STEPHEN HAWLEY MARTIN

Fmr. Sr. VP, The Martin Agency

MARTIN
BRAND
POWER

Dominate the Category

CONTENTS

Practical Applications

Talk the Talk and Walk the Walk

Discover

Develop

Align

Engage

Track

Enhance

A Continuous Improvement Process

A Creative Process That Works

The Fun Begins

Development Phase Summary

How to Institute Major Change

Scorecards

Alignment Summary

Track Everything That Can Be Tracked

Enhance & Track Summary

How to Build Esprit de Corps

A Call to Action

Chapter One
Is Yours a Power Brand?

Brand Power: It's a sometimes-priceless expectation of performance that sets apart and elevates a person, a product, a place, a business, or a service above the competition. It's why Duracell$^®$ can charge more for a pack of AAA batteries than Rayovac$^®$. Why Tylenol$^®$ gets more for a bottle of pills than the CVS brand of Acetaminophen, even though it's the very same formula. Why most people would rather drive and are willing to pay more for a Mercedes or a BMW than a Chevrolet.

Developing Brand Power is how you or your business can make more money—a whole lot more. Consider this: A while back, I bought a Toyota Land Cruiser—a great vehicle that I still have. In the process, I asked the salesperson what the difference was between the Land Cruiser I had my eye on and a Lexus 470. Except for some chrome, they looked the same to me.

"$6,000 and a tilting steering wheel," he said.

As I drove away in my brand new Toyota Land Cruiser, I noticed he was wrong. My Land Cruiser also had a tilting steering wheel. The only difference was that Lexus is considered a luxury brand, and Toyota is not. Those few pieces of chrome—or more correctly, what they stood for—were worth $6,000 to a lot of people.

Here's a similar tale: When I was just beginning my career and was a junior executive at a big ad agency, I was standing with a client in his factory watching jars of his company's name-brand applesauce come off an assembly line. You can imagine the noise. Suddenly, the line stopped. The client and I chatted for a minute or two, and the line started up again. I looked, and coming off the line was a private-label store band—same jar, same applesauce, different cap and label.

Do not misunderstand. I'm not saying your brand shouldn't be higher quality or better in some way if you want to beat your competition. As the old saying goes, "Nothing kills a bad brand faster than good advertising." But it doesn't always have to be intrinsically better because—let's be honest—image sells. Is Starbucks coffee really all that much better than McDonald's? Perhaps, but maybe not. It would be interesting to see the results of a blind taste test. But even if it came out to be a tie, I'd have to say there is a difference. What is it? Loyal Starbucks customers get some sort of difficult-to-define emotional payoff—a sense of pride, perhaps—when drinking the Starbucks brand. A large percentage of them would probably turn up their noses at a cup of McDonald's coffee. They might even refuse to taste it—unless, that is, they were going through caffeine withdrawal.

If your brand is a business that provides a service, however, let me quickly say that getting everyone in your organization to buy into and believe in your brand's

promise—what sets it apart and adds value—is extremely important. More will be said about this. But first, let me give you and overview of my qualifications to write this book, and tell you what you will get from reading it.

I joined a large ad agency two weeks after graduating college and have worked in branding and marketing communications for more than 30 years. For half of that time, I was a principal and the Senior Vice President—the Director of Marketing & Media Services—at The Martin Agency. It's the firm that brought you the GEICO Gecko, "Virginia Is for Lovers," and the ads you now see for Oreo, Old Navy, and Timberland. I've also been the President & CEO of a successful ad agency that took off like a rocket and was purchased by The Interpublic Group, the international ad agency holding company that owns McCann, MullenLowe, and FCB. My primarily job in both those positions was to conduct research and develop plans and strategies that would boost our clients' brands to the top of their respective industries.

For the past few years, I've been pretty much on my own, consulting and writing books. I love what I do, which is dig into a topic to discover and expose the truth, and you know what? That's not at all surprising. According to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®, I'm an INTJ.

If you don't know what that is, Google it. Simply type in those letters. You'll find not only that INTJs are extremely rare, we're compared to master chess players who can see several moves ahead. It's true. We view all

the pieces in our minds and how a few strategic moves can turn things in our favor—or in a client's favor. To quote one online description that was offered a minute ago up by Google:

> *For [INTJs], life is like a giant game of chess. Relying on strategy rather than chance, [INTJs] contemplate the strengths and weaknesses of each move before they make it. And they never lose faith that, with enough ingenuity and insight, they can find a way to win—no matter what challenges might arise along the way.*

That's me, and why you ought to read this book. I'm going to do my best to tell you everything I know—the really important stuff—about what you can do, and how you can do it to create a compelling brand out of whatever it is you have to sell. Then I'll explain, as briefly and as clearly as possible, how to create messaging for it that will result in your brand leaving its competitors in the dust. The best part is, you will get all this for the price of this book—which you may even have gotten free.

That's what's in it for you. So what's in it for me? Am I really so magnanimous?

