

instinct™

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

\$ Billions on the line in big fat cash settlements.

News Item: Class action suits turn their focus from tobacco to fast food.

Boardrooms are squirming all over North America as the litigation heavy weights build their cases against fast food marketers. The big corporations who know they are the likely targets are especially nervous and have reacted early. Kraft announced their "Global initiatives to help address rise in obesity"- it reads on their website like a desperate promise to reform from an accused criminal. Ouch. McDonald's has launched their "Lighter Choices" menu items – but new salad customers are quick to see that the promise doesn't hold if you include the dressing. Ouch again.



Two examples of brands trying hard to be something they are not, nor will they ever be.

Having a strong brand today is more important than ever before, because brands form shortcuts that allow consumers to make fast decisions in an increasingly complex world. The Kraft and McDonald's brands were built brilliantly, by delivering consistent messages and experiences and today this bond with their consumers is powerful - ranking them #65 and #8, respectively on the Interbrand top 100 list of Global Brands.

In the face of a shifting world, here's the challenge...
The only thing harder than building a brand, is changing one.

What would brand coach suggest?

Be the brand you are. Lots of people still smoke, many still drink alcohol, they still buy powerful cars and drive fast, millions still lay in the sun and even more people still eat fatty foods – by choice. They have all heard the risks and know the chances they are taking. What's more, the brands that serve these markets make a lot of money. Be truthful, publish fair warnings, but don't be a leopard and try to change your spots.

Companies caught in changing markets need to create new brands.

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Today, the toughest part of starting anew is often working into the distribution channels, these guys don't have that problem – Kraft has powerful relationships it can leverage and McDonald's owns theirs. McDonald's could take a lesson from the shared retail strategy of Tim Horton's and Wendy's and introduce a healthy product in a split retail space. Dividing the offering would allow them to respond to changing market expectations without risking the significant equity which resides in the McDonald's brand by providing clarity of offering - a true McDonald's on the right and a very green "Salad Days" on the left.

Building brands is a process not an event, they should start now.