

instincts

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instincts is a monthly publication on Branding for clients, associates and friends.

Our Mission: Support and challenge business leaders to maximize the potential within their Brand.



Dear Starbucks,

When you're at your best, we love you – for your cool experience and smart young staff, anchored by deliciously tailor-made coffee creations. One of our partners sees you at least twice a day and has a Starbucks swipecard stamped with his name and five-component drink. Your baristas at his regular store know him so well, they just write his name, not the drink's details, on his coffee cup. You get a prominent mention in his bio, for heaven's sake.

But he thinks you've really been screwing up.

Your stock price has halved in 52 weeks. You're closing stores – terribly humbling for a company that has 16,000 units and wants 40,000 to cover the planet.

**Bad service, poor product
and dirty stores are ruining
your Brand.**

The media has really dug deep on this issue and thinks you're swooning because the stores don't smell enough like coffee. Nonsense. Bad service, poor product and dirty stores: these are the issues ruining your experience, your profitability, your Brand.

You have too many staff with inadequate training, and substandard hires who lack a positive attitude. They don't listen and they "call" the drinks wrong. That personalized card with the entire drink spelled out in black and white? It has proven useless in preventing the mis-made coffees that ruin the product, slow down traffic and drive away customers.

The temperature of the same drink can be lukewarm on one visit and tongue-burning the next. Your sandwiches are stale half the time. Your staff doesn't know your prices: they over- and under-charge at random, annoying customers and killing your margins, respectively.

Too many stores are filthy. Even worse than the bathrooms are seating areas piling up with spent coffee cups and crumbs that can go un-tied for hours, even with baristas standing around doing nothing.

What does the Brand Coach coach?

Setting a goal for 40,000 stores has shifted your focus from a consistent, high-quality coffee experience to a massive construction project. Your original Brand vision has been lost, turned into a revenue target to pacify the analysts. Dear Starbucks: focus on pleasing your customers – not the stock market.



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and Books for Business in Toronto

"Brand: It Ain't the Logo*
should be required reading for
anyone who sits around the 'big
table' and for anyone who seeks
to influence their decisions."

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