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Coca-Cola is little more than sugar, some flavoring, and lots of (carbonated) water. It is largely indistinguishable from innumerable other brands of cola, yet people around the world seem to think that Coca-Cola is something and they are eager to ask for it by name and even to pay a premium for it.
GEORGE RITZER

Coca-Cola é sinônimo de marca forte e gestão estratégica.

Hoje teremos a oportunidade de conhecer um pouco do trabalho que existe por trás da construção de uma das marcas mais valiosas do mundo com a palestra de Luciana Feres, Marketing Execution Director da Coca-Cola Brasil.

Gostaríamos de agradecer à nossa convidada e também à recepção calorosa, aqui na sede do Unibanco, de Marcos Caetano, Diretor de Comunicação e Sustentabilidade.

Os papers selecionados para este fórum falam da importância de uma comunicação de marca alinhada e dos impactos positivos que isso tem nos negócios.

O primeiro paper, **“Branding, uma ferramenta indispensável no novo cenário de negócios”** é um artigo que escrevi para a ABERJ. Nele, conto um pouco sobre como o Branding reinventou a forma das empresas se relacionarem e se comunicarem com seus públicos. E falo de critérios de sucesso para a construção de uma marca forte, e, mais do que isso, inspiradora.

Já o texto **“Integrated Brand Communications: A powerful new paradigm”**, de Carolyn Ray, mostra como a IBC (Integrated Brand Communication) é uma estratégia de comunicação holística, que integra toda a comunicação, para gerenciar de forma precisa o ativo mais precioso de uma empresa: sua marca.

E, por fim, trazemos **“Harmonizing your touchpoints”**, de Scott Davis & Tina Longoria, que apresenta a comunicação alinhada em todos os pontos-de-contato da marca com os públicos, para fortalecer e reforçar a personalidade da marca e, assim, gerar associações positivas.

Aproveite a palestra e os papers para usar no seu dia-a-dia, na gestão de marcas de sucesso.

Até o nosso próximo Fórum de Branding!
Ana Couto



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Branding, uma ferramenta indispensável no novo cenário de negócios.

Ana Couto

Outro dia, durante uma palestra, alguém me perguntou se o Branding era moda ou se veio mesmo para ficar. O comentário da aluna foi: “Todos dizem que fazem, poucos entregam. Essa moda vai passar?”.

De fato, Branding é a nova onda. Mas é uma disciplina que já existe há tempos, em resposta a uma evolução que vem modificando todos os paradigmas de relacionamento e, conseqüentemente, as formas de se fazer negócios. Há quinze anos eu prego o Branding como a inovação que reinventou a maneira como as empresas se expressam e interagem com o mundo a sua volta. Aquela velha história que nos contavam – a propaganda é a alma do negócio – ficou para trás. Hoje, a Marca é a alma do negócio.

Não porque propaganda seja ruim, ou porque não precisemos mais dela. A razão é simples: o melhor investimento que uma empresa pode fazer pela saúde do seu negócio é construir uma marca forte. A qualidade do produto e a eficiência dos serviços continuam sendo fundamentais, mas já não são diferenciais de longo prazo – tornaram-se um *must have*. O que diferencia e cria relevância, nesses novos tempos, é a Marca, a essência de uma empresa transformada em ativo.

O que mudou nesses 100 anos?

Evoluímos da revolução industrial para um capitalismo sofisticado, uma economia globalizada. O marketing foi um dos *drivers* do século passado porque respondia à necessidade de se organizar e fomentar a oferta de produtos. A cadeia produtiva, como um todo, deveria estar em sintonia com a venda, o consumo, a entrega. Era a Economia do *Push*, do “empurra”, em que as marcas eram impostas ao consumidor – fomento do consumo a qualquer preço!