No, of course not. I believe it's quite possible you are a busy man or woman. You might have your hands full running a business, or doing whatever it is you do—marketing, perhaps? Whatever the case may be, you might decide to get in touch with me, and for an extremely rea-

sonable fee, have me put the process described in this book to work for you and your brand. Once that's done, you might want me to develop a marketing communications plan that you can hand to your staff, or to your marketing agency, to implement. There's absolutely no obligation, of course, but if that turns out to be what you decide, simply go to the contact page of my website, and shoot me an email, and let's begin a conversation. Just follow this link:

www.shmartin.com

No need to write that down. I'll remind you about it when you arrive at the end of this book.

What You Are Going to Learn

Perhaps the most important thing you're going to learn from this book is a process, the result of which should enable you to fill in the blanks for your brand in the sentence below, thereby creating a Brand Power Statement:

To the (market target), (insert your brand name) is the brand of (frame of reference) with (benefits and attributes) that (sustainable and emotional point of difference).

Here's an example of a Brand Power Statement that resulted some years ago from the process you will shortly learn about:

To hand tool users, Stanley is the brand designed with features that feel solid and perform well under demanding conditions, so that when you finish, you experience the satisfaction of a job well done.

Think of all the great ads, blogs, videos, and such, which can be built on that statement.

You may be thinking, "Okay, maybe so, but why were the people at Stanley willing to pay good money for it? That statement seems pretty obvious."

Brand Power Statements almost always seem obvious in retrospect, after the process has been done. If you already know what statement will move your brand to the head of the class, you don't need the process. But Stanley's leaders did need it—they needed it badly. The brand had been losing share among professionals as well as serious do-it-yourself homeowners. The people at Stanley knew it needed to be set above and apart from other, mostly cheaper brands, they just didn't know how. They did know that woodworking isn't just hammering nails or measuring corners. It is such things as making sure a foundation is square, that the floors are level, that everything fits, tongue and groove. Anyone who wants to do a job right needs reliable tools.

The Process pointed clearly to the solution: Focus on specific hand tools and appeal to the pride of craftsmanship to the challenge of doing the job right.

Here's a summary of what was found:

The One Thing: Craftsmanship
Benefits and Attributes: These tools have been designed with features that feel solid and perform well under demanding conditions.
Emotional Wrap: I had the best tools to do this job right.
Theme line: "Stanley helps you do things right."

What came of it? Following the brand study and the subsequent marketing push, the downward slide in market share turned around, and Stanley hand tool sales grew steadily—averaging 5% growth a year, despite strong competition.

Stay tuned. The Process will be explained in the upcoming chapter.

Chapter Two
How to Create Brand Power

Some people think brands come only in bright shiny packages, but you know that isn't so. Others think a brand is a snappy logo and a tagline, but that's not true, either. A brand—a good one at least—is a name that stands for something unique and desirable. It's whatever you want people to buy or accept, and if that "what" has a name, it's a brand. From cupcakes to combines, no matter what your business, you have a brand to sell, and whether or not you sell to consumers, or to other businesses, if you have one or more competitors, creating a powerful brand image has never been more important or desirable than it is today.

Perhaps your company does little or no advertising. Does that mean your brand cannot become famous? Of course not. It can become top of mind in your industry because what you are, what you do, and how you and your associates do it in your interactions with others every day gives off a message, perhaps subconsciously, and that message can set your brand apart from any other product or service in the category, provided it's the right one.

Most of the case histories you will soon read about are from branding studies that my late brother, David Martin, and I performed after we sold our shares in The Martin Agency, the firm that still bears our name. This is how I define, and we defined, a brand:

A brand is an expectation of performance.

That expectation can either be good, or not so good, and it almost always stems from a core identity that's based on one thing in particular. That one thing is what your product, service, or company delivers, provides, or—let's hope your brand doesn't fall into this category—what it *doesn't* deliver to customers that they would like to have. For brands that do not fall short, but rather, those that have the potential to take market share from competitors, it's what the brand does best—what makes it stand out. It's that "something" that creates a preference. How to put your finger on what that "something" is, or what it can and ought to be, is what I will explain.

As you read ahead, you may think it's easy to find the one thing you do best and make it a way of corporate life because, as you will see, that can create a powerful brand. You can do that, all right—this book will tell you how. But finding it is one thing, and doing it, another. As the late great actor, Robin Williams, said to the detective in the movie *Dead Again,* "Either you are a smoker, or you aren't. Decide what you are, and be that."

Below is what I believe, and what I am convinced is true based on my 30-plus years of branding experience:

A lasting commitment to a particular ideal or advantage will lead to a clear claim to fame that will set your brand apart from the competition and lead to an increase in market share.

That claim to fame is what needs to become your brand's identity. Your brand's name—"Stephen Hawley Martin," for example—needs to become synonymous with what potential customers find most appealing about it. For Mercedes, it's "luxury." For BMW, it's "German Engineering." In my case, it's "Branding" because I help them create a brand by identifying something that already exists—or that can exist—but that they have overlooked. So, like cowboys of old, I "brand." It's my "One Thing," and when a second word is added, it's "Brand Power."

