



Extraordinary Business: Sell Happiness

In this week's Business week, there was a story that centered around Apple called, "They Still Believe in Steve." The gist of the article centered around the Apple brand and the fact that despite "Antenna-gate," the company reported profits of \$3.25 billion on \$15.7 billion in sales. According to the article, CEO Tim Cook said that Apple is, "selling every unit [they] can make."

Consider, for a moment, what kind of brand power this company has. "'For many people in this economy, Apple is what makes them happy,' says Kaufman Brothers senior analyst Shaw Wu." This is the emotional response brand experts strive for when they work on a branding campaign with a company.

Where is your brand power? What do your customers and clients say about your company that, “makes them happy?” Is it your customer service? Your attention to detail? Your willingness to listen and spend the time?

There was a client of mine who told me that her business was built around the fact that she was always accessible to her clients. Her clients did business with her company because of her. She made them feel good.

Is there a way that this could become part of the company culture, wherein everyone in the company could bring the same personal brand power? In their hiring practices, they could find people with certain personality traits that could specifically address the needs of the organization. They could indicate the close relationship in their values statements and articulate their desire to help in everything they do.

This begs to ask the question, [“What are you really selling?”](#)

Grow an extraordinary business. Sell happiness.

[Aepiphanni](#) is a Business Consultancy that provides Management Consulting, Implementation and Managed Services to business leaders and entrepreneurs seeking to improve or expand operations. We are the trusted advisor to those seeking forward-thinking operational and strategic solutions to help them plan for and navigate through the challenges of business growth.

If you are ready to discuss how Aepiphanni can help you with business strategy, overcoming challenges to growth or any number of business solutions for your business, whether a small, growing or established company, contact us directly or submit a request for a complimentary [Coffee & a Consult](#) to learn how we can help you CREATE | DESIGN | BUILD an Extraordinary company.

Technorati Tags: Extraordinary Business, Sales Strategies, Business Branding

Extraordinary Business: What's Your Brand?

In this society, we are exposed to more media and commercials than ever before in the history of the world. In it, we are bombarded with commercials for everything from bleaches to sodas to department stores, etc. If you think about the purpose of these commercials and presentations, much of it has to do with building their brand. While these are only tags – only part of the brand message, think about it:

- Just do it...Nike
- Fly the Friendly Skies – American Airlines
- Don't you feel good about – 7up
- I'm a Phoenix – University of Phoenix
- Broadcast Yourself – YouTube

If you'll notice, these tags don't have anything to do with the products or services. Instead, they represent the way they want you to think about their products or services. They are seeking to draw an emotional response to help you as a consumer fulfill some need – whether physical or emotional – that is attached to their product or service.

When you think about your product or service – what emotional attachment are you asking potential consumers to buy into? Is your message the right message for your target market?

Burger King's goal is to connect with young adult males, so

their commercials are edgy, filled with thin, attractive people who tend to go against the grain. These are the people they want to come into their stores and buy their burgers.

Nike seeks out athletes and want to be athletes with their motivational messaging, often depicting the work behind being the best in a particular sport.

Notice in these examples, none of the companies mentioned have fragmented branding, that is, branding that is inconsistent depending upon who they are talking to, where they are and what medium they are broadcasting their message through. All of their paperwork, their websites, their clothing, uniforms or lack thereof tends to speak the same message.

Consider this: If a client cannot understand your brand and see the consistency of the brand across everything you are doing, they are less likely to trust you and thus, less likely to do business with you.

Think about it: Toyota boasted that they were in “Relentless Pursuit of Excellence.” Very admirable. Unfortunately, with their current safety issues, they are in relentless pursuit of damage control. Their new campaign has the sole purpose of restoring the trust their brand has been known for.

While there is a cost and commitment to building your brand, building a solid brand is what separates typical companies from those that are extraordinary. These are the companies that stand the test of time. These are the companies who’s target market trusts them and will recommend them to their friends. These are the companies who consistently bring all they have to the table, every day.

Be extraordinary. Build your brand.

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Technorati Tags: Extraordinary Business, Branding, Business Development Strategies, Marketing Strategies

What are you REALLY Selling?

Again – What are you really selling? Are you selling marketing or architectural designs or is it something more. Think about the most memorable things you've done, be it an amusement park, a great restaurant, a cruise, etc. Was it the ride you remember or the experience.