Saímos do século XX carregando as boas e más conseqüências de tais excessos. Foram anos de enormes avanços, se analisarmos dados como expectativa de vida, índices de pobreza e de educação. O mundo melhorou, e muito. Acabaram-se as ideologias polarizadas, como o desgastante Fla x Flu do capitalismo x comunismo. A centralização do poder econômico vem sendo substituída pela ascensão dos países em desenvolvimento – aliás, os próprios conceitos de centro e periferia estão em transformação. Vivemos em plena Economia do *Pull*, do envolvimento, das redes, dos relacionamentos.

Os tempos são outros. Novas práticas emergiram: o consumo consciente, as empresas envolvidas no desenvolvimento social, a sustentabilidade, a governança corporativa, a transparência, a relação com investidores, a necessidade imperativa de se gerar valor.

Saímos da Era do Tangível e mergulhamos na Era do Intangível. Essa enorme mudança foi proporcionada pela internet – ela mesma, o maior dos intangíveis. Foi uma revolução silenciosa, que democratizou a informação e conectou o planeta,



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transferindo o poder para o consumidor. Essa revolução mudou as relações afetivas, as relações de força, as relações de trabalho, as relações entre os países. E, como não poderia deixar de ser, as relações no mundo das marcas.

O Branding surgiu a partir dessa revolução. Mas... como é que ele funciona?

O Branding, como disciplina, surgiu como consequência de mudanças que terminaram por redefinir o papel da Marca na gestão dos negócios. A Marca, hoje, encabeça a agenda de grandes gestores em escala planetária. No mundo contemporâneo, empresas, lugares e até mesmo pessoas fazem Branding.

Por essa razão, a cada dia aumentam os desafios e as responsabilidades de quem trabalha com Branding. A disciplina que nasceu para gerir o intangível hoje já possui ferramentas para definir seus processos e estabelecer critérios de sucesso. Que objetivos devemos perseguir, em Branding, para gerar resultados?

1 - Gerar diferenciação

Uma marca que simboliza uma empresa, serviço ou produto tem como objetivo primeiro se diferenciar do restante do mercado. Ser única! Marcas são como pessoas: têm DNA, talentos, características próprias, crenças e personalidade. Por isso, cunhamos o termo Personalidade da Marca. Vamos além da identidade visual: estamos construindo marcas com personalidade e carisma.

O primeiro passo é definir a essência da Marca, centrando o negócio em uma proposta de valor única. Negócios bem sucedidos têm a Marca como espinha dorsal – são os *brand driven business*. A Marca cria uma vantagem competitiva de longo prazo. Difícil de copiar, e um grande desafio a se executar.

O Branding, como metodologia, parte de um raio X sobre três pontos-de-vista:

a) A visão dos executivos e acionistas

A primeira coisa que precisamos conhecer são os objetivos do negócio, a curto e longo prazo: a idéia é vender a empresa, abrir o capital, entrar em novos mercados, novos segmentos, lançar novos produtos?

b) A análise dos concorrentes e do mercado

Para que uma marca possa se diferenciar, é preciso entender como ela se posiciona em relação ao seu universo de atuação. É fundamental que identifiquemos as oportunidades e as tendências de mercado.

c) Entender os públicos

Quais são as percepções, expectativas e desejos das pessoas em relação à Marca? Como responder às suas demandas emocionais? Num mundo de produtos e serviços “comoditizados”, os benefícios emocionais são tão ou mais importantes quanto os racionais. Como criar um relacionamento relevante com os públicos? Não basta ouvir apenas o consumidor: é mais seguro fazer com que a estratégia de negócios e o mercado apontem o caminho.

O primeiro indicativo de sucesso na construção de uma marca forte é a diferenciação. A estratégia da metamorfose – ser igual ao que já existe – é 100% equivocada. Copiar, em um mercado globalizado, é problema, jamais solução. A Apple, por exemplo, não nasceu e cresceu sendo apenas mais uma marca de



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computadores. Ela já surgiu definindo a sua essência: "Pense diferente". De lá pra cá o mercado digital mudou, os concorrentes da Apple também, mas o *drive* da Marca, o motor do negócio, continua sendo a personalidade. A Apple reforça a sua essência em tudo o que faz: nome, marca, produtos e lojas, conquistando cada vez mais consumidores fiéis.