I deliver Brand Power by digging into businesses and target markets, and in the process, I identify the most important competitive advantage that whatever my clients have to sell can offer. I put my finger on the "One Thing" that sets it apart, and in doing so, I create what becomes Brand Power. When all the firm's employees, stakeholders, and its marketing communications fully embrace that One Thing and no one takes his or her eyes

or mind off it, the product, or the service, will inevitably gain market share.

If your brand is a product, the "One Thing" will be a sustainable advantage—real or perceived—because, as was said in Chapter One, a compelling image can make all the difference. It is amazing, though, how many marketers drift away from a clear-cut advantage in their zeal to stake out something new. To prevent this from happening, your "One Thing" must be ingrained into your corporate culture. Identity springs from shared core beliefs and perceived competencies by everyone involved—leadership, staff and stakeholders.

To establish and maintain a clear-cut advantage, you may have to fine-tune what you do and how you do it. If your brand is a business that provides a service, this may require a cultural shift that must be embraced and fostered both by leadership and by staff down the line. Systems might need to be retooled in order to deliver the "One Thing" consistently. As you will soon see in the upcoming case histories, if and when you and your associates focus the organization to deliver time after time on that "One Thing," you will be building an impenetrable wall around unsurpassed value. A clear sense of identity will develop among you and your colleagues that will guide you to success in a much bigger way than would ever be possible with clever marketing and smart advertising tactics alone. Your shared identity will literally

guide how you do business, and when that happens, success inevitably will follow.

Before you read another word, however, do this: Stroll down your company's hallways and ask those you see to give you a single word that defines the business the two of you are in. You'll be fascinated by what you hear.

And what you don't hear.

But take heart. Even if the words are all over the map, a core identity does exist. All organizations have one, or they can have one—it's just that sometimes what a company stands for has been forgotten. Over time, it has simply receded into the collective unconscious.

Identifying, bringing to the surface, and embracing the core identity is a way to center everything a company does so that what you stand for is meaningful and real. It helps your staff focus on a common purpose so that they continue to do the things that got the company from A to Z and made it successful in the first place. As authors of *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies,* Jim Collins and Jerry Porras wrote:

> *Contrary to popular wisdom, the proper first response to a changing world is not to ask, "How should we change?" Rather, it's to ask, "What do we stand for and why do we exist?" This should never change. Then change everything else.*

Seeking The Company's Core

A true identity is often based on bedrock values established—either purposefully, or by accident—by the founder or founders and carried forward through the years by employees. In some companies these beliefs are recognized clearly, in others it is just the way things are. Either way, the great companies—what Collins and Porras called "visionary companies"—have strong core beliefs and stick by them. These beliefs shape what the company is and what it delivers—from product quality to the particular leadership stance the company must take in order to dominate its market category. When regenerated, founding values instill pride and sure-footed confidence at all levels. Basic beliefs and shared values provide muscle strength in the corporate body.

How do you uncover what they are? When I conduct identity studies, I often find that managers are surprised that a powerful belief system has endured despite the passage of time, growth, mergers, or acquisitions. Because core belief spawns identity, I advise those leaders to move quickly to reinforce it through training, communications, repetition, incentives, ratings and reward.

Why is that important?

A core identity—that "One Thing" —is the glue, the unity, and the refrain that threads through the organization as well as through a series of sub-steps in a total selling process. A strong core identity can often be summed up by

a single word. It might be necessary to add a word or two to clarify the meaning, but the fewer words the better so that people can easily remember what the company does best, where it is going, and why. As mentioned, for me that word is "Branding," and when I add a word, it's "Brand Power," which is why I titled this book *Martin Brand Power.*

A core identity frequently evolves from core values over time, which is one reason a company's leaders may not be able to define or easily put a finger on it. But customers will know—although perhaps subconsciously. Once it has been drawn out into the light, identified, tested, and adopted, all actions going forward need to flow from that fixed point of reference—that Brand Power. This will include acquisitions, operational initiatives, new hires, new products and line extensions, marketing, advertising, and even the tag lines that will be used through the years.

The Brand Identification Process

The place to begin in order to put your finger on your core identity is inside your company. Your quest for a robust brand—one that can withstand the slings and arrows of outrageous competitive claims—ought to begin with a hard look at what's in the minds of leadership and staff. It then should move outside to talk with customers in order to reconnect with your central purpose and relate to the expectations and desires of the marketplace.

Here is what you want to learn:

- What does the company or brand offer of value and relevance from the perspective of customers (at all distribution levels)?
- How does this compare with the competition?
- This insight leads to creative ways that the company and its brands or services can be packaged for greatest impact.

After this homework is done, you'll be able to decide what marketing initiatives and communications tactics will be needed to meet your business goals, while at the same time enhancing both the corporate and individual brand core identities.

The first step will be to schedule a series of individual interviews with key managers of the business and then move through the ranks to get a representative cross-section.

