

# instincts

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

Leading and inspiring all those who touch the enterprise to understand, embrace and enhance the power of your brand.

## An open plea to Bell Canada.

Life is way too fast, granted. But com' on Bell, help a guy out.

I'm working like mad trying to make a buck as the world is shifting as it never has before - manufacturing jobs are going away, the US (our major market) is going broke, real estate is escalating so that my adult kids can't buy a home, oil prices will soon catch up to bottled water and colon cancer I now understand can get me as well.

“ The number you have dialed is NOT a long distance number... YOU IDIOT! ”

And I understand your world is changing too. Now you have competitors, tough, huh? There's a new need for more exchanges so the system has to dial more numbers - expensive I bet. And, who'd of thought that people could make free calls on the Internet through VoIP - ouch!

Bell, I've been your customer for over 35 years and I have always paid. You don't need to give me free stuff to sign up, I'm yours already. And I wouldn't have time to switch providers anyway. I have a house and a cottage, each with more than one of your products - phone, cell phones, internet - I'm bundled (though you don't seem to know it).

While I know there are still lots of real people in your company with the same personal world issues as me, it's been a long, long time since I've had any kind of a positive experience with your company. You've become so focused on introducing the latest new phones and courting new customers, that you've forgotten to keep your existing services current and to recognize your customers.

It makes me crazy when I dial a number, not knowing whether it falls inside or out of long distance range, to hear that same woman's voice (the one you've had forever with the snobbish lecturing tone) tell me "the number you have dialed is NOT a long distance number" and "this is a recording" and then hang up. Can't you just connect me?!

## What would brand coach suggest?

*Many companies are always searching for the next thing to attract new customers. Very few companies look at the little things that could make an existing customer even more loyal, more of an ambassador.*

*In my experience, just talking to customers (not massive research programs but an overall culture of talking and listening to customers) is still the best and yet today most underutilized tool in business.*

*Great retailers are the ones who are in their stores and know the pulse of what is working. Great big companies of this century seem to have lost the contact. Start listening yourself.*