

# instinct™

Instinct is a monthly publication for clients, associates and friends of brand coach.

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

## Save your Brand!

While working against the odds, the people at ING Direct have done a remarkable job of introducing and building their brand here in Canada. Aside from the challenge of entering a marketplace using a name made up of initials<sup>1</sup>, they have used an otherwise disciplined

approach – differentiated their positioning, articulated it with a simple yet powerful Core Idea – Dutch actor Frederik de Groot uttering the words “Save Your Money”, all on a powerful orange visual platform, delivered with unyielding consistency.<sup>2</sup> This has resulted in significant success, attracting 4 million new customers – doubling their global customer base in the last 12 months.

A powerful platform, however, does not go unnoticed by others.

So successful have ING’s efforts been that the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation [who have never stuck with a consistent idea in their history – you don’t have to when you own a monopoly on a vice] has recently taken to mocking the ING ads on radio to promote their own Lotto 649. The faux Dutch voice begins with some financial mumbo-jumbo and then admits that he doesn’t know what he’s talking about, concluding that “winning money is better than making it anyway”.

Ouch!

## What would brand coach suggest?

*Cease-and-Desist! Given that their Core Idea is worth much, much more than their non-existent branches – it is the sole face of the corporation - ING needs to stop this piracy in its tracks. The fact that this lampoon strikes right at the heart of the ING Brand promise – making money – makes it critical to defend. Six years of ING Brand equity is being eroded rapidly.*

*Brands, Identities, Trade Marks and Core Ideas are increasingly among a company’s most valuable assets and must be defended aggressively and protected diligently. With the topic of valuing a company’s intangible assets moving to the forefront in accounting practice and reporting, protecting the integrity of a company’s brand and Core Idea is imperative. “Like a property, a brand can increase, maintain or lose value depending on how well it is looked after.”<sup>3</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> See the January 2003 issue of Instinct about naming brands with initials.

<sup>2</sup> See the February 2003 issue of Instinct about consistency as the number one factor in building brands.

<sup>3</sup> Lindsay Williams, “Valuing the Brand”, Director of Finance, 2003, [www.altalink.co.uk](http://www.altalink.co.uk).