2 – Criar propriedade

Criar um universo proprietário, em várias dimensões, é o segundo objetivo do trabalho de Marca. O que é isso? É construir *equities* associativos para inspirar e *equities* visuais para definir um universo claro de Marca. Por essa razão, o Branding é tão fortemente ligado ao design. Através do Branding, a estratégia de negócios de uma empresa se materializa em forma e conteúdo: é o campo associativo proprietário da Marca.

Ao avaliar uma marca, definimos de imediato a jornada do consumidor. Mapeamos os pontos de contato vitais e transformamos cada um deles numa expressão da Marca. O universo associativo de uma marca vai muito além da logo: trabalhamos com um verdadeiro arsenal visual de cores e formas. Ele estabelece os *equities* visuais que tangibilizam a Marca.

Nosso estoque de associações mentais e emocionais é igualmente potente: uma essência de Marca bem explicitada, atributos de personalidade claros, a Voz da Marca, o slogan, sons e aromas são importantes para que a Marca possa inspirar e tornar-se memorável.

Criar propriedade é gerar um campo associativo forte através do Branding. A Coca-Cola, uma das marcas mais valiosas do mundo, sempre reforçou seus *equities* associativos com maestria. A essência da Marca é a felicidade, o otimismo. Seu slogan muda constantemente, reforçando a mesma essência: *enjoy it*, viva o lado Coca-Cola da vida. Seus *equities* visuais são valorizados a cada contato com os públicos: a cor vermelha, a onda da logomarca, o contour da garrafa, o script, que é a maneira única como a palavra Coca-Cola é grafada. Trata-se de um universo de Marca que há mais de cem anos se constrói com consistência, sem jamais deixar de inovar. É assim que se constrói a propriedade de uma marca.

3 - Ser relevante

Uma marca precisa saber com quem deseja se relacionar. É uma marca jovem, como a MTV? Para mulheres, como a Dove? Rebelde, como a Diesel? Estabelecer relacionamentos é fundamental. Entretanto, toda Marca se relaciona com muito mais pessoas do que o seu universo de consumidores. O Branding faz com que as marcas estabeleçam relacionamentos de valor com todos os *stakeholders*. E quem são eles? Todos os públicos tocados pela existência da Marca. Ou seja: as muitas e muitas pessoas por quem uma marca deve ser percebida com clareza.

a) Colaboradores

A equipe vem sempre em primeiro lugar: o time é o grande agente construtor, transformador e multiplicador de uma marca. O Branding identifica os valores que permeiam a cultura corporativa, expandindo aqueles desejáveis. Marcas fortes possuem uma visão de mundo, uma crença, uma causa, compartilhada por todos



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os colaboradores. O Branding ressignifica o trabalho do dia-a-dia, expandindo-o para uma nova dimensão: a dimensão emocional.

b) Acionistas e investidores

Uma marca forte é uma das cinco principais razões para a compra de ações no mercado. Ela é menos suscetível às crises – principalmente em tempos de globalização. Estudos demonstram que empresas com marcas valorizadas apresentam melhores resultados de negócios do que empresas com marcas fracas. A razão? Elas têm o *goodwill* do mercado.

c) Comunidade

O entorno no qual a empresa está inserida também é de sua responsabilidade. O papel das empresas mudou: a forte tendência da sustentabilidade é fruto da consciência de que somos todos interdependentes. Marcas também precisam gerar valor social, ambiental e econômico. A sustentabilidade não precisa necessariamente estar presente na essência da Marca – como é o caso da Natura e da The Body Shop. Mas deve ser percebida na gestão e nas práticas da empresa. É recomendável que a Marca tenha um foco definido de atuação junto à comunidade: o retorno desse investimento é uma imagem positiva, que impacta todos os *stakeholders* e influencia beneficentemente os negócios e as relações.

