



A Better Brand ‘Orchestra’ Builds Your Sales...

WILL THE CONSUMER EXPERIENCE MATCH YOUR MARKETING MESSAGE?

Underneath the consumer’s decision to add your brand to their purchase consideration menu, is an important scan for “agreement and confirmation” of your messaging, product claims, reputation and trustworthiness from an array of outside, independent and credible sources. Ones you don’t control.

Consumers today look for and expect harmony and consistency from all brand touch points and the external conversations that occur around them. So it is vital to achieving brand preference and growth that what you say (message) must also match what you do (acts) ... in order to influence what is said (word of mouth).

You are doing business right now in the new era of **brand validation**.

- When consistency will help breed trust.
- When your ethos as a company will matter as much as your technology.
- When the experience with your brand must flow from consumer expectations at the front end, to use outcomes at the back.

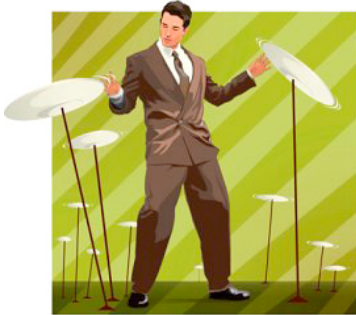
- When all points of contact – Web, customer service, shelf, package and retail matter equally.
- **When outside influencers and their views will hold great sway in the court of consumer opinion – opinions that are now shared liberally and widely.**

Consistency + harmony =
symphony ... of sales

Great music at its fundamental level is an outcome of colorful, evocative sound, harmony and pitch. When voices or instruments come together and sounds merge harmoniously the expression is beautiful, emotional and empowering. Our ears and brain process the notes as we drink in the mood, meaning and feeling the composer had in mind. If instruments are out of tune, harmonies don’t mesh and someone without an ear for pitch is “off key” – like a bad American Idol audition – the whole experience can come crumbling down.



Consumers today look for and expect harmony and consistency from all brand touch points and the external conversations that occur around them.



Actions do indeed speak louder than words. But all of your efforts to build brand awareness and equity can implode if touch points and experience are not in harmony.

So put yourself in your consumer's shoes. What will they see and experience when in contact with your brand? Is it harmonious? Is there agreement both internally AND externally about what you assert in your brand communications? This requires all of us to take our marketing game to its highest level. You really have to work hard at this.

Belief can no longer be bought, only earned....

You simply can't buy belief or claim it. A fundamental principle of sound public relations strategy is "demonstration." Said another way – when companies employ concrete acts to help prove out the assertions made in product and brand messaging you want consumers to believe. **Actions do indeed speak louder than words.** But all of your efforts to build brand awareness and equity can implode if touch points and experience are not in harmony: If the symphony is not properly orchestrated.

Making beautiful brand music...

Consistency and validation therefore is an essential ingredient now in effective brand communication. And this requires careful review to assess where weaknesses and inconsistencies in the brand fabric may exist. Where dissonance can overcome harmony and thus a "disconnect" occurs between what you claim to be true – and alternative views espoused by citizen journalists and other influential channels of communication the consumer respects.

So Show Me!!!

Authenticity in many respects springs from acting and doing, not just talking. We are confronted now with mounting evidence that the principles of demonstration are more important than ever...

- Consumers listen to their peers before they listen to you.
- Consumers are more skeptical to begin with.
- Consumers are more aware and better informed.
- Consumers have access 24/7 to inside information on businesses, brands and product reviews.
- Corporate actions and decisions are under the public and media microscope.
- Bad behavior and outcomes can be known globally within minutes.

Why is this so important...?

Honesty over-rules hype
Reality trumps spin
Integrity beats hyperbole

Consumers are actively looking for authentic and real in their relationships with brands that matter to them. As a trusted friend – when harmony exists – brands can become lifestyle allies. Is your brand communications orchestra in tune? Or perhaps it's time for a tune-up – maybe even a new sheet of music? When the brand orchestra plays well, it can alter the trajectory of your business growth.

