perceived value

A Authenticity
Anything other than the real you won't do. Discover exactly what makes you fascinating. Build your brand on your true strengths.

B Blog
An insightful website is the engine of your personal brand. Your blog is its fuel. You need to start a blog, and once you do, there's no stopping.

C Content
Valuable content has magnetic power. Create an interesting mix of content to earn the mindshare and trust your brand needs.

Define Your Audience
To focus on the needs of your readers, you must define their pain points and identify how you can help. Conducting surveys will be very useful.

E Email List
Email is your ace, the money media. It's private, permission-based and pervasive. Commit to developing an email list and using it.

F Focus
Blurry brands languish. Define your brand with a focused niche to connect with the minds of those you aim to influence.

G Graphic Design
Everything you create should be presented with class and continuity. Develop a tasty logo, color palette, and design standards that reflect well on your brand.

H Help Others
Don't wait for opportunities to come to you. Find ways to be helpful. Be the first to volunteer, connect people, or get behind any meaningful mission.

I Influencers
Influential professionals have prominent friends. Seek out leaders. Surround yourself with them. Find ways to be of value to them.

J Join
Affiliations are all-important to the growth of your brand. Find groups you'd be proud to be a part of, get involved, and make your presence known.

K Keywords
When surfers go Googing, which words will lead them to you? Build a short list of the most relevant keywords and use them often.

L LinkedIn
It's today's "who's who" of the professional world. Take LinkedIn seriously, and mop or its every rock and cranny.

M Media
Media is more complex than ever, and more vital. Identify the outlets that are most valued in your field, and use their tools to elevate your brand.

N Network
Make connections locally, regionally, and globally. Have a business card or something of even greater value to distribute. Follow up and follow through.

O Opine
Fix the notion of universal appeal. Take strong stands on your ideals and voice your opinions. There's no notoriety in bland land. Be bold.

P Photo
Your face must appear all across the social sphere. Don't scrimp here. Hire a pro to do a photo shoot and pose the portrait that says, "I'm your friend."

Q Questions
Ask questions. Ask people to tell you their stories. Ask for their ideas. And then listen closely. Everyone loves a good listener.

R Recognize
You won't achieve your goals on your own. Privately and publicly, recognize the contributions of every person who's played a part in your brand development.

S Slogan
Your brand should be the promise you make. Work at developing a unique selling proposition and express it in a concise, memorable slogan.

T Teach
Every person you admire taught you valuable lessons. Commit to nurturing the teacher within and build your brand by becoming a trusted advisor.

U Understand Triggers
Weak brands focus solely on intellectual arguments. Strong brands tap into emotions. The subject you need to master is psychology. Become a student of it.

V Voice
People remember how you made them feel. What you say is important, but how you say it is even more important. Develop a unique and genuine voice.

W Win Friends and Influence People
Dale Carnegie's classic book remains unsurpassed as the manual for understanding the essence of influence. Reread it and win new friends.

eXamine
Your x-ray for all online efforts is analytics. Deploy Google Analytics and/or additional tools to inform you of how visitors behave on your site and what you can do to improve their experience.

Y You
The first rule of writing emotively is using the first person. You are "I." The reader is "you." If you want to push their buttons, write conversationally.

Z Zeal
Zeal is a "strong feeling of interest and enthusiasm that makes one determined to do something." Without it, there's no point in building a personal brand.

Infographic source: [Placester](#)

Branding is the art of becoming knowable, likable and trustable. All three of these elements of branding go beyond just your logos and colors. Every business has a brand, and it is an important to the long-term success of your business. Georgie Gallagher, a Duct Tape Marketing Certified Consultant, explains why your brand truly matters.

How to Make Your Brand Matter

By Georgie Gallagher

Every business has a brand – even if it thinks it doesn't.

Your local coffee shop has a brand. Your local accountant has a brand. Your local vet has a brand. And your business has a brand.

I can see you rolling your eyes. Isn't branding just a lot of 90's marketing hype? Does a brand really matter in today's world?

Yes, your brand does matter. In fact, it matters a lot. Why? Because in a world where we're bombarded by thousands of messages a day, your business needs to stand for something to set it apart from the pack. What's more, understanding your brand means that you control how people experience your business. This is your brand, and you're in the driving seat.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Let's begin by understanding what a brand is.

What is a brand?

Here's what it's not. It's not your brand name. It's not your registered trademark. And it's not your great logo you spent \$10,000 on. It's much more than that.

