

# 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."

## Don't get Repositioned



In our *other* favorite Brand book, *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*, Al Ries and Jack Trout talk about a powerful strategy: "repositioning the competition."

The strategy came to mind when I visited the poor old Beer Store in Toronto last Fall. For the past 7 years they'd been making some wonderful strides to lift their Brand up from its previously seedy levels, first with a customer-inspired name change from "Brewers Retail," then with wonderful new store designs and uniforms, extended hours, credit card purchase capability and what seemed to be a new pride among employees.

Meanwhile, their very slick marketing competition – the "LCBO" (don't get me started on that 'initial mistake') – the world's largest retailer of wine and spirits, makes an aggressive and classy push into the beer retailing world with chilled product, beautiful displays, stories about the beers and first and foremost, convenience – the natural connection to simply pick up your beer when you stop for your wine and spirits. No need for the Beer Store anymore.

Then the LCBO persuaded the Beer Store to be their recycling depot! It was the *pièce de resistance à la* Ries and Trout – that repositioned the Beer Store way back downscale.

The Brand experience stinks – literally.

Talk about brilliant. The LCBO, long criticized for not having a "green" bottle return program, installs one inside their competitor. Now when you go to the Beer Store, you line up forever with all the folks returning smelly, dirty, noisy liquor and wine bottles. Beer Store employees are forced to wear rubber gloves and have decidedly lost their pride. The Brand experience stinks – literally.

### What would the Brand Coach coach?

Hey CEO: you must be the CBO – the Chief Brand Officer. As our book explains, building your Brand is about **you** driving *remark-ability* – together with a clear position that can easily be explained to others – and a great customer experience. And then it's about protecting all of it ruthlessly, which the Beer Store leadership so obviously failed to do.

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*Brand: It Ain't the Logo\* (\*It's what people think of you™)* is now on **Amazon** and at **Books for Business**, 120 Adelaide Street West 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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