These candid discussions with those who have the company's best interest at stake will:

- Reveal points of agreement and disagreement along with internal perspectives.
- Go below the surface to discover basic beliefs and shared values. Even in companies assembled through acquisition, there will be common denominators, common themes. People

inside know the company and its products best and often have definite ideas concerning what it stands for. They have insights that will reveal why the company is in business beyond making money and keeping the shareholders happy. These ideas may vary, but learning what range of perception exists is the first step in defining a cohesive point-of-view for the company to adopt.

Internal consensus groups stimulate a cooperative spirit among the participants, and promote enthusiastic support for the outcome.

Ask employees such things as:

1. What does the company name stand for?
2. What are the top two or three things that the company offers customers?
3. What differentiates this company from competitors?
4. What are its unique strengths?
5. What attracted you here?
6. How would you describe the corporate culture? How would you describe the type of person
7. who is a good fit for this company? If the company ceased to operate today, what
8. would be lost to your markets and customers? For someone who is not already a customer of

the company, what do you suppose would be the first thing that comes to mind when they hear the name?

This stage of the process will reveal the company's strengths, its claim to fame, and perceived core competencies from the perspective of employees. Now, ask top management questions like:

1. Beyond making money, why does this company exist?
2. If you could say only one thing about your company to get someone to do business with it, what would that one thing be?
3. Sum up your claim to fame in just one word. What are the company's guiding principles?
4. What do you want employees to believe above all else?
5. Describe the type of culture you have tried to create here.
6. What are the one or two things you feel need to change for this company to achieve long-lasting greatness?
7. If *Fortune* magazine were to write a feature about this company five years from now, what would you like the article to say?

You are searching for different ways to position the company. Think about it. What is your company's claim to fame? What does it do better than the competition?

Management and employees always have firm thoughts about such things and the information they provide will be used to draft clear value statements that can be tested for customer reaction.

Identity Testing

After the input sessions, it is time to do some thinking and writing to hone the various value statements for testing with customers. Each of these value statements will represent true company strength, but one, more than others, will represent what customers prefer.

Sometimes the statements have to be revised and edited following the interviews to gauge what customers believe most accurately defines a particular strength. One way or other, however, the process will lead to a sure match between a company's deliverables and customers' desires.

The best way to proceed with this phase is to recruit a microcosm of the customer universe. These groups will represent your direct customers, the people who make the buying decisions, place the orders, and write the checks. They can be dealers, engineers, or architects, corporate buyers, whatever, and they may be located all over the map and work out in the field most of the time.

The interviews can be conducted by setting up group or one-on-one Zoom, Skype, or Google Meet sessions. A specific appointment should be made with each participant so that he or she may be ready on a particular date and time. Moreover, the interviewees should be sent material to review prior to the session. This will include the list of value statements. He or she may or may not know in advance which particular company is the subject for discussion. The name will be revealed as the interview progresses so that each customer can comment directly from his or her experience in having dealt with the business.

How can we get the participants to sit still long enough to take part in an interview? Don't worry, once the interviews begin respondents will be held in rapt attention and the time will seem to pass quickly. In one example, a company's largest customers assembled throughout the country in their own offices to take part in a lively discussion that would last the appointed hour and a half.

The researchers were seated in the client's conference room. Suddenly, when a particular customer's voice boomed over the speaker, the sales manager jumped to his feet. He was excited and nervous at the same time.

"You got him to participate in this? He's our largest customer. How did you get him? We can't even get in to see him."

While the interviews may cover other topics, the focus of the exercise is to get reaction to the several precise value statements that have resulted from the internal interview sessions.

Each statement will be designed to accomplish the following:

- Show how the company is known and regarded from past performance or how it must change.
- Determine sales appeals or brand values that will make customers buy a particular product or service or choose to do business with the company instead of the competition.

Unlike traditional focus groups that sometimes ramble around in unfocused ways, this method gets customers to react to specific ideas and notions. You can learn such things as:

- What will it take for the customer to switch?
- What is it that makes this brand unique?
- What do we offer that is superior?
- Are we at a disadvantage?
- Can the appeals be tweaked somehow to improve our chances of winning the sale?
- Are product improvements needed?
  What intangibles make a difference?

Price always lurks as a primary reason why people buy, but it would be a mistake to assume that it's the only reason. Investigation will reveal added values that override price or that make a difference when price is a given. In one case, for example, a sales manager was so convinced price was really all that mattered that he felt a branding study would be worthless. Yet customers revealed they often would accept a higher bid from that particular company. Why? Because they knew they could expect delivery when promised. Price was important, but so was overall cost—cost that could include idle work crews and lost time in meeting production schedules.

Insight Is Better Than Hindsight

Identity testing can lead to valuable insight, including how to improve the product or what to emphasize in marketing communications.

In one session for a company that made metal breaker-switch panels, electricians were interviewed. As a result, this client learned how to make the product user-friendly by drilling another hole in the back of the box.