I love this definition by the father of branding, Al Ries. It's stayed with me through the years while working with B2B and B2C clients.

“A successful branding program is based on the concept of singularity. It creates in the mind of the prospect the perception that there is no product on the market quite like your product.” – Al Ries



I like to think of it as that little piece of someone's mind that you own – it's all that person's collective thoughts and experiences that pop up when they think of your business. We have the same process when we think of people. Some people make us happy. Some challenge us. Some are downright annoying. You want your brand to be one of the good guys.

Your brand is the look and feel of your business. It's how people experience you as a company. It's your promise to people – a kind of silent understanding about what you'll deliver when you do business with them. And it helps create your unique identity.

But aren't brands just for big business?

Absolutely not.

Take the café that's buzzing. It's interesting. The guy taking orders gives you a great smile and good-humoredly banter with you. The girl making coffee is an artisan at her craft. Everyone's busy. The tables are packed but clean. The service is fast and fun. There's atmosphere. There are great magazines. There are quirky and fun things to look at. And you feel like you're a part of something special, part of a club.

What you don't necessarily realise is that this is all crafted as part of a well-orchestrated brand.

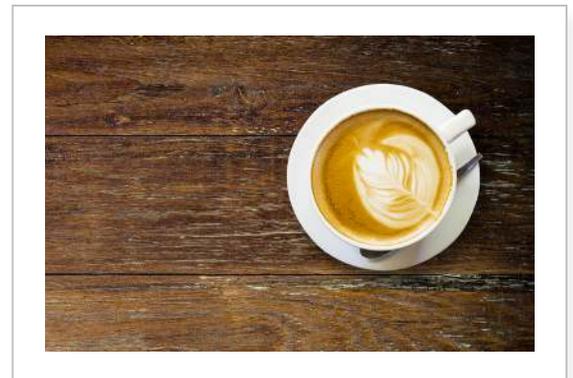
These guys know exactly what they stand for – great coffee, great food and great service in a fun, quirky atmosphere that people just love. EVERYTHING in their business is about delivering on this brand promise. From the quirky service and funky music tracks to the handwritten thank you with a chocolate-coated coffee bean on your bill, every detail has been attended to and shapes your experience.

Building your brand

So how can you go about creating your unique brand? What's your business's unique stamp on the world? How are you going to build a business that gets talked about and referred?

Here are four guiding questions that may help you develop your brand.

What are the real benefits of dealing with you? Do you deliver anything unique or special? Is there something over and above your competitors that you could offer? I'm



looking for REAL benefits here. Think like your client or customer – why are they using you?

What's your brand style? Are you professional, aspirational, quirky, fun, friendly or something else? How can you deliver this style with every client interaction and communication offline and online?

What are your brand values? You may value professionalism, the environment, people, your community or something else. How will your business live up to these values? How will this alter your clients' experience with you? Be honest and true. Today's social media savvy consumers will not tolerate falsehoods.

What is your essence? What is your reason for being? Why does your business exist? This is the toughest question you can ask business owners. But if you can nail this, you really do have a driving force that can shape your entire business offering. It's a very powerful thing.

Once you answer these questions, then you need to work out how you can deliver and create a seamless brand experience.



For many businesses, their internal culture is a major part of their branding. Happy employees can help your business grow and prosper. At Duct Tape Marketing, we have taken the same approach, promoting a positive culture with our growing employee base. Here's how we do it:

As a Business, We Are What We Aspire to Be

By John Jantsch

The title of this post applies to most things in life I feel and certainly in business. Unless we have goals and aspirations for our business, it's hard to imagine arriving at a destination of our own control.

Businesses have long espoused the virtues of mission statements, but it's only when you live these statements through everyday acts that they become real.



My business has always been driven by a few simple ideas, but only recently did I turn them into what I call a “culture statement.” I would say these ideas represent a great deal of what I’ve always stood for, but seeing them in this fashion keeps them even more firmly rooted in my day to day actions.

The idea behind a culture statement is to come up with a set of ideas for what you stand for and then build upon them in ways that make them real in everyday situations. This not only lets team members know a bit about what we stand for it also helps us all make the right decisions when the heat of the moment may creep in and attempt to dictate how we act.

This is how culture is built, communicated and lived through decision-making that happens in real time.

We use this document in training and keep it front and center at all times. It’s our plan to discuss individual attributes during review meetings and I’m happy to share it here publicly.

