

instincts

instincts is a monthly publication on Branding for clients, associates and friends.

Our Mission: Support and challenge business leaders to maximize the potential within their Brand.



A Diamond in the Rough

Choosing an engagement ring is something you don't want to screw up. And so you seek the opinions of people you trust – family, friends, co-workers – on where to shop. When asked for such important advice, people will do as they've always done: they'll relate an experience they, or someone they know, found to be *remark-able*: an experience so great that it's worth remarking about to others.

It turns out that Spence Diamonds, a retailer with eight stores in Canada, provides a remark-able shopping experience. To anyone who's heard one of their radio ads, this will come as a complete shock. CEO Sean Jones, Spence's pitchman, portrays himself as a total buffoon, babbling excitedly to the point of strangely howling. He proudly refers to himself as annoying and even speculates, on his company website, that someone might want to punch him in the nose.

Although Jones promises listeners a great diamond-buying experience, the ads ultimately convey an experience that is ultra-low-end and ultra-cheesy. Definitely *not* the experience – or sense of trust – you want when buying an incredibly important item you know nothing about.

Someone might want to punch him in the nose

So when a friend of Instinct suggested we "ignore those ads" and check out what he described as a great experience, we were skeptical. And pleasantly surprised: Spence indeed delivered a remark-able experience by building enormous trust – by smoothly guiding us through the selection process, educating us about cut, clarity, colour and carat, and allowing us to select and inspect our diamond using a binocular microscope. An experience run by jokers, this was not.

What does the Brand Coach coach?

Observe the number one rule of Branding – be consistent – by aligning the character of your marketing messages with the character of the buying experience you provide. Here we have clownish ads that scare away anyone looking for an in-store experience that creates confidence.

Take note, however, that people trust advertising less – and their friends more – than ever. That's why you've got to deliver a remark-able experience, as Spence has done in its stores: it's the shortest path to building Brand equity.



Now available at Amazon.com
and Books for Business

"Brand: It Ain't the Logo" should be required reading for anyone who sits around the 'big table' and for anyone who seeks to influence their decisions."

Ken Wong
Associate Professor, Business
and Marketing Strategy
Queen's School of Business

Instinct in the media



The NDP considers a new name – and Ted Matthews weighs in

Go to our In the Media page.