For a building product line, a client learned that the configuration of the post could make or break a sale.

From customers of another, the client also discovered that price is determined by ultimate cost—not the initial cost. A defective component part could lead to a maintenance call that would multiply the initial price ten-fold.

Before interviewing potential customers, the ads running for a travel destination we were conducting a study

for had shown romantic scenes of couples holding hands, walking along deserted beaches. You probably have no trouble imagining what those ads were like. They were changed, however, when our client and we learned to our surprise that the majority of the target audience preferred to vacation on a crowded beach.

I have also found that advertising can sometimes be too direct. For certain products and services, people prefer implicit appeals. They respond more readily to cues and clues than they do to hard sell.

Whatever the case may be, whether it's consumer or B2B, people always want to know what's in it for them. When it comes to putting down their hard-earned cash, or the company's money, buyers can be very, very persnickety.

Chapter Three
Case Histories

In my thirty plus years of branding experience, I've learned that three ingredients typically sum up a brand's appeal:

1. The core identity.
2. The benefits and attributes that stand out and should be featured.
3. The emotion the target experiences from using the brand.

In this first case history, I'm going to go into detail, step by step, so that you will have a clear picture of how the process works in a real-life situation. For those that follow, I'll basically hit the highlights.

Siebe Appliance Controls

You probably didn't know it, but back when this branding project took place, Siebe could well have made the controls that govern your kitchen range and oven; your washing machine and dryer. They might have been what kept your food cold at home, or at the grocery, and what caused McDonald's French Fries to sizzle in cookers the world over.

Through a series of mergers and acquisitions, Siebe (pronounced See-Bee) no longer exists. It is now part of Schneider Electric, a global technology company head-quartered in France. No doubt the success of Siebe Appliance Controls made its owners and shareholders a lot of money when it was acquired. But when my brother and I were asked to help Siebe solve a branding issue, it was a totally new name in appliance controls. How so? Siebe's parent company headquartered in London had acquired and merged five separate appliance controls companies and put them all under the Siebe name. Suddenly, that new entity had a 10% worldwide share of market. It also had almost zero name recognition with the appliance manufacturers that Siebe now served. Nevertheless, at the time of our first meeting with Siebe Appliance Controls' president and CEO, the company was virtually tied with Diehl of Germany, and it had about twice the volume of its closest North American competitor, Honeywell.

The primary question the CEO wanted answered was this: how could all the company names that had become familiar to OEM appliance customers (Robertshaw, Ranco, Eliwell, ACT, and Paragon) best be brought under one corporate umbrella? Should the individual names be retained? It was a question that had to be answered quickly. Whatever the answer to that question turned out to be, it would have to capitalize on whatever

brand equity and goodwill already existed in the acquired companies.

The CEO listed what he wanted to know:

- Should each unit operate with separate identification, or should they be combined under the Siebe name?
- What should be done to capitalize on the inherent strengths of each?
- What were the company's perceived weaknesses?
- What was or what could be the best and competitively most powerful and sustainable point-of-difference for this new company?
- What would it take to establish the brand as the clear leader worldwide in the appliance control category?

While a true identity can almost always be found at a company's core, in this case there were five different companies, each with its own heritage, cultures and beliefs; each with its own unique strengths, followers and failings.

As is my standard operating procedure, the search for facts and information started by scheduling interviews with the company's employees leading up to the managers in order to ferret out cultural common denominators.

The Process

Input was gathered in group discussions by teleconference, starting with sales and continuing throughout the entire organization. Then, value statements were prepared in order to get feedback from customers.

It soon became clear that a sound case could be made for making price the king in this industry. Unlike the automobile category where retail prices had kept pace with or led inflation, retail prices of kitchen appliances at that time were about what they had been ten or 15 years previously. That was great for homeowners, of course, but not for appliance-makers and their suppliers. When the research was done, would the company that made the cheapest controls be the winner? Many Siebe employees that were interviewed thought so. If that turned out to be the case, there was no need to proceed further with the study. A powerful identity based on value is not needed when price is all there is to talk about.

The Quest for Quality

As probing continued, the horizon began to clear. In addition to price, there appeared to be increasing pressure among the OEMs for quality.

Did they want it both ways?

The desire for quality stemmed from the high cost of service repair calls. A three-dollar control device that failed after the customer had taken the appliance home could cost the manufacturer a $100 repair call. This, and

a growing realization that consumers are likely to remain loyal to a brand with few problems, put pressure for quality on suppliers. One major appliance maker had moved to extract a guarantee that suppliers would pay for a call after a ceiling was passed. Moreover, during the years prior to their acquisition by Siebe plc, some operating units had slipped in product quality. As one of the company's employees said during the internal interviews:

> *When you talk to (our customers about what they want) you will hear Service, Quality, Price and Delivery. And you will hear complaints. To be candid, we've had some problems. Our PPM (failed parts per million rate) hasn't been what it should be.*

Prior to the acquisition, customer complaints had intensified. Afterward, there had been some management turnover that further exacerbated the situation, as service continuity was lost.