d) Consumidores

A compra é o final da cadeia de relacionamentos e é o que faz a empresa ter lucro. Na visão do Branding, a compra não é fruto apenas dos critérios racionais de qualidade e preço. O mercado de consumo – e até mesmo as empresas *business to business* – é regido pelas percepções e práticas da Marca. O consumidor compra com critérios emocionais, mesmo quando o bolso é pequeno.

Consumo, hoje, complementa a personalidade das pessoas. A Marca deve agregar ao seu estilo e acrescentar uma experiência relevante à sua vida. Imagem expressa valores e estilo de vida. Por isso, é importante marcas terem personalidade.

Nessa nova lógica de relacionamento com todos os públicos da Marca (*stakeholders*), ela integra e potencializa todas as relações.

4 - Manter a consistência

Em tempos de mudanças e ofertas, construir uma marca é uma tarefa difícil. A premissa de inovar e se repensar é crucial para a sobrevivência nos negócios. O Branding constrói as bases firmes para que uma empresa possa se diferenciar e mudar constantemente – no sentido evolutivo, e não disruptivo. A construção e a gestão de uma marca exigem reflexão e pensamento de longo prazo. Demandam consistência no tempo e na intensidade: todo e qualquer ponto de contato deve ser inspirado pela Marca, que age como um grande integrador e multiplicador.

Analisando nossos critérios de sucesso em um trabalho de Branding – gerar diferenciação, criar propriedade, ser relevante e manter a consistência –, concluímos que o maior desafio é criar marcas inspiradoras e perenes. Isso requer paixão, precisão, conhecimento e técnica.



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Respondendo à dúvida inicial da minha aluna, posso afirmar com convicção: o Branding não é tendência, nem moda, é uma ferramenta de negócios que veio para ficar. Sua função é construir marcas que possam destacar-se, sobreviver e manter-se relevantes num mundo fragmentado, em que o consumidor tem total poder. O milênio está só começando, mas já redefiniu papéis e relacionamentos. Ando apaixonada por essas mudanças e estudando as características que a Nova Empresa e a sua Marca devem ter para fazer a diferença no novo milênio... mas isso já é assunto para um outro artigo!



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Integrated Brand Communications: a powerful new paradigm.

By Carolyn Ray

The case for a new view of integrated communications

It wasn't too long ago that many in the industry were flagging Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) as a revolutionary concept. However, it's fair to say that while IMC is theoretically sound, it has not stood up to the promise and hype in practice.

IMC is based on the principle of integration, which holds that all communications emanating from a single strategic platform will generate a significantly greater return on the communications investment than would be the case with traditional independent media executions.

In a client-agency relationship, the theoretical benefits are clear. For the client, there is the potential for significant synergies and stronger connections with their customers. For the agency, there is the promise of a more complete partnership with the client that provides a greater share of the total marketing communications budget.

However, three underlying currents have undermined the potential of IMC.

1. The very agencies that innovated the concept are constrained by media bias.

If an advertising agency is shaping an integrated marketing communications plan, it is a fair assumption that the plan will revolve around advertising. While an important medium, advertising is not the only component of a successful integrated marketing plan. It is extremely difficult for organizations that earn fees through mediadriven efforts to provide clients with unbiased integrated media plans.

2. Clients themselves are poorly structured to truly execute an integrated communications plan.

Most marketing communications organizations are structured around individual media with managers given a mandate to manage specific media budgets. The tendency to build silos makes it difficult to build IMC plans internally.

3. The IMC process begins too far down the value chain to be effective.

Many companies are often more focused on 'action' and tactics rather than strategy. In many cases, internal pressure to show marketing 'activity' displaces 'big picture' planning. As a result, we often see tactical communications plans shaped by tactical specialists working in silos. These plans need to be shaped first on the strategic level for the benefits of integration to be fully realized.

