

instinct™

Instinct is a monthly publication on branding for clients, associates and friends of Ted Matthews.

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

Simplicity at its most complex.

The following is an excerpt of an email from a Bell business customer service rep to a small business customer they claim to appreciate. (Warning: scan quickly to preserve your sanity...)

As per our conversation, you qualify for the premium BIHS 4.0 with Static IP and brand new Wireless modem. All new BIHS 4.0 customers will get one (1) static IP included free of charge & a Business Internet Gateway (E6300 wireless modem), instead of the regular modem (e5200). The E6300 consists of DSL modem, 5 Ports router & wireless capability that enables customers to create their own Local Area Network through Internet, file & peripheral sharing [...].



Currently, you have the KEYPAK service valued at \$125 which includes your one business line and Highspeed 3.0 Meg. We can upgrade you to our BIHS 4.0 Meg with the new modem without changing any existing account information. There will be a one-time debundling charge of \$37.50 but for only \$9 more per month you will have this brand new service. Also, if you have Bell Mobility for business, I can also give you 1200 minutes free of long distance on your business line every month as a compliment from BELL.

"Prices do not include hardware or equipment (except where noted). Cables and connectors to customers' equipment are not provided. Prices assume but do not confirm availability. All prices are subject to applicable taxes. All prices are subject to approval by Customer Services Engineer, Implementation and Provisioning. The above prices are based upon a one year contract." Please visit the Bell Canada High Speed Web site for complete Terms and Conditions.

Have you ever heard anything more convoluted and confusing? Just imagine being the busy person receiving this 'friendly', personalised message during the course of your typical crazy business day. What is Bell possibly thinking? Who do they think has the patience to read this with any level of comprehension - and to then make an informed decision? Hello Bell! Wrestling with your service plans and equipment is not the only thing that people try to do in their day! Your products are just a facilitator and as such are supposed to help, quietly!

You may recall that Bell's new positioning is "Making it Simple".

With this action, Bell has demonstrated that doing business with them is anything but simple.

What would brand coach suggest?

*A 'position' is the promise that differentiates a company from its competitors. This is **the** critical component of building and maintaining a brand! To own space in the customer's mind, you need to stake out a very relevant position that people buy into and then you must deliver on it and own it. (Think Volvo and safety and FedEx and sure.)*

Delivering on your promise is critical - if you say you do something differently (implying better than your competitors), then you have to be best at doing just that. You cannot do what CEO Michael Sabia has done at Bell and use a market facing 'position' of "Making it Simple." to try and motivate the internal folks to shoot for it. This position could be an ideal internal 'vision' (where we are going) for the company, serving to rally employees. But the confusion which results from a promise of simplicity with an organization and employees not equipped to deliver on it will not serve Bell well. They continue to over promise and under deliver, losing many people along the way. Goodbye.