

# 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.

## The Ultimate Driving Machine vs. The Relentless Pursuit of Perfection

For those readers who live in Toronto, you will no doubt have been struck by the awesome glass showroom tower that BMW has built on the lower end of the Don Valley Parkway. What an amazing statement for the BMW brand! And it gets better... A friend of mine reported that, when he took delivery of his new BMW 645, the delivery took place on the 4th floor of the tower! And, after his introduction, he and his new beemer were whisked down to street level on the elevator - a very cool start to the new relationship indeed.



Now, fast forward to the first service event. The same dealer has but one gal you can speak with to arrange your service appointment. You call, but she's not there so you leave a message. She calls you and leaves a message. You call her back and so on and so on. When you do arrive early in the morning for your first service appointment, there's no logical priority system for speaking with the service agents. So, owners jostle for position, only to discover that after check-in, they'll still be waiting until a large enough group assembles to be loaded into a decidedly non-BMW minivan. Then, in uncomfortable silence, the group is shuttled into the city in a stop-and-drop school bus style. For these busy customers who are anything but cost-sensitive, this ain't the ultimate service experience they were expecting from BMW ownership.

## What would brand coach suggest?

*Brands are built with consistent, positive experiences.*

*A new car is delivered once, way back at the beginning. On the other hand, a car is serviced about half a dozen times over the life of a lease... and the last time is often just before you trade in your vehicle. At what point in the lifecycle of the automotive customer relationship do you think BMW should be focusing? Answer... at every point. In order for service to be excellent, it must be relentless.*

*Take for example my experiences as a Lexus customer. I call the special Lexus service number and make an appointment the first time I call, every time. When I arrive for my service appointment, I drive right into the building and stop outside the private office of the Service Manager who opens my door, greets me by name (not a difficult thing to orchestrate, but a significant one) and invites me into his office while he retrieves the mileage. Details conveyed, he hands me his business card and invites me to visit the Hertz counter immediately across from his office where they give me a new fresh Lexus for the day.*

*Question: Which is the ultimate driving experience?*

*Maybe BMW should consider contracting 'Top Gun' graduates from its own Driver Training program to whisk BMW owners to work in the latest demos ensuring the ultimate driving experience continues beyond the first glance.*