Toward a new paradigm

Enter Integrated Brand Communications (IBC) – a holistic communications strategy that integrates all communications activities – such as public relations, advertising, investor relations, interactive or internal communications – to



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manage the company's most precious asset – its brand. Since Integrated Brand Communications flows from Brand Value Management, it is central to the notion of managing brands to optimize value.

The starting place for Integrated Brand Communications is the business, not marketing communications. Integrated Brand Communications begins with understanding the role of brand within the business model and determining how brand can help grow and sustain the business. However, this first means that we must view brand as a financial asset and identify the key drivers of brand value so that we can influence, control and measure them through an integrated communications effort.

Integrated Brand Communications engages the highest levels of management because it brings strategy, finance and marketing communications together to manage the brand to optimize its value. It serves as a catalyst for uniting executive, financial and marketing management and ultimately helps to remove internal barriers that may have prevented an integrated communications effort.

Integrated Brand Communications: The Process

The primary value of Integrated Brand Communications is that it provides management with a comprehensive process for leveraging brands to sustain and grow the business. To begin shaping an Integrated Brand Communications program, we need to adopt a strategic approach that is focused on building stronger connections with clients or consumers.

There are ten steps necessary to build a successful Integrated Brand Communications program:

Step 1: Start with understanding the role of brand in your business.

“Brand” is defined as a relationship that secures future earnings by creating customer loyalty. Given this, the starting point for Integrated Brand Communications involves analyzing the role that brand plays – and can play – in securing greater loyalty across the business. To determine the value of brand, audits for business strategy, customers, employees and key stakeholders should be undertaken.

This step involves challenging long-held assumptions regarding the key drivers of the business. Beliefs such as: “price is our only added value,” “ours is simply a commodity business,” “we can’t alienate our distribution partners,” and “our brand plays no role, it is all about relationships,” need to be re-examined in the light of what is possible, rather than what has always been.

Step 2: Understand the factors that contribute to brand value.

For years, executive management has sought a means to quantify the return on marketing communications investments, only to be told that it is impossible to isolate this data. With Integrated Brand Communications, this is no longer true. This process provides management with the tools needed to judge brand asset investment performance relative to all other asset investments made by the enterprise.

Some companies choose to do this through Brand Valuation, which derives



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an objective measurement to benchmark brand value. However, the value of “valuation” in the integrated brand communication process is not necessarily the raw number that is calculated. Because Brand Valuation identifies the contributing factors to brand value, it helps to develop and measure the impact of communications activities on the brand, or to forecast “what-if” planning scenarios. By measuring the relative change in brand value from assessment period to assessment period, we can objectively quantify the return on investment on funds used to build and promote the brand and determine the overall effectiveness of the integrated communications program.

Step 3: Understand whom you need to reach.

Once the role of brand has been explored, the next critical step is to identify key target audiences. To prioritize this effort, it is necessary to distinguish between targets that drive the success of the business and targets that simply contribute to, or influence, its success. In some cases, if you successfully influence your driving audiences, the resulting business performance will be strong enough to motivate your contributing audiences to take notice and respond.

The primary challenge is to design a brand strategy that connects with your driving audiences and a communications plan to connect with your contributing audiences.

Step 4: Frame your BIG idea.

Big ideas define unique value propositions. Communicating sameness is a waste of valuable resources. Communicating meaningful distinctiveness is a catalyst for growth. Big ideas stem from a clear understanding of audience needs, marketplace dynamics and your business strategies. Big ideas match your unique skill set with the needs of your driving audiences.

Great big ideas satisfy four fundamental criteria. They are: relevant in connecting with audience needs; differentiated and stand apart from competitive propositions; credible in their believability; and have the stretch to grow with your business as it evolves.

