

instincts

Instincts is a monthly publication on branding for clients, associates and friends.

Our Vision: to be recognized as the organization responsible for teaching the broader understanding and appreciation of "Brand."

Excerpt: Chapter 5 – A Brand's Worst (and Next Worst) Enemies From *Brand: It Ain't the Logo** (*it's what people think of you™)



The enemies of Brand consistency lurk everywhere. Worst are "Old Friends" – the people inside the organization who are so tired of their own messaging, they assume everyone else is too. Old Friends will agree to any new Brand message ideas that come along, just to get away from their same old Brand position or incessant jingle. They're the people at Coca-Cola "Coca-Cola" who are sick and tired of giving (or receiving) another red t-shirt; the folks at Energizer "Energizer" who'd just as soon blow up that bunny as see him or hear his incessantly beating drums...

Even more entrenched than the MarineLand "MarineLand" jingle was Canadian Tire "Canadian Tire"'s brilliant "Give Like Santa – Save Like Scrooge" campaign that ran like clockwork every Christmas for eons, all across Canada, on TV and in print. I was flabbergasted when Canadian Tire killed it. It was a bona fide Christmas tradition and bought the Brand instant, positive mindshare for the calendar's most profitable shopping season. Funny: they'd just hired a new ad agency from Chicago – and if Old Friends are a Brand's Worst Enemies, who are the Next Worst? That's right: "New Friends."

Together, Old Friends and New Friends conspire to destroy consistency, your most powerful Brand building tool. They're an especially virulent problem as your firm grows. As more and more people make decisions that affect your company and Brand, it becomes tougher to be consistent because the new blood in your organization – an unholy alliance of new staff and outside creative suppliers – is chomping at the bit to make its mark. Old Friends – those longtime employees so bored with your Brand message that they're dying for a change – are their easy prey, eager to act as accomplices...

Communicate to those folks who seem to be itching for a change that Brand consistency is good not just for the business, but for them. Tell them that the way to make a mark is not by changing the Brand message but by helping solidify it. Challenge your creative suppliers to do fresh, not new. And say a polite goodbye to the ones trying to sell you change for its own sake.

They'd just as soon blow up that bunny.

Over the course of a 37-year career, Ted Matthews has preached proper Brand understanding and relentless consistency enroute to some of the most successful Brand evolutions in North America – at companies including adidas, Steelcase, Toshiba, Oxford Properties, Benjamin Moore, Steam Whistle Breweries and Honda. He is Brand Coach and Founding Partner of Instinct Brand Equity Coaches and can be reached at tedm@instinctbrandequity.com

Early Advance Praise:

"Brand: It Ain't the Logo* is an enjoyable read with a host of clear rules and colorful stories that will inspire CEOs and their CMOs to build great brands."

John Bogert
Chief Marketing Officer
Coleman Natural Foods