



Understanding “The Why”

If you were to ask a roomful of executives why their brand exists, chances are you would get a different answer from each. True, many answers would overlap or be slightly different interpretations of the same “why,” but many would not. And to be sure, the reason a brand exists will likely evolve over time. But having a deep understanding of why the brand exists is crucial.

They say it’s the little things that matter in life – same is true for branding. It’s the little things that can have such a profound impact on the positioning of a brand and its ultimate success. The little thing is a little one-word question: “Why?”

In describing a brand, you can employ the whole list of journalistic queries:

Who? (The inventor, the manufacturer, the customer, etc.)

What? (The product or service, etc.)

When? (When it was created, when it’s sold, etc.)

Where? (Where it’s made, where it’s sold, etc.)

How? (How it’s made, how it’s different, etc.).

All are important and are necessary to correctly describe the brand and even draft the supporting “reasons to believe” behind the brand’s “unique selling proposition.” Yet none are as important as the “why” of a brand. Why is that? The “why” demands the answer for the reason of existence for the brand. Why was the brand created? Why do people want it or need it?

What is the “why” of some familiar and successful brands?

“The third place” Starbucks makes great coffee, sells delicious pastries and plays cool music. But after home and work (places #1 and #2) they want to be your #3.

“Lowering the cost of living” Most retailers would claim that, but Wal-Mart consistently delivers. Yes they’re the biggest. Yes they have name brands and amazing selection. But they’ve always been on cutting the cost-of-living mission.

“What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas.”

Need we say more?

Can you think of more “Why’s?” Better yet, what is the “why” of your brand? Think about it and share with others internally and externally.

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