A Sense of Enthusiasm

All company personnel interviewed adhered to the strong belief that the new management was committed to quality. One of the first things the new CEO had done was institute stringent new standards and plant investment. A transformation was underway to the Toyota Production System, now known as "Lean Manufacturing," and it was expected to lower production costs while a the same time increasing output quality. This had generated

enthusiasm internally about the future of Siebe Appliance Controls. One executive told me, "Our strength right now is the enthusiasm we have. We wanted to generate some excitement, and it's working."

A sense of spirit had also been brought on by the consolidation. Employees spoke of the company's heritage; the tale of the young Austrian inventor who had come to England in the early 1800s to pursue his engineering interests and had invented the first diving suit. Augustus Siebe was his name. It seemed that he was driven to invent devices that would reduce manual labor and increase human productivity. His pursuit of excellence had been based on sound engineering principles and his guiding spirit projected values that would be rekindled 160 years later in the company that bore his name.

Many staff members who had been part of the Robertshaw unit of the newly constituted firm, the one that had been plagued with PPM problems, viewed the creation of the new Siebe Appliance Controls group as an opportunity to cast the entire company in a new light. Here was a typical response:

> *Being part of a big global corporation is a definite advantage. This lets customers know we are not going bust tomorrow. Besides, we are investing year after year. We have balance now and can combine shared experience across these companies and across the world. That's a big advantage.*

Rather than finding a resistance to change and the consolidation, which is often the case when mergers and acquisitions take place, there appeared to be widespread acceptance. This opened the door to using the Siebe name to establish a single identity, and there were practical reasons for doing so. In Brazil, for example, Robertshaw Controls enjoyed a favorable reputation, but it had been known primarily as a maker of mechanical devices and, at that time, electronic controls were rapidly taking over. A new name would give the company a fresh start and associate the operation with the latest technology available.

In England, one manager said, "We want to get the job done. Get lean. We're trying to do things that haven't been done before in the new product area."

I asked him, "What about a name change for your group?"

"Change it. Siebe makes us number one in the world."

While the idea of changing the name did not resonate well with every single employee, especially those within companies in countries where pride in separate heritages ran deep, the Siebe Appliance Controls name was neutral at worst, and therefore a realistic option. It carried no baggage. Adopting it would wipe the slate clean across the board, and in the aggregate it would broaden global appeal.

As one manager said, "Most customers don't know the Siebe name or company well, if at all. It is neither positive

nor negative. This may not be true, however, with large international customers. Top management is probably aware and has a positive impression of the company."

Customer Interviews

The input from discussions with people throughout the company and throughout the world was distilled into ten value statements. Each was heartfelt and true; each represented an important strength.

They were:

Systems Innovation: Our platform systems approach (several different controls in one snap-in panel designed to govern all functions) speeds customer installation and lowers overall cost.

Global Source: As the only international company in appliance controls, Siebe is a single-source supplier that can maintain a strategic balance between manufacturing capacities in different countries.

Single Contact: A single service representative is a conduit for all the worldwide engineering abilities of this international engineering company.

Standardization: We know the standards, regulations and configurations for appliance controls everywhere in the world and can help customers standardize and cut costs.

Breadth: Customers will get both up-to-the moment answers and the lowest costs because Siebe Appliance Controls can produce and sell a greater breadth and depth of components and systems.

Stability: Siebe's financial strength helps customers enter markets everywhere by assuring them a dependable source of supply.

Reliability: Our time-tested manufacturing and technological capabilities mean we produce reliable components and systems that will be delivered on time.

Responsiveness: Because appliance controls are our only business, customers can count on Siebe Appliance Controls to solve problems and get the job done.

Technological Excellence: Siebe Appliance Controls is part of a powerful international engineering group whose sole business it is to deliver technological excellence for customers everywhere in the world.

Engineering Focus: Siebe Appliance Controls is part of Siebe plc, one of the largest diversified engineering groups in the world. This helps shorten product development time while reducing cost.

The statements above provided customers with information we believed they would find intriguing.

However, **reliability** (product excellence combined with on-time delivery) emerged clearly as the most desired attribute.

Customers wanted suppliers they could rely on for quality and just-in-time (JIT) delivery, particularly because lean manufacturing was gaining steam across the globe and JIT delivery is essential to success when it comes to lean production.

They also wanted honest information; a willingness to solve problems; kept promises; and components that performed with the lowest possible failed parts per million. It all added up to the top ranking of "reliability."

This study rested upon personal interviews rather than statistical data, but the point was soon reached that researchers call "Theoretical Saturation." That's when the answers all begin to sound the same. The respondents had been sent the value statements ahead of time. They had read them and formed opinions before our conversations began.

Typical Comments:

We require a quality goal of 50 PPM in our production testing and 100 PPM in field defects. A supplier has to be willing to support that. Some aren't willing to invest in improving manufacturing techniques. They need to go to the latest manufacturing technology.