[DTM Culture Statement](#) (Slideshow)



If you find this document interesting you might also enjoy similar ones from [Buffer](#), [Zappos](#) and check out the companies rated by [Glassdoor to have the best cultures](#).

After wrestling with this idea for a while a couple things became very clear:

- A culture statement starts by reflecting who you really are – there’s no point in coming up with stuff that simply sounds good
- A culture statement should include some aspirational elements – it’s okay to include “this is something we strive for but don’t always achieve “- that’s how we grow
- A culture statement will evolve as you grow – add new things, take things away, consolidate and learn
- A culture statement, like so many things in business, will flow only as it’s lived from the top – if the boss doesn’t live it, it won’t mean much
- A culture statement must be taught, led and enforced – make time to discuss various elements of the culture statement as you teach and review actions inside the business
- A culture statement is a team game. not an edict – everyone in the organization needs to come to their own terms with what the values mean to them and how they can best live them



At Duct Tape Marketing, our culture statement is part of our purpose, and it directs every decision we make as a company. We are dedicated to helping businesses grow, and make their work a better place. Duct Tape Marketing Certified Consultant Alan Twelkemeier explains why purpose is so important in branding.

Building an Exceptional Brand Begins with a Purpose

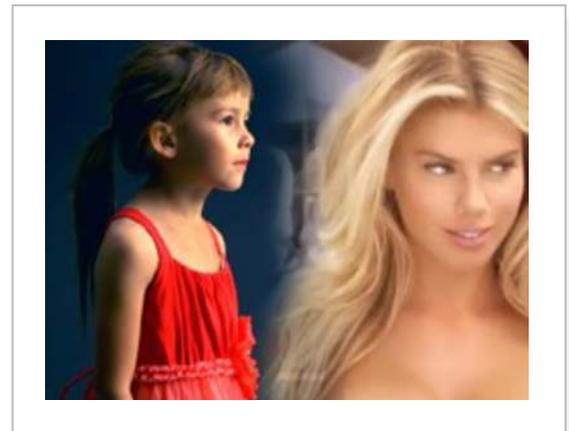
By Alan Twelkemeier

If you watched SuperBowl 2015 you might have noticed a shift. Not in the momentum of the game, or in one of Katy Perry's wardrobe changes. The shift was in the marketing. There were more brands talking less about product and more about family, people and social impact than ever.

The starkest example came before the big game when GoDaddy pulled their controversial [puppy sale](#) ad and replaced it with an ad supporting a business owner who was missing the game because he was hard at work. In fact, according to [vv](#), 8 out of 10 of the SuperBowl's top ads (including the no. 1 and no. 2 spot) had inspirational or awareness-related themes. This inspired some cynical ad critics to call Superbowl XLIX the "Touchy Feely Bowl".

This shift in advertising isn't just about sugar and spice and Daddy's that are nice (see Dove's [Real Strength](#)). It's about an attempt to connect with people where brands have always sought to live - in their hearts. Because when you have someone's heart, you have their mind and when you have both, you have their money. If this sounds like a diabolical plan to take advantage of the consumers' emotions for the sake of profit, you might be right.

However, for some brands this shift isn't occurring because they are only driven by the almighty dollar. They've also recognized that communicating why they do what they do can power great profit and great profit can power a greater purpose.



(L) Always® - Like a Girl (R) Hardees® - Au Natural



This isn't the kind of growth that is built around a purpose and measured with YouTube views and social shares. You can get that kind of short-term brand equity with string bikinis, dancing babies and screaming goats.

The connection between a company's profit, its maturity and its brand perception is irrefutable. More and more organizations are following in the footsteps of industry leaders like Coca-Cola, Procter & Gamble, and Apple because they recognize that the power of their profits lies in the translation of their purpose.



This kind of brand equity is built *on top* of an organization's purpose. It's constructed slowly through awareness, emotion, and ultimately the loyalty of both the employees who produce the goods and services and the consumers who choose 'their brand' every single time because they understand **the why** behind the product.

Most brands still find it difficult to turn "touchy-feely" into brand equity because they are missing a key ingredient. Creating an ad that makes a potential customer feel good in that moment doesn't work if they can't relate the message back to the brand that made them feel that way.

However, organizations that have the vision to align their products and services with a purpose will experience extraordinary growth in Profit, in Culture, and in Impact. These companies are more than profit driven organization or purpose-driven organizations, they are Growth Driven Organizations.

