
THE BORDERLESS BRAND

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After two decades, global communications are alive and well except they now live in people's hearts and minds, not in maps or charts.

Stage 1

One Sight, One Sound, One Sell

- Centric (strategy, execution)
- Generic (international, universal, LCD)
- Compliant (laws, ethics, religions)

Stage 2

Think Global, Act Local

- Culturally sensitive
- System-friendly (NIH vs. NIH)
- Deliverable

Stage 3

Borderless Mindsets

- Insight-driven strategies
- Concept-driven brands
- Interactive messaging

As geographic borders and language barriers become less important, various forms of culture come into play and affect the successful development and deployment of global communications:

- Popular Culture
- Corporate Culture
- Category Culture
- Brand Culture
- Consumer Culture

The global landscape has changed and will continue to change 24-7. Aspiring globals have become truly global: CNN, Microsoft, MasterCard. Ambitious locals have developed global legitimacy: UPS, Samsung, Burberry. Comfortable globals have been slowed down by the strong headwinds of lifestyle relevance, cultural acceptance, nationalism or poor press: Levi's, McDonald's, Nike and even Coca-Cola.

New technologies, convergence, e-commerce and dot-coms (not to mention perennials such as mergers and acquisitions) became the lexicon and syntax of a brave new world of business, where Wall Street, not cultural currency, reigned supreme. Gone are the Westerns and Easterns, the Wangs and Woolworth's, the Selectrics and Oldsmobiles, brands now forgotten, or soon to be.

People have changed— or have they? They still wake up, brush their teeth, eat breakfast, go where they need to go, do what they need to do, return to base, eat and drink, play videogames and entertain themselves -- and go to bed again.

They travel, they shop, check their stocks, they obsessively watch the news, have sex, have children, make choices, absorb and exude data, they buy and they sell -- through new channels, perhaps; more contemporary methods of payment, perhaps; seduced by a less innocent, more cynical selling message, perhaps...

...but in the end it is still about “how do I improve the way that I feel right now” (not “today”, or “these days”, or “in general”, but “right now”, as distinct from “a minute ago”, or even “a minute from now”).

Truth be told, the world has seen profound change, but most of us have barely scratched the surface of that change. Our ground level view is, by definition, immediate, incomplete, unfocused. Blurred. It takes time and perspective to develop a sharper, clearer picture.

From a marketplace point of view, countries and regions have morphed into constituencies. Constituencies are defined not by age, not by sex, not by language, not by color – or any such conventional criteria – but by the way they think and the way they act. Call it ***like-minded constituencies.***

They inhabit a borderless world. In this world, film, TV, music, data and the news don't go through passport control. In this world, there is a language for which there isn't a dictionary yet. (A fluid, fickle language, subject to manipulation and interpretation. A language in which words have given way to icons.)

What is near may never be visited; what is far can be accessed at a moment's notice. Choice isn't about having choice, it is about believing there is choice. Showrooms, shopping malls and websites are landscapes surrounding choices that, in many cases, have already been made.

Money isn't necessarily an object because that is what it has become, an object. Spend? Invest? Cash, credit, debit, check, ATM? Is this a present tense proposition or a long-term preoccupation? Is this a tool or an end in itself? Are value and money one and the same?

Consumption habits start with what media you consume. Psychology and sociology are trailing behind technology, at least for the next 15 minutes.
In a world geographically and economically borderless, emotional borders rule.

In this New Globalism, the opportunities for global Brands still abound. The mission, for the global Brands that choose to accept it, will be to relentlessly assess how consumers will feel and act next, as opposed to obsessively dissect how they felt and acted yesterday. Thus equipped, they will need to interact with those consumers in the most relevant, most creative and effective manner.

They will need to:

Recognize

the culture of the Category

Reflect

the culture of the Brand

Respect

the culture of the Consumer

Respond

to the culture of the Mindset

A global Brand that does it credibly and compellingly,
faster and better than the other guy, will prosper.
Locally and globally, as these terms of the past
increasingly become one and the same.

Enter...**The Borderless Brand**

“There is a Jaguar ethos - values people see as traditional in our cars. You draw a car like this with an eye on the past. You mustn't lose that personality, nor must you let the new car become absorbed within a set of classical lines people have seen before. It's desperately difficult, but it is what we are paid to do.”

Geoff Lawson

1954-1999

Jaguar's Chief Designer

XK8/S-type

“It is the only American car that never lost its DNA...”

