

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.

Not enough dollars to donuts.

A recent survey of Canadian Business magazine readers* declared Tim Hortons to be the best managed brand in Canada - by a factor of 2! This, while Air Canada was voted to the lowest end of the scale by an even wider margin!

Brands are built with the consistency of their positive touch points. Driven for almost 40 years by Ron Joyce - the entrepreneur who ensured the success of Store #1 - Tim's does it millions of times each day with 2300 outlets and an army of coffee and baking servers who never let their customers down. A promise of Always Fresh and a fast and friendly culture surrounded by their own 'double-double' and 'roll-up-the-rim' vocabulary complete the every-morning experience. Careful and consistent attention to their identity and, for the most part, their self-funded work in the community with camps for underprivileged children, lock their place in the hearts of Canadians.



Poor Air Canada. It lacks an entrepreneur, or the instinctive leadership style of one. It continues to deliver millions of negative touch points from its well-publicized daily battles and let-downs with its pending bankruptcy, accusations of wrong-doing by competitors and battles with airports. Even Aeroplan, its successful rewards plan, has publicly distanced itself. Employees facing the painful inevitability of more work for less pay, make sure the travelling public feel their wrath. And on it goes.

What would brand coach suggest?

The only thing tougher than building a brand, is changing the negative perception of one. There isn't enough time, there isn't enough money from anywhere, to change the compounded negative thoughts we have about Air Canada.

*Memo to the board - CCAA** was created to help a company with a chance. Stop screwing around. Fire Milton. Pay down the suppliers. Bankrupt the company. It's over.*

Memo to the new board - Hire a real, inspiring leader. (What's Ron Joyce doing?) Hire natural service people - x-teachers, nurses, hospitality folks and the very, very few x-AC people who do get it. Reinvent it. Rename it. Relaunch it. Do it now!

**The study was conducted by Spencer Francey Peters (SFP) and The Strategic Counsel, on behalf of Canadian Business, to provide a comprehensive look at how businesspeople view Canadian companies on their brand management efforts.

**Companies' Creditor Arrangement Act. CCAA is the legal process which is used in Canada for court-supervised reorganization or restructuring of a company's obligations. It provides a way for companies to gain time to restructure their debt, and rearrange their financing, while continuing operations.