

# 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.

## CEO – take back your brand!

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal with the Chief Executive Officer of BMW revealed how seriously he sees his responsibility with one of the world's leading Brands.

When Helmut Panke [trained as a nuclear engineer] was asked if he had special responsibilities maintaining or building the brand image, he responded that the biggest task was to say 'no'.



"Because in the end, authentic brand management boils down to understanding that a brand is a promise that has to be fulfilled everywhere, at any time. So when something doesn't fit, you must make sure that it isn't done". Asked when the last significant time was he said no, he replayed a debate as to whether BMW should be in the minivan market. "We don't have a van because a van as it is in the market today, does not fulfill any of the BMW brand values. We all as a team said no. We will not bring a van". [See Instinct June 2003 - When is a Porsche a truck?]

In further discussion around understanding BMW's premium character, he referenced his favourite test – the blindfold test: "Take any of the BMW brand products, sit in them, touch it, feel it, hear it, feel the feedback from the road. You know exactly this is what a BMW feels like. Someone said brands are only skin deep. No it's not. It has to be authentic, through everything you do".

## What would brand coach suggest?

*CEOs take your lead from Helmut! He clearly recognizes his role as CBO – Chief Brand Officer. The ownership of a successful brand must come at the highest level of the enterprise in order to permeate and remain true throughout, in everything it says, does and creates.*

*Today, most hired gun CEOs have left the brand responsibility with the marketing department – the place where it was relegated when the original entrepreneur [the last guy in the CEO chair to ooze the brand] left when the company outgrew his start-up management style. Leaving the brand responsibility with marketing limits it from effectively garnering the attention and support of peers in other departments.*

*CEOs take back your brand!*