Geoff Lawson

(when asked why his personal transport remained a 1969 7-liter Corvette Stingray convertible)

Most leading Brands succeed because they possess a clear and unequivocal *DNA*, that facet among facets that best defines the Brand's core competency and primary purpose:

- It declares its **ethos**
- It bespeaks its **values**
- It exudes its **personality**
- It celebrates its **uniqueness**

Future success, however, will depend on the Brand's ability to remain true to and/or evolve that *DNA*.

Brands Have A DNA:

- American Express
- Subaru, BMW, Volvo
- Harley Davidson
- Nike, Adidas
- Gillette
- Coca-Cola, Pepsi
- Chanel
- BA, Virgin
- Nescafé
- Heineken
- Mustang, Corvette, Jeep
- Revlon, L'Oréal
- Starbucks
- Tiffany
- Barbie
- Tag Heuer, Breitling
- Perrier
- Guinness

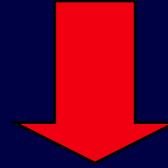
Corporations Have A DNA:

- UPS
- Johnson & Johnson
- Hallmark
- Nestlé
- Disney
- IBM
- L'Oréal
- GE
- P & G
- Sony
- GM
- Microsoft

A Brand's DNA Is Not Guaranteed



- Ray Ban
- Cadillac, Audi
- Apple
- Google
- Abercrombie & Fitch
- MasterCard
- jetBlue
- Corona



- Mr. Pibb
- Oldsmobile
- Max Factor
- Benetton
- Polaroid
- Sanka
- PanAm, Swissair
- Pabst

A DNA Is Not Built *Overnight*

- Agilent
- Lucent
- WorldCom
- Enron
- Diageo
- Aventis
- Adelphia
- Qwest
- Iridium
- Altria
- Global Crossing

To successfully *market* a Brand's DNA is to establish and exploit a *compelling connection* between its specialness and the core desire of its most likely Constituency.

To successfully *globalize* a Brand's DNA
is to elevate and expand that connection beyond
geography, nationalism and cultural identity, in search
of *like-minded constituencies*.

Two Examples:



A regional brand goes national.



A national brand goes global, repositions itself.



Washington Mutual

WASHINGTON MUTUAL SELLING IDEA

People First. Money Second.



Repositioning: *Synchronization*

- ✦ Long established brand
- ✦ Highly respected
- ✦ Highly trusted
- ✦ Highly relied upon



- ✦ Full service capability not recognized

Managing The DNA Of A Global Brand

- ✓ well defined core competency
- ✓ well defined, like-minded constituency
- ✓ compelling, unique personality
- ✓ organic interactive capability
- ✓ ***virtual, real-time consumer insights***
- ✓ ***imaginative insight interpretation***

Imaginative Insight Interpretation

Consumers only know what they know. What they've seen before. What their experience has been.

Brands that rely exclusively on this type of consumer information run the risk of standing still, unable to see the way forward.

Conventional research produces reports, not plans.
The very purpose of nurturing strategic ***planners*** is
to ensure that consumer knowledge is put into
action.

While there is comfort in knowing where one stands,
the objective is to determine how far one can go.

Greatness is not in the knowing, it's in the
imagining.

To interpret a consumer insight is to use one's imagination – to take a ***calculated risk*** – to make the leap between knowing and projecting probable consumer behavior.

To turn strategic planning into Stage One in the creative process.

To turn insight interpreters into creative people themselves.

Consumers do not read research reports.

Consumers meet the message where the message happens: the screen, the page, the poster, the matchbox, the website, the t-shirt, the morning radio program.

Messages only mean something if they add to what consumers already know and feel.

Windows, not mirrors.

That's what messages should feel like to consumers.

Possibilities, not reflections.

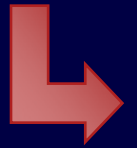
That's what will impel them into action.

It is true in the village, it is true in the town, it is true in the city and, in the aftermath of the Big Bang – alternative media, alternative lifestyles, alternative mindsets, all happening at dizzying speeds – it is progressively true in the world.

(If you don't capture that insight, if you don't imagine that idea, your competition will.)

The Imagination Path

Insight



Instinct



Interpretation



Imagination



Idea



Interrogation

To interpret, to imagine, to invent...how much of a risk is involved?

Risk-taking ideas require more checks and balances than safer ones. Hypotheses must be validated; the firmness of new terrains must be tested; responses must be evaluated and quantified.

The global application, the cultural relevance of these ideas must be verified.

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- ✓ imaginative insight interpretation
- ✓ ***a lifestyle enhancement,
not a cultural infringement***

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