

BRAND POSITIONING & VERBAL BRANDING

Ted Levitt , Harvard Business School Professor Emeritus

"Differentiation is one of the most important strategic and tactical activities in which companies must constantly engage. **It is not discretionary.**"

■ BRANDING IN TWO PARTS

IDENTITY

- ▶ Logo, Naming, Tag line(s), Design standards, etc.

POSITIONING

- ▶ How *different* and *better* than the competition

■ **THE GAP?** VERBAL BRANDING

- ▶ Reflects "Positioning / Differentiation" in conversations
 - **IMPORTANT:** Describing is not branding!

MARK TWAIN:

- " **THE MORE YOU EXPLAIN IT, THE MORE I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT "**

■ VERBAL BRANDING FOUNDATION

PHILOSOPHY

- ▶ People only *remember* a couple things – period!

DYNAMICS (OF CONVERSATION)

- ▶ Create *curiosity* as the first, best step
- ▶ Create *context* to proceed (Gentle Dental)

■ THE DENSITY PROBLEM

NO VERBAL CRITERIA ?

- » For positioning development or a spoken application
 - Gaps in brand density
 - Diminished revenue generation

HOW TO SOLVE

- » Internal dynamics first !
 - Add verbal criteria
(**Natural understanding**: internal / external)
 - Create "implosion" dynamics

■ IMPACT AND VISION

- » Internal
 - Understanding
 - Uniformity
 - **Cultural confidence**
- » External
 - **More sales**
 - Brand density

A COMMON FOUNDATION TO THINK AND SPEAK...

WHICH TURNS INTO **CULTURAL CONFIDENCE** AND **MORE SALES !**

■ NETWORKING THROUGH OTHERS:

- » Positioning must be simple enough that others can tell it for you

■ UNIFYING SALES AND MARKETING

- » Nearly every firm has difficulty with this issue

Continued

■ TIPS AND REMINDERS

» Silence

- Not saying anything more after telling someone your “positioning” is good verbal branding technique

» The “Of course” approach

- The 95% + of things every firm does are strategically assumed, de-emphasized, and used to minimize competition

» Productive interactions

- A conversation is productive to the degree someone later remembers what you want them to, i.e. your best brand positioning

» Two levels of messaging to “own”

- Most will be curious about your positioning. The next things you say are important messages to better explain and validate the offer is real

» Qualifying

- Conveying your positioning immediately, and finding out whether a prospect is curious and interested in it, allows for quick qualifying

» “They’re the one’s who...”

- Finish this sentence with your positioning concept(s). If someone else said it, would you be happy with it? Would it convey the right thing(s)?

Jaw Branding™: An audio book available at www.melansonconsult.com and Amazon.com