Step 5:

Understand how far you need to shift perceptions in order to own the big idea. As they develop a loyal relationship with a brand, audiences move through a process of progressive involvement. During that process, perceptions may develop that could hinder their ability to respond to your distinctive promise. These “perception barriers” must be overcome to convey your big idea.

Some barriers are more difficult to surmount than others. If your barriers are awareness-related, greater exposure to your message may be all that is needed to fix the problem. However, if you face questions of credibility, you must actually change the way your targets think about your value to them.

Step 6: Build the messages to shift perceptions.

Getting people to change the way they think about you is no easy task. It requires a communications effort that is capable of penetrating the formidable walls people erect as protection against daily information overload. To make them take notice,



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you must deliver precisely targeted messages that rise above the clutter and compel them to alter their assumptions.

A compelling message that delivers a powerful, big idea can generate communications success even with modest media budgets. Before you spend, make sure the messages are right. It will help to optimize the return on investment.

Step 7: Understand the role of each medium in making the shift and sustaining momentum.

Once you have the messages, you have to pick the most appropriate delivery vehicle. As a general rule, each progressive stage of involvement requires more individualized communications to meet the needs of your audience.

Advertising and PR are powerful awarenessbuilding tools. They are also helpful in instilling a sense of relevance. High-touch media – such as collateral, direct and interactive – are better for relevance and instilling a clear sense of differential value. Once the purchase decision is made, direct interaction is the most effective tool for shaping satisfaction and encouraging loyalty. The challenge is to leverage the relative power of each medium to build an integrated solution that will work the best for your unique audience communication requirements.

Step 8: Determine the optimum media allocation.

The ultimate execution challenge is determining the optimal media mix to propel target audiences toward developing an intense loyalty to your brand. The trick is to optimize the power of your message within the limited means of your budget. This will help generate a compelling return on investment, securing increased funding in the future.

Creative media planning to optimize existing budgets will be an important skill that influences your success, especially in year one. Then, with demonstrated results, the case can be made to invest appropriate funds for brand building in year two and going forward.

Step 9: Measure results.

The investment case can only be made with a clear sense of the facts. Convincing financial management to view integrated brand communications as an investment, rather than as an expense, requires that you demonstrate a relative return on that investment that can be judged relative to all competing investments.

By exploring the effectiveness of messages and media through qualitative input, you will have the tools needed to optimize the approach in subsequent years.

Step 10: Revisit Step 5...and repeat the process again...and again...

Integrated Brand Communications is an organic process, one that can be fed, nurtured and made stronger through active involvement. Once you have measured your initial results, return to the program's foundations and examine opportunities for enhancement.

Return to your messages and explore opportunities to make them more compelling. Return to your media assumptions and determine if you're reaching your targets.



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Return to your budgets and determine if you've allocated them as effectively as possible. And finally, return to your assessment tools and determine whether they are generating the insight you need to grow and manage your program.



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Harmonizing your 'touchpoints'.

Consumers may come in contact with your brand on a daily basis. Use each interaction to strengthen their beliefs about your brand.

By Scott Davis and Tina Longoria

The authors, Scott Davis and Tina Longoria, are Managing Partner and Senior Associate, respectively, with the Chicago office of Prophet, a consulting firm specializing in brand and business strategy. Contact Scott at sdavis@prophet.com and Tina at tlongoria@prophet.com.

Think about all of the different ways that your brand interacts with and makes an impression on your customers, your channel partners, your employees and all other critical partners that help to bring your brand to life.

Then, ask yourself this question: "Are you in control of all these interactions and confident that every 'touch' your brand has with those stakeholders is operating the way you want it to?"

If you answered "no," you're probably like countless other companies that have limited control over the interactions their brand has with stakeholders and are not even aware of all of the different ways in which their brand can impact or be impacted by these various interactions.

These companies risk brand denigration. Plus, they put their brand's success in the hands of others.