Your brand is also enforced by your employees. While culture is important to drawing the best employees, they still must be engaged and focused on improving your company's branding.



How To Turn Your Employees into Brand Marketers

By Alex Boyer

Think for a minute about your best customers. Not only do they represent returning business, but the best customers refer you to their family, friends and business partners. They rate your business highly on Google and interact with you in social networks. Essentially they are marketers for your business, helping promote you and maximizing your marketing efforts. Everyone can use more customers like these.

But your best customers are hard to come by, and even the best companies occasionally have customers that aren't happy. What if I could tell you there is a surefire way to increase your number of people that are assisting your marketing efforts, much like your ideal clients?

Look around you, all of your employees are resources that you can use to maximize your marketing efforts. We at Duct Tape Marketing believe in many simple principles, one of which is that marketing is everyone's job. Whether you are in finance or HR, you're representing and marketing your company. It doesn't even take a conscious effort; just a positive viewpoint on where you work goes a long way.

That is why you should engage your employees and co-workers in your marketing efforts. Your employees should be your best customers and your biggest fans. Here are some easily implemented ways you can engage your employees and turn them into your brand marketers.

Promote a Positive Work Environment

This seems like a no-brainer, but can be difficult to achieve. You want your employees to love working for you, so they can't wait to tell their friends and family about what you do and what makes your company special. Create a positive work environment by offering great perks or promoting after-work activities. If you're a product-based company, offer free or discounted products to your employees and their family and friends. Even something as simple as branded T-Shirts or coffee mugs for your employees can turn into conversations outside of the workplace.



Show Your Employees What It Is Like To Be your Customer

At Duct Tape Marketing, we ask companies to examine their customer journey; the path every customer takes from the moment they discover your product through the sale and post-sale support. Visually, this should look like an hourglass; customers get to know, like and trust your company before buying, and then eventually repeating and referring you.

I suggest you walk each and every one of your employees through this process, treating them exactly as you would any other customer. That way, your employees will not only know what makes your customer journey special, but also how to describe it to anyone who asks. You can even do this during the new employee on-boarding process.



Social Sharing

Businesses are always looking for ways to keep their employees from wasting time on social media, but are always looking for more social sharing of their business posts. Why not ask your employees to follow and share your social media posts? Not only is this a great way to expand your audience in general, it hones in on your employees' friends and family who are likely to have a positive existing view of your company.

Have Everyone Blog

Blogs are a great way to draw in good leads, but sometimes it can be tough to create enough content to keep your blog up-to-date. Try asking your employees to assist you in writing posts, or even set up a monthly or weekly employee post program. Regular blog posts from your employees can help give your blog a different viewpoint and voice while strengthening your readers' connection to your company. In addition, ask your employees to share their posts with their friends and family in person or on social media.

These are just some simple thoughts I had to turn your employees into marketers. I know many of these reasons are why I love working at Duct Tape Marketing.



Branding for businesses is often defined by the likeability and trustworthiness of leadership. This is especially true with companies that use the inbound marketing techniques of the Duct Tape Marketing System. Leadership must embrace improving and cultivating their own personal brand, and in-turn people will trust and like their business more.

Grow Your Personal Brand to Benefit Your Business

By Chris Bibey

Growing your personal brand is easier said than done, however, this can go a long way in benefiting your business.

What can you do to set your small business apart from the competition? If you are just another “egg in the basket,” you will find it difficult to take your company to the next level.

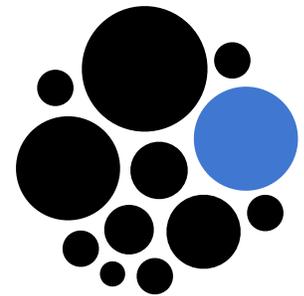
Rather than rely on the “same old” marketing strategy as the rest of your industry, it is time to take a unique approach. And for some, this means putting more resources into growing their personal brand.

According to the [U.S. Small Business Administration](#), there are approximately 23 million small businesses in the United States. If you don't have a strategy for outdoing your competition, you could find yourself trading water for years to come.

Your Personal Brand

If you are the face of your company, it is essential that you grow your personal brand. Doing so will go a long way in showing your market that the person in charge knows the business inside and out.

Here is the question you need to answer: what are the best ways to grow your personal brand? There are many answers, with these three sticking out in the crowd:



1. Go out of your way to help others. If I could only choose one strategy for growing my personal brand, this would be it.