All things being equal, we will go with the supplier with the better track record on reliability.

Reliability is particularly important when you are in a just-in-time position, as we are.

We need to be reliable ourselves and that must extend to our part suppliers. Quality is the major issue.

The most important thing Siebe can do is provide reliable products, it gets us favorable brand awareness. Siebe must have a built-in process to prevent defects.

Reliability is the most important [criteria] of all. All these other things (we've talked about) lead up to this. It's absolutely number one in our book.

When all the questions have been considered, reliability would be the most important consideration for us at this time. Being proactive along with ideas and global technology is also very important.

We are in the commercial cooking game, and reliability is absolutely number one with us. I've studied this list, and there is no question.

When I see the word reliability, to me it also means quality. The quality has got to be there. It's essential.

Lean Enterprise

In this case, the word "reliability" defined the atti-

tude and the result that had to be achieved: Reliability rooted in excellence.

While performance in several of the operating units was uneven, the desire for excellence was embedded in the Siebe's corporate culture. Excellence in all endeavors was present in the form of leadership and resources. To become the appliance controls supplier of choice worldwide, excellence would have to be delivered in all things from inventive technology to operations, from proactive sales and service to quality products and sure-fire delivery.

To accomplish this, the CEO began systematically to convert all the appliance control manufacturing and business operations worldwide to a system of lean manufacturing. This system defines value from the customer's point-of-view and creates a value flow starting with raw materials and suppliers. These sources move downstream through manufacturing and shipment in a way that brings everything together to reach the customer precisely at the speed of consumption. The methodology causes flaws, if any, to be identified at an early stage, rather than after something has been manufactured and placed into inventory. The lean manufacturing concept was extended to the entire organization, including how the company was run, and to the value chain, thus creating what the Siebe Appliance Controls' CEO called, a "Lean Enterprise."

I must say that I got caught up in the enthusiasm created by what was going on with this client, and I told the

CEO I thought he ought to write a book about it. Not only might the book become a bestseller, it could help get the word out about the lean transformation at Siebe Appliance Controls. He said he thought it was a good idea, but he simply did not have time. So I volunteered to ghostwrite it for him, and we worked out a deal.

Things transpired just has we hoped they would, and the book became an international bestseller. Called *Lean Transformation: How to Change Your Business into a Lean Enterprise,* it was translated into German, Italian, Spanish, Russian, Korean, and Chinese, and today it is required reading for Lean Certification by the Society of Manufacturing Engineers (SME).

Through lean production, the objectives of reliable products and delivery were achieved for a company that became the clear leader in appliance control manufacturing throughout the world. Lean Production gave solid meaning to the core identity of the Siebe Appliance Control brand.

Siebe Appliance Controls Summary

Let's fill in the Brand Power Statement for Siebe Appliance Controls:

In the white goods and appliance industry, Siebe Appliance Controls is the quality supplier of OEM components that appliance manufacturers can rest assured will arrive on time and perform as intended.

LEAN TRANSFORMATION
How to Change Your Business into a Lean Enterprise

By Bruce A. Henderson and Jorge L. Larco
Foreword by James P. Womack

This international bestseller has been translated into
Chinese, German, Italian, Russian, Korean, and Spanish

Core Identity: Excellence (Pursuit of perfection/always reliable)

Corporate Mission: To become the dominant appliance controls supplier of choice worldwide.

Marketing Strategy: Achieve global customer satisfaction and confidence by partnering with them to design, produce, and deliver innovative new products and systems.

Corporate Position: Siebe pursues excellence in all aspects of its operation resulting in leading-edge products and just-in-time delivery.

Benefits and Attributes: Innovative new products, global sourcing, financially strong, broad-based engineering, a technological leader, proactive service.

Emotional Pay-Off: Confidence

At the top of the next page of this book is one of a half dozen or so ads that my staff and I created for the newly constituted Siebe brand. It ran in trade journals read by executives in the appliance manufacturing industry.

This two-page ad headlined, "Everyone's chasing six sigma quality. Lean production's helping us catch it," ran in *Appliance* magazine and

Stihl Chain Saws

Anyone who knows anything about chainsaws will tell you that nothing approaches the reputation of a Stihl. Some time ago, the same could not be said for the trimmers, blowers, and other power tools labeled with the Stihl brand name. These companion products were good—they just weren't invincible.

The Quality Standard

As a result of a brand study like the one you just read about, Stihl devised a clear marketing strategy statement that would keep everyone at Stihl focused on what the company was all about. It embodied both what customers wanted and what the company was able to do:

To design, manufacture and distribute outdoor power equipment that is the best value for the use sought.

As a result, Stihl management took steps and served notice that all future decisions would protect the brand's core identity as articulated above. Stihl USA managers in particular were determined that the various products they made would always offer the best value that a customer would be able to find in a particular category. Prior to adopting this newly defined marketing strategy, product and pricing decisions had been based for the most part on whatever the leaders at Stihl headquarters in Germany specified and added to the line. Often this was done without consideration for the brand's sustainable competitive advantage—the mystique created by the chain saw line, i.e. "the best value for the money spent."