But if you are in control of these brand interactions or what we call brand "touchpoints," then your company is in control of its own destiny.

You most likely recognize that by consistently reinforcing and strengthening what your brand stands for, through each of these touchpoints, you can drive customer satisfaction.

With a high degree of customer satisfaction, your brand will tend to experience superior loyalty, greater word-of-mouth, higher price points, a higher degree of consumer forgiveness ("oh, that slip-up was just a onetime event") and, most importantly, higher levels of profitability.

Southwest Airlines, Lexus, Starbucks, Kraft and PepsiCo are some of the companies that actively control the multitude of touchpoints their brands have with consumers.

These companies each focus on constantly reinforcing their brand promise. These marketers also use every customer interaction to reinforce consumers' beliefs about their brands.

Defining brand touchpoints

What is a brand touchpoint? It's all of the different ways that your brand interacts



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with and makes an impression on customers, employees and other stakeholders.

Every action, tactic and strategy your brand has with customers or stakeholders, whether it is through advertising, a merchandising display or a customer-service call, is a brand touchpoint.

In our experience, every brand has at least 30 and sometimes up to 100 brand touchpoints that customers, employees and other stakeholders experience on a daily basis.

In general, brand touchpoints fall into three distinct customer-experience segments: pre-purchase experience, purchase experience and post-purchase experience touchpoints (See Brand Touchpoint Wheel diagram on p.8). Let's define each.

Pre-purchase experience touch

These brand touchpoints influence whether customers or future customers will consider purchasing your brand. Typical pre-purchase experience touchpoints for consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies include advertising, direct mail, samples, free-standing inserts (FSIs) and the company's Web site.

Specific pre-purchase experience touchpoint goals and objectives include:

- * Retaining current customers. Keep current customers loyal to your brand by continuing to remain relevant in their lives.
- * Heightening brand awareness. Make prospects aware of the main differences between your brand and a close competitor's brand.
- * Shaping brand perceptions and expectations. Shape perceptions of prospects by helping them to understand the benefits that your brand offers vs. competitor brands.
- * Driving brand relevance. Ensure that prospects link the benefits of your brand to important needs and wants in their lives, thereby recognizing the value your brand brings.
- * Driving brand consideration. Steer the brand into a prospect's consideration set.

For a marketer such as General Mills, this means things akin to cereal promotions, coupons, online games, public relations, word-of-mouth, etc.

Purchase experience touchpoints

Purchase and usage experience touchpoints move a customer from only considering your brand to actually purchasing it.

Typical purchase experience touchpoints for CPG companies include packaging, P-O-P displays, in-store sampling, price, an influential sales rep in the store or seeing what the person next to you just bought.

Specific purchase experience goals and objectives include:

- * Instilling confidence. Maximize the value that prospects see in your offering and mitigate any doubts they may have about making the right decision.



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* Delivering value. Make prospects understand the price-value relationship they are getting in your brand vs. other brands.

At this stage, you have to instill trust in the minds of your prospects and prove beyond a reasonable doubt that your offering will be better than others. Reassure them that their purchase will deliver the value they are expecting.

Post-purchase experience touchpoints

Post-purchase brand touchpoints are all the interactions that are leveraged after the sale to help maximize the total brand experience. The usage or consumption of the product is experienced at this stage as well.

Typical post-purchase experience touchpoints include product and package performance, customer service, customer satisfaction surveys, loyalty programs, loyalty coupons, Web site visits and newsletters.

Specific post-purchase experience touchpoint goals and objectives include:

* Delivering on your brand promise. Meet or exceed customer performance and usage expectations. This includes delivering brand value above and beyond expectations as well as seeking new ways to delight customers.

* Increasing brand loyalty and advocacy Good customers not only look to your brand for repeat and future purchases, but they also endorse and recommend your brand to others.