You won't always get paid for going out of your way, but this has nothing to do with the results. I am never shy about jumping on a phone call, connecting with an interested party via email or even meeting in person.

Simply put, this generosity will pay off in the long run.



2. Build your online following. In today's day and age, there is no better way to grow your personal brand than through a strong online following. This has treated me well in the past, despite the fact that my social media presence is anything but robust.

Remember, you don't need tens of thousands of followers, friends, or connections to grow your personal brand. What you do need is the ability to provide guidance, advice, and information to those who care about what you have to say.

Many years ago, back when I was first getting started with LinkedIn, I took the time to strike up conversations with every new connection. Doing this eventually led me to a conversation with the founder of [Brosix](#), an instant messaging company. Shortly after that, the team reached out to me after checking out my experience online, and it led to a strong business relationship.

3. Always provide value. Remember, everything you "put out there" is going to reflect on both you and your business. If you aren't providing information of value, you might as well take a step back for the time being.

This doesn't mean every tweet and blog post should be earth shattering. What it does mean is that you should think twice before you update your social media profiles or blog. Also, don't throw around advice, such as on a phone call, without thinking about what you are saying. The other party is likely to implement the advice you suggest. Do you want to steer him or her down the wrong path?



Final Thoughts

The time has come to strongly consider the benefits of growing your personal brand. If you follow the three tips above, it could have a profound effect on your business [going forward].

The best brands are not only effective at getting customers to know, like, and trust them, but they also set themselves apart from the pack. You must strive to differentiate yourself from your competitors. A lot of this is achieved in the strategy phase, but it is constantly getting more and more difficult with the sheer number of brands available to customers. Branding Expert Mark Di Somma gives us some valuable tips for differentiating your brand.

Is Brand Differentiation Still Possible?

By Mark Di Somma

Short answer – yes it is, but not in the way it was.

I haven't met a brand manager yet who didn't tell me that they had a differentiated product. I'm not surprised. It's part of the job description of any brand owner to be marketing something that is disruptive, market-changing, blue-ocean, category-killing...15 years on from when I first suggested "parity is the real pariah", every brand's still talking up difference – but consumers are increasingly hard pressed to see any.

In some ways, marketers only have themselves to blame. Enthused by the need to be so very different from everyone else, marketers seem to have searched, then compromised and finally settled for nit-picking their way to a self-appointed category-of-one. Is it time to call time? Perhaps if more brands admitted that the chances of them redefining the universe at a product or service level were nil, they could focus more on the things that do matter.

We've been drawn into the innovation myth – the belief that brands can invent their way to market dominance. Most brands will never do that. At best, "innovation" (which would better be described across the majority of the market as improvement) will keep them on a par with those around them. At worst, it will lure them into risking massive resources for a difference they will never make.



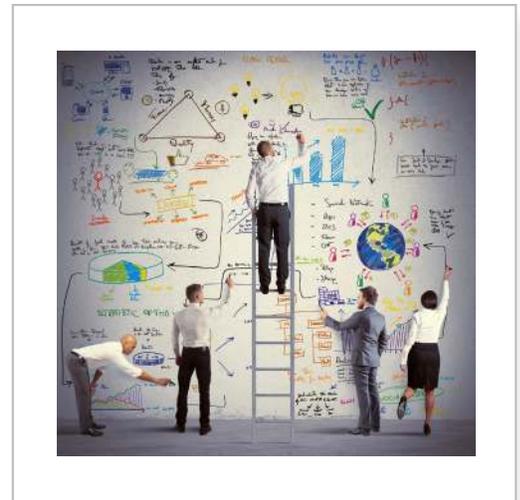
So let's talk about a shift of focus: from big picture, broad brush disruptive market plays to a new era of personalized, specific, individualized small plays. In the new world of the quantified self and the emerging Internet Of Everything, brand differentiation today is really about what a brand does for "me" not how it revolutionizes whole swathes of a sector.

Will Novosedlik posted this timely reminder recently: "We're not in the land of [Trout and Ries](#) anymore, folks. We are in a networked economy characterized by constant technological disruption, channel proliferation and fragmentation, overpopulated categories and far fewer opportunities for differentiation. Far more empowered and influential customers are forcing a shift from customer acquisition to customer retention and from messaging to experience. They don't want to listen to brands; they want brands to listen to them."