What is it that your clients are actually purchasing from you. What is the experience they are seeking to have with you or your business? Is it your intelligence, your ability to lead, is it the time and attention you give them or is it something else.

This is a most important piece of information that you need to get from your clients, your peers, your employees and other

stakeholders. Your clients and former clients will probably give you the most objective and insightful responses. Give those responses the most weight, but don't throw out the responses from other participants.

Once you learn what this, exploit it. Learn more about it. Develop it. Identify ways to convey this message to your target market. Think, for a moment, about Disney Land...the Magic Kingdom. They position themselves as an organization

;" alt="">

that will make all your dreams come true. Their employees are called "cast members" so that they are always in character when they are on the premises. They have creative staff members known as "imagineers," and promote themselves as THE most important thing on everyone's bucket list. Think about this interview after many major accomplishments

What will your clients experience with your company be? Will you make dreams come true? Will you help your clients reach a memorable levels of entertainment, or be able to do something remarkable as a result of an engagement with you? How do you position it? How will your organization present itself as the extraordinary business that provides an experience to its clients that they can get no where else in the world?

Be Extraordinary. Know what you are selling.

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Technorati Tags: Extraordinary Leadership, Products and Services, Target M, Product Development

Green Eggs and Ham | Extraordinary Business

Dr. Seuss wrote a book called, “Green Eggs and Ham.” In the first few pages of the book, an elderly gentlebeast is sitting quietly while a younger gentlebeast runs by, quickly, first with a sign that says, “I am Sam.” Then, he returns with another that says, “Sam I am.”

Now, the elderly gentlebeast does not seem to be pleased by Sam’s youth and energy. Just as we notice that the expression on his face says, “I do not like that Sam-I-am,” Sam I am rushes up with a plate of – you guessed it – green eggs and ham.

Now what if Sam had been someone that the elderly gentleman respected. Do you think he would have been more likely to try the green eggs and ham? Do you think we would have had such an exciting story?

Of course not.

While watching a commercial on TV for one of those “we can

grow it bigger, faster and stronger, making you the envy of the neighborhood,” and noticed, at the end of the commercial that it was sold at several local stores, including one big box retailer. I thought to myself, “If XYZ Big Box is selling it, it must be a decent product. I trust their judgment.”

When our clients look at us, our products and delivery, they make certain decisions about our companies, ranging from, “I wouldn’t trust anything they are saying without several references,” to “I’d believe anything he or she would tell me.” If we want to build an extraordinary business, we need to focus on being on the right or latter end of the spectrum.

As business leaders, we have the choice – we can be ordinary and run ordinary businesses. If we keep our expectations low, we’ll never make any impact, be forgotten and feel completely satisfied. However, if we want to say at the end of the day, “I have accomplished a great thing,” then we spend 80% of our waking days working to be extraordinary leaders, and run extraordinary businesses.

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It's Been Done, Before | Extraordinary Business

King Solomon, the third King of the Nation of Israel, said that "there is nothing new under the sun." It's all been done before. Everything is just a reiteration of something that has been done in the past.

Just as it was true at the time of Solomon, looking around, you will find that it is just as true, if not truer? Think about it:

- How many iterations of the restaurant are there?
- How many iterations of the fast food restaurant are there?
- How many iterations of the fast food restaurant focusing on hamburgers are there?
- How many iterations of the fast food restaurant focusing on hamburgers and fries are there?
 - ...and on and on.

That goes to show you that

1. Someone has probably done what you are doing before
2. Whether they've succeeded or failed, there is an opportunity to learn.

Given the challenge of overcoming adoption, meaning the ability for the market to accept and purchase a new product or service, when you see other players in a marketplace that is underserved means that there are people who do understand the value of your product or service, are willing to pay for it. While very few people would say that they are "keeping up with the Jones," these days, the first thing that many people look for are testimonials. When purchasing a book at Amazon, most people stay away from the 1-star books and look for the three, four and five star books. The books that are "yet to be rated" might get picked up by people who like to be the first

to review a book, but most likely won't get picked up by the bulk of the reading population.

Case in point, look at the movie industry. Many times, movies will live and die by the reviews of screeners and reviewers. Movies that get rave reviews become blockbusters...the crowd is influenced by the initial purchasers. Movies that get few reviews often leave the movie theatres after a few weeks.

So when you bring your product or service to market, or as you operate, and look around to see what others in the marketplace, realizing, the others are, to some level, substantiating your existence. What will make the difference? It could be your target market, your delivery, your type of branding, your marketing budget, and on and on.

