

The brand manifesto

September 2002

1. Branding unites people's passions.

People are not born financial creatures. We recognize that revenue and returns on investment do not concern the majority of people. Branding respects that we are passionate people who are inspired and who have freedom. Therefore, branding activities must be human and humane. Branding, not numbers, provides the interface between organizations and audiences.

2. Brands must have focus to be relevant.

Branding is not a mere gloss but something that must penetrate the whole organization. If there is a corporate philosophy, everything about that corporation must reflect that. Therefore, there must not be false claims about helping the planet. The philosophy must be focused enough and real enough to be meaningful to people.

3. Branding is about delivering what you promise.

We believe that every claim the organization makes must be sincere and must be carried out. The strongest brands are promise-keeping ones. Failing to do so leads to an embarrassing exposé. Good branding leads to sincerity while failure to use branding principles leads to collapse.

4. Good brands should make people happy.

Whatever a brand has to offer to consumers (whether purely functional, emotional, associative, empathetic), it must make people happy to part with their (hard earned) money and satisfied in the process. A company's employees must understand this and derive their own happiness and satisfaction from this. Shareholders should reward companies that have such brands and we in turn must create them sincerely for our clients.

5. Finance is broken.

We believe money is a poor snapshot of human value. Brands, however, create value. The branding industry is about creating value for our customers. It makes more sense to measure the ingredients of branding and relationships.

6. Brands are not advertisements.

Branding is not promotion. Promotion is part of branding, but only a small part. Good brands act, not just speak or sell. Organizations must live the brand, not just in advertising and promotions.

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7. Brands bring humanity to the organization.

Brands are the rallying-point for the positive empowerment of all connected with the organization.

8. Brands create community.

Brands are not created by a handful of big bosses, but by everyone in a system. A good branding exercise involves and builds a community. They, therefore, have a duty to educate and reinforce positive behaviours, and can even alleviate some of the world's worst problems.