Take that one step further. Not just listen – cater. They want their brands to come closer and act as an extension of their extending world. In a recent McKinsey interview with Ola Källenius, the global head of marketing at Daimler AG talked about how the luxury car maker was forging a [new type of customer experience](#) through "Mercedes me". It seamlessly integrates what Daimler AG know universally about their cars with what each driver experiences, through a single Mercedes ID that links a driver's smartphone with their car and the manufacturer.

This combination of big data and little data (the view that each individual forges of themselves through their habits and their social and brand choices) will in my view redefine how customers find difference across brands. Differentiation won't be about one big thing anymore. Increasingly, it must be about a personalized configuration of ideas that click with people's worldviews.

According to Nigel Hollis, [consumers don't see difference, but they will find it](#). "On average, the proportion of people willing to endorse any brand as "different from other brands of (a specific category)" is low. But perceived differentiation is only important once buyers believe that a brand is acceptable — that is, that it meets their basic needs and is an acceptable choice."



And that's the new confluence – to advocate a view of the world that consumers are drawn to, believe in and find “acceptable” (a concept I have previously referred to as a [Unique Brand Perspective](#) coupled with smart and individually specific ways of connecting, increasingly through devices, that consumers find intriguing, rewarding and inspiring. Universal and personal.

Let's stop looking for big-bang difference on the shelf because for most brands I don't think that's where competitiveness is going to be found going forward. And stop bragging about how great you are. Most big brands can do campaigns. There's no differentiation there. Chances are [no-one's listening anyway](#). Instead:

- Break with a simple tradition in the sector. The simpler, the better.
- Import something simple from another sector. Again, the simpler, the better.
- Leverage how people want to make decisions – don't fight with it (by asking them to make decisions in ways that feel foreign to them)
- Help consumers navigate the massive choice set that confronts them, rather than adding to the clutter with more and more information
- Stand for something in the world that makes sense, makes headlines and aligns with what you make, not because it's sensationalist but because enough people want to see the same change happen. (Nice piece on this by Kathy Oneto here)
- Make everything a consumer touches endorsing of why they should seek you out more – and do that through being in touch with them, not through generalizing about them

Put your money into those things, I suggest. There's plenty to do.





Monthly Favs

Every month I like to collect some of my favorite links and tools to help take your marketing efforts to the next level. Here are my monthly favs.

[Free Summarizer](#) – tool that summarizes long texts in a few seconds

[PodClear](#) – New app for recording high-quality audio from Skype calls

[Parcel Audit Pros](#) – UPS and FedEx parcel auditing to recoup late delivery charges

[Soundsnap](#) – Library of over 200,000 sound effects and noises for audio editing

[Userlike](#) – Nice looking live chat tool for your website

[Revue](#) – Automatically created rich, content filled weekly digests

[GetSocialAnalytics](#) – Nice little Chrome plugin that gives you social stats on any web page you land on

[Pablo by Buffer](#) – Simple visual content editor for Twitter and Facebook images

[Twilert](#) – Get Twitter search email alerts for terms and conversations you select

The Duct Tape Marketing System

Thank you for your interest in the Duct Tape Marketing System and this lesson topic, Brand and Identity. If this content interested you, I urge you to join our exciting new online program and community, [The Duct Tape Marketing System](#). There you can find even more content on this subject as well as the other aspects of the Duct Tape Marketing System.

When I created the Duct Tape Marketing System, I sought out to impact as many businesses as possible by installing a practical and effective marketing system that ensures ongoing marketing success and growth. This new program includes the many lessons and modules of the Duct Tape Marketing System so you can install it in your business. In addition, you will have access to:

- Exclusive live webinars



- Monthly Q&A sessions with John Jantsch
- The accountability of a vast network of marketing consultants and business owners to help you meet and exceed your marketing goals

If taking control of your marketing efforts interests you, I urge you to take advantage of this opportunity. For more information, visit www.ducttapemarketingsystem.com.

Identity Audit Worksheet

Branding your company is difficult. It is important that not only does your brand reflect your business positively, but it also reflects your marketing strategy. It is important that all of the elements of your brand work together to create the best image of your business to your customers. We created the following worksheet to help you assess all of the elements of your current brand and identify the ways you can improve.

This is just one of the many assets available to you as part of the Duct Tape Marketing System Program and Community. To find out more about the program and how it can help you not only improve your marketing efforts but also set your business up for ongoing growth, [click here](#).





Identity Audit Worksheet



udit identify elements for alignment with strategy.

Company Name

Date

Name (does the firm name support the brand?)

Logo

Colors

Images

Print Materials

Action Plan: *What needs to be done?*