Nike isn't the only sneaker (tennis shoe) company in the world. There are others that do as well as them, or better.

Still, there are new products coming to market every day. Your goal should be to stand out in your industry, with your products and services. You might carry the mantra, "while it's been done before, six ways until Sunday, *it hasn't been done my way!*" Because essentially, people do business with people. I don't care how you slice it, they do.

Stand out. be extraordinary. Run an Extraordinary Business.

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Technorati Tags: Business,extraordinary,decisions,marketing Strategy,industry,marketplace,stand out

Extraordinary Business: Do the Right Thing

As I was sitting at a traffic light, this morning, someone got out of their car, ran up to mine and secured the gas cap and door on my truck. Later, I saw someone pull off the road and into the grass to help someone change a tire. Acts of kindness do not go unnoticed. As a matter of fact, while people might tell a lot of people about the thing you messed up, they are likely to remember the kind act for a very long time.

As a business leader, your business probably has a lot of opportunities to do the right thing. That could look like serving the community, developing a mentoring or leadership program, connecting with other local businesses for networking and mastermind groups, etc. Doing the right thing means that you aren't doing these things for your benefit, but rather, doing them because they are the right thing to do.

Isn't it easy to act the way everyone else does, operate your

business the way everyone else does and to slip a few things through, so to speak, the way every other business does? I guarantee you that whatever gains you make as a result will be only temporary. Keep in mind: money is only a tool. We work to live, we should be focused on living to work. Extraordinary leaders have balance in their lives. They don't just sit in the parking lot of their lives, watching it happen from afar. They take the leadership role and make things happen. Extraordinary leaders run extraordinary businesses.

Be an Extraordinary Leader. Do the Right Thing.

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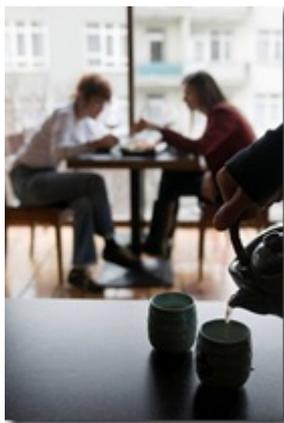


Technorati Tags: Ethics, Attitdue, Business decisions, Business Path, Extraordinary Business, Extraordinary Leadership, Sales, Sales Strategies

Taking it to Them! : Leveraging Personalized Services

One of the value propositions small businesses have is the ability to customize their service level, going far above and beyond what most larger organizations can afford to duplicate. While they are forced to deal with the politics and sheer volume, small businesses have the opportunity to develop deeper, more personal relationships with clients, vendors and their communities, uniquely positioned to meet their clients' needs and interests quickly.

In order to provide your clients with customized services, however, still means that you must maintain a level of control to ensure that your products are still profitable. While you may lead in with a product that is not as profitable as your core solution, you must keep in mind that the goal is to get that client into that core solution at some point. In order to do so, ensure that you have some type of strategy in



place.

For example:

One of our clients is a fitness repair firm. The owner of the company realizes that this time of the year is one of the

better times of the year for his company, since people are preparing to get into shape for the summer months. Right now, he has two options –

- 1. he can focus all of his time and energy on doing the work he has now, thinking only about getting as much cash as possible into the organization or*
- 2. he could lay groundwork for ongoing work by offering those he serves a benefit for referring others to him. However, this benefit must be flexible, based on the client's specific needs, rather than something he just wants to get rid of. Additionally, he could teach his clients how to maintain their equipment so that their equipment breaks down fewer times, and the life of the equipment is extended.*

He chose option two. Guess who they will call next time they will have a problem? Guess who will get the referral when the client's friend has a problem with their fitness equipment? Guess who gets the call when new equipment is required? Guess who the fitness equipment expert is?

Choosing to focus on his clients' needs and providing them additional, personalized benefits and education will help to keep his cash flow moving throughout the lean months while extending his client base. Making flexibility, education and the referral program the core of his operational strategy makes him a desired service provider in his industry. Providing the same level of service to other businesses and vendors has strengthened his company's position in the marketplace and has allowed him to double his reach.

Looking at your business, how can you increase your personalized service? What strategy or strategies can you incorporate into your operational strategy to provide value for your clients, your vendors and your "competition?" How can you or your company become an asset to your community?

We welcome your thoughts, ideas and comments.

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