

# 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.

## "Coke, Pepsi and all other pops will be known as the cigarettes of the future."

"Colas are NOT a substitute for water. Colas are just another cheap drug made to look great by advertising."

*The Lululemon Manifesto*



Lululemon. Created in 1998 by Vancouverite Chip Wilson, it creates, produces and sells yoga-inspired athletic wear through its own stores across North America, Australia and Japan. Early last year, Chip sold 48% of the firm based on a value of \$225 million. Zero to equity in eight years – and a very healthy portion of that equity is the Brand.

Lululemon was built not with traditional advertising, but with remark-able products and a Brand that emanates from its stores. Lululemon builds a relationship with the natural sneezers – the personal trainers, yogis, and workout instructors who "embody the Lululemon lifestyle and live [their] culture", spreading the viral word through the form-fitting attire on their inspiring bodies in every class of wannabes. To keep them energized about spreading the message, these Brand Champions (Lululemon "Ambassadors") are continually trained and given discounts on product they happily model for the world.

The stores themselves are key Brand storytellers – through the Manifesto printed on their walls, handouts and vivid packaging. Lighthearted statements like "Dance, sing, floss and travel" accompany the Coke diatribe above to portray a worldview that's one part Deepak Chopra, one part Michael Moore. The colourful, beautiful products are well thought out, well made and sold by genuinely nice people. The stores run yoga classes after hours, videos of which run throughout the selling day. The entire experience is a Brand broadcast that allows the perfect consumer to self-identify, connect with the culture, buy and start telling the Lululemon story to others.

## What does the Brand Coach coach?

First and foremost, strong Brands are built with *remark-able* products and services – things so compelling that people tell their friends, who then tell others, and so on. Lululemon has *remark-ability* nailed with its body-flattering attire. Strong Brands also have stories that transcend the product/service itself. Stories of the organization's culture – their founding, Core Purpose, Vision of the future, Mission (the things they do every day) and Values (what they believe in). Lululemon has it all embodied in its brilliant Manifesto – what we at Instinct call a Brand Foundation.

In an increasingly competitive world for customers and employees, strong Brands like Lululemon have lineups for both.

In an increasingly competitive world for customers and employees, strong Brands like Lululemon have lineups for both.