

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."

Staples: Branding's Boost to the Bottom Line

A Brand is what people think of you™. And when people think about Staples, the office supplies store, chances are they think of the "Easy Button." Staples has employed strong Brand discipline – consistently delivering the "That was Easy" experience and message at every customer touchpoint – to demonstrate the power of Branding to increase revenue and lower expenses.



In 2001, Staples' revenue and profitability was second to Office Depot in North America. Then they discovered that their most profitable customers weren't the masses they'd been pursuing with a low-price, big-box strategy, but harried small business owners with a narrow set of needs. People willing to sacrifice rock-bottom prices in favour of a quick, painless shopping experience. An *easy* shopping experience.

So they ditched their ceiling-scraping shelves and dizzying array of products – because business owners don't have time to climb up product displays and they don't need 50 pens to choose from. Staples made it easy to shop on their website and ensured free, next-day delivery on orders of \$50 or more. In-store, Staples staff are quick to offer help and ask "did you find everything you were looking for today?"

In the six years since Staples focused their Brand around "easy," revenue has jumped from \$11 billion to \$18 billion. Profit has skyrocketed 1000%, from \$100 million to \$1 billion – double the rise of Office Depot's profit over the same period. And the Staples stock price has more than tripled, from \$8 to \$25.

What would the Brand Coach coach?

Take a page from Staples and focus your Brand. Boost revenue by staking out a unique, clear Position and sticking with it to resonate deeply with a tightly defined market segment. Save money on costly reworkings of your advertising strategy by communicating, with relentless consistency, an unchanging Position to stakeholders.

Staples' profit has skyrocketed 1000%, from \$100 million to \$1 billion.

It might not be as easy as Staples made it look – but it will be worth it.

New! Read an excerpt from our upcoming book – BRAND: It Ain't the Logo (It's what people think of you™).
www.instinctbrandequity.com