

# instinct™

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

## **Canada, strong and clean.**

These days Canada seems to stand for less than it used to. A middle rank power, we once made our international reputation as a dependable peacekeeper and willing Western ally. And now, we are shying away from taking our rightful leadership position on the Kyoto accord.



So what if the Americans are out? Canada has gone it alone before, or led the way on issues that our North American cousins eventually followed us on. Big projects didn't used to scare us and doing our part to save the world shouldn't this time around. Let's sign on and work out the details later.

As a country, Canada appears to be less in the U.S. shadow than ever before. We've been less eager to endorse the U.S. "War on Terror" - a reflection of our withering armed forces perhaps - and we've had our share of arguments with our neighbour to the south.

Canada, the brand, clearly has a distinct future, one that will not soon be stirred into that great U.S. melting pot. The world has a pretty positive image of Canada the brand. They think: great outdoors, unspoiled vistas, wildlife. Tourists from places such as Japan and Germany flock to our country in search of pristine forests, mountains and that increasingly valuable commodity, wide-open spaces. They generally find what they are looking for.

The "Clean Canada" brand which clothing retailer Roots has so successfully managed to package and sell in the U.S. and Japan is precisely what should be underlying our Prime Minister's strategic decision making relating to Canada's brand.

Instead of getting bogged down in scientific arguments about the nature and extent of environmental change, Chretien et al have a chance to make Canada stand out. To be the good guys on an issue everyone agrees with, at least in the broad strokes. What could be more of a no-brainer than saving the planet?

Canada has become a world leader in telecommunications precisely because of the challenges of talking to one another over our vast distances. Agreeing to do something about climate change will similarly push us to be environmental leaders.

The provincial-Federal bickering, that governmental "who's gonna pay the tab" wrangling, doesn't fit with the issue of climate change. Like international agreements on pollution or controlling over-fishing, climate change should be an easy sell across Canada. We have more to lose than any other place on the planet, a truth the politicians should be focusing on.

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A can-do country, we've tapped electricity from the most glorious waterfall on the planet, built a national railway across the world's second-largest landmass and have been leaders on the most important issues over the past century.

Politicians have to be proud of the brave and clean brand. We're clean now and brave enough to stay that way. Kyoto gives Canada plenty of time to clean up its act and make the country a world leader in clean energy, conservation and new technologies.

Not bad things to be known for internationally.

## ***What would brand coach suggest?***

*Canada, like an enterprise, would benefit from branding discipline. Giving the world a clear, memorable snapshot of us – a brand - would secure a solid role on the global stage.*

*The greatest tool in Brand building is consistency - consistency of promise, consistency at every touchpoint and consistency over time.*

*A brand promise needs to be differentiated, relevant and ownable. Canada's reality is the massive size and the relatively pristine state of our land, water and nature. If the world knows anything about us, it's that. We need to use this as our base and build from here. The only thing tougher than getting a thought into somebody's busy head is changing a thought that is already there. Yet as Canadians, spoiled with all we have, we seem embarrassed by this positioning! Get over it! Being known as caring, intelligent stewards of our lands doesn't preclude us from being also thought of as innovative and high tech – think fuel cells, hydro generation, and on.*

*Relevant? In a world that is increasingly crowded, dirty and scared of running out of the most essential of elements – drinking water, Canada could clearly be seen as the owner of the environment by default alone.*

*Great brands look for opportunities to align themselves with events and opportunities that are consistent with their brand promise. Kyoto is a world event that Canada needs to own.*