

EIGHT BIG

BRANDING
TRUTHS



An e-book from the **thinkbigseries**

Think Big.

8

It's the advice we give our clients at Brand Innovation Group (Big). But before you can "think Big," you need to know what Big thinks.

We believe there are **EIGHT** simple, yet immutable, **principles** that **must be followed** for any branding effort to be successful.



HERE, IN NO
PARTICULAR
ORDER,
ARE THOSE
PRINCIPLES.





1

If your customers
think
you're a

tomato,

then you're a



.

Perception is everything. Especially with your customers. In his best-selling book [*The Brand Gap*](#), Marty Neumeier writes, "A brand is a person's gut feeling about a product, service or company....A brand is not what you say it is. It's what *they* say it is." So it is with your customers. Say you're positioning your company as the leader in a category, but your customers feel you own second place. Guess what? You own second place. At least in their minds. So ask your customers what you do best. Discover what resonates with them — and capitalize on it!

If you're not the king of your ring,

then find another ring to fight in.



Differentiation. It's the name of the game in marketing. You've got to find a way to stand out from the pack. Own your own space. And if you can't, then think differently. Take a lesson from Apple. Instead of creating another MP3 player, they took the existing concept, revolutionized it—and called it iPod. Likewise, Netflix forever changed our routine of renting videos from the local video gallery. And eBay? Well, they took the idea of an auction to a whole new level. A knockout of an idea, don't you think?



True **innovation** may be threatening,
but it **gets** you noticed.

One of the biggest impediments to innovation is fear. Just because something's never been done before (or done *that way*) doesn't mean it's wrong. In fact, that might be the very reason to do it—whatever "it" is! As management guru Peter Drucker once said, "Business has only two basic functions: marketing and innovation." So how are you doing with the latter? Break out of your traditional thinking. Try something new. Embrace innovation. Long live the marketer who takes risks!



4

Consumer **trust**

grows

from a
consistently
positive brand
experience.

Every time you or your employees interact with customers, you impact your brand. For better or for worse. From your Web site to your latest brochure. From the way your receptionist answers the phone to how your employees interact with clients. Every touchpoint is key—and serves to create a positive or negative brand experience. Have you ever taken time to evaluate your brand touchpoints? Or better yet, asked your customers to do it? Trust us, the exercise will be enlightening and one that'll pay off. Big time.

5



Not being afraid to look

silly

is a powerful strategic weapon.

A little “silliness”—in the form of guerrilla marketing—might be just what your brand needs. Coined by Jay Conrad Levinson, father of guerrilla marketing, the term refers to unconventional marketing that achieves maximum results with minimal investment. So the next time you’re trying to get your audience’s attention, try guerrilla marketing. Anything from PR stunts and painted cars to branded sidewalks, scavenger hunts and more. You’ll be glad you did.



Customers should be able to recognize your brand

by its **VOICE.**

A clear and consistent brand voice. It's critical to your success. And what is that voice? Anything from your visual identity (logo, typeface, colors) to the words, phrases and characteristics that distinguish your brand. Is your brand outdoorsy? All natural? Cutting-edge? Irreverent? Whatever your voice, make sure you guard it and execute it consistently—from your Web and public relations strategy to your sales force and corporate culture. The result? Your customers will recognize and remember you. Even without a name badge.



7

Product features and benefits are meaningless

without an emotional connection.



Research proves it. A strong emotional connection between your target audience and brand increases sales. When your brand engages customers on an emotional level, they're hooked. Loyal. And eager to tell their friends. That's because your brand becomes more than a brand. By meeting your audience's felt needs, your brand ascends to a higher level. It becomes their community (Facebook), their lifestyle (Harley Davidson) or their inspiration (Nike). Moral of the story? Work hard to get into your customers' heads—and even harder to touch their hearts.

8



Your product
can be as
HOT as you
want it to be.

all it needs is **BRANDING.**



That's right. By following these eight principles, your branding efforts will be well on their way to success. And for even more ideas, contact us. No matter your audience, no matter your industry, Big has the firepower and experience to exceed your goals and help you stand out. That's because we're branding experts. Ready to do what we do best in any industry: discover your brand story and find the most creative ways to tell it.



Brand Innovation Group (Big) is a full-service, award-winning branding and communications company passionate about building and leveraging your brand.

gotobig.com

1.866.469.4060

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