Of the three brand touchpoints, the post-purchase experience is the most under-leveraged (especially within CPG companies), yet offers potentially powerful ways to drive sustainable and profitable growth to the company.

Tide is an example of a brand that has not overlooked the post-purchase experience. For instance, Tide's Web site, www.tide.com, offers online coupons, advice on doing laundry and tips on removing tough stains.

Assessing your brand's Touchpoints

Since you cannot focus on every single touchpoint due to time and resource constraints, you need to identify the handful of touchpoints that really drive the brand experience you desire.

We use four general steps with our clients to help them determine which touchpoints they should leverage. These four steps are fairly universal and cut across a variety of industries and company sizes.

Step one: Identify all the touchpoints that impact and influence customers' perceptions of your brand. Categorize these brand touchpoints by the three experience segments that we outlined above.

It is a good idea to ask multiple departments in your company for input on the touchpoints, as many of the touchpoints come from other areas beyond marketing.

Step two: Gain a deep understanding of how you are performing against each of these touchpoints from both an internal and external perspective. This should



Brand Touchpoint Wheel



include an assessment of your touchpoints' strengths and weaknesses, the ideal end-state for each touchpoint as well as competitors' performance on each.

This second step is where the revelations start. You will hear from customers what impacts their perceptions of your brand the most. You will understand where your touchpoint vulnerabilities are vs. the competition. Plus, you will have clarity on what the touchpoint gaps are and what it will take to close those gaps.

Importantly, eventual touchpoint owners need to get engaged here to have their voice be heard, to hear the market's perspectives directly and to start to better understand the challenges that lie ahead for them in getting to the desired touchpoint end-state.

Step three: Based upon these internal and external perspectives, prioritize the touchpoints and determine which are high-impact and will have an immediate effect on brand perception and experience.

This will also help you determine where you should focus your time, effort and resources.

Use a set of objective screens to prioritize your touchpoints. These screens include impact on customers' perception of the brand, size of the gap between today and tomorrow, cost of implementation, a cost-benefit assessment, as well as the touchpoint's ability to help your company achieve its longer-term goals and objectives.

Step four: Implement and manage your high-impact touchpoints on an ongoing basis. Whoever owns the touchpoint is now responsible for not only executing it, but educating employees on its value, understanding how the marketplace is experiencing it and leveraging metrics that will help to inform future decisions tied to that touchpoint.



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FÓRUM DE BRANDING

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION



PACKAGING STAYS TRUE TO BRAND PROMISE

Tom's of Maine does an excellent job of staying true to its brand promise through many of its touchpoints, including its product packaging.

Tom's promise is to provide natural care products made with pure, simple ingredients that are safe, effective and pleasant to use.

The packaging respects the promise that the brand makes to its consumers. The packaging is simple, pure, environmentally friendly and not tested on animals.

Unlike most traditional toothpaste marketers, Tom's does not use bright colors with sparkling, holographic bursts on its toothpaste packaging. Instead, the company uses a simple, beige-colored carton with a picture of the plant (e.g., pepper mint) that designates the flavor variety.

To reinforce the natural aspect of its toothpaste product, Tom's of Maine prints images of pulp fibers on the paperboard carton.

TALK WITH ALL CUSTOMERS

In conducting external research to find out your touchpoints' strengths and weaknesses, you should talk to three types of customers. These include:

* Past or lost customers

These folks can help you better pinpoint which brand touchpoints are negatively impacting consumers. They also can isolate competitors' touchpoints that have swayed them to move from your brand to another brand.

* Potential or future customers

These consumers can help you determine what is working well and not so well in their pre-purchase and purchase interactions with your brand. Also, this group can tell you what your competition is doing well, in real-time.

* Current customers

These individuals can give you direct insights as to what you are doing so well that they have stayed loyal to your franchise. Newer customers, who are active with your brand today, can tell you why their participation with your brand has been limited and/or what touchpoints helped them make the decision to buy your brand over others.