With a clear and distinctive marketing strategy now in place, managers at Stihl USA were able to evaluate product, pricing, and promotions against what the company stood for—Stihl's core identity and claim to fame.

This worked. Ask any lawn and garden and landscaping professional what the number one brand of blower, hedge trimmer, or weed-eater is. Nine out of ten—perhaps even more—will tell you, "Stihl."

Invensys Software Systems

Sometimes an outside, unbiased study by a branding professional (like me) can turn what could have been a disaster into a success. In this case, it was for a multinational, multibillion-dollar company that had just acquired and merged six software businesses into a new entity with the intention of selling software systems and fixes to mass manufacturers. These manufacturers all had factory automation. They all had e-commerce, supply-chain and customer relationship management (CRM) software. The problem many had that my client could mitigate was that many of these systems were purchased at different times, at different levels of the organization, and most had been meant to achieve totally different objectives. Most of them worked at different speeds— the e-commerce software sucking in orders as fast as customers could key them into a website, and the automation software working at the speed of the slowest machine on the factory floor. To make matters worse, many of the individual software systems came from different IT companies, had different architectures, and spoke different languages.

My new client asked me to develop a marketing communications and branding strategy based on how an older, slower manufacturing automation system can bottleneck fast-moving e-commerce because it was something this newly constituted entity could fix. Applying

my process of interviewing leadership and staff throughout the organization, I came up with almost a dozen rough benefit statements. Prior to setting up interviews with customers of the business, I shared with the CEO and his top managers.

Seeing the potential benefits crystallized got my client's attention—and showed him and his colleagues that they appeared to be headed in the wrong direction. It occurred to them that the speed difference was only the tip of the iceberg. Below the surface—the big part of iceberg—was the basic incompatibility of different systems, with different functions, bought at different times by different executives to do different things at different speeds, and with no ability for many of them to talk to one another.

After some head scratching and discussion, they realized they could sell patches that would give disparate software systems the ability to communicate, and to work and to play together well. These patches would cost customers far less than entirely new systems, and putting them in place would entail little, if any, factory downtime.

But that wasn't the best part from my client's point of view. The newly realized approach would make the business more money than dealing with only automation and e-commerce. So they shifted strategy on the spot. Simply put, the new direction was to call attention to the host of potential problems that could be caused by disconnects between a manufacturer's different software

systems—disconnects my client could fix.

The ad campaign that came about as a result is shown below and at the top of the next page. It ran in *Industry Week, CIO, Chief Executive, Managing Automation,* and *Darwin* magazines. All the ads in this campaign achieved record high readership scores. Publishers of two of the magazines liked the ads so much they upgraded them to

premium inside-cover position at no extra charge.

That a record number of readers apparently liked what they saw paid off in a big way in business for my client. During the course of the campaign, the company went from a $400 million loss to overall profitability.

I'm not saying that my branding work and the ads my colleagues and I developed as a result were fully responsible for the turnaround. But the effort did get a large number of prospective customers thinking and talking about my client and what the business could do, and I have to believe that helped.

Riggs Bank

You may not recall, but until June 1, 1997, banks were not allowed to expand by putting branch offices across state lines. That's when the law changed, and when it did, the leadership of Riggs Bank, which served Washington, D.C., decided they needed to open branches in the suburbs

in order to grow and to stay competitive. As you likely know, D.C.'s suburbs are either in Virginia or in Maryland, depending on which side of the Potomac they are on.

As expansion plans were being drawn up, I was called upon to add "Brand Power" to the equation.

My research indicated Riggs was well established and well regarded in metro Washington. It had been around a long time and was regarded as safe and solid. It was also thought of as being stuffy and aloof, particularly by newcomers to the market and by those living in the suburbs. This finding set off alarm bells about the expansion plans.

Digging into the bank's history, I found that Riggs had provided financing for some very special projects, including the renovation of Mount Vernon (George Washington's home), construction of the Capitol Building Dome, the Alaska Purchase, the National Zoo, the Iwo Jima War Memorial sculpted by Felix de Weldon, and the wire strung by backers of Samuel Morris from Washington to Baltimore in order to test the first telegraph.

In anticipation of moving into the suburbs, it was clear to me and then to management that the bank's image needed to be softened in order to make Riggs more approachable and likeable. The strategy I recommended to accomplish this was to evoke emotion—evoking emotion, if you haven't picked up on this already, is extremely important to creating "Brand Power;" it's an

essential tactic that will be discussed in an upcoming chapter. In this case, nostalgia was the emotion we wanted to conjure up.

Below is copy from one of the television spots. Imagine hearing it read by a friendly, melodious voice accompanied by soft music, with images appearing of the Capitol Dome under construction, Mount Vernon undergoing renovation, and so forth:

We've already helped put a roof on your house, and proudly lent a hand in the restoration of your father's home, we've helped you acquire land on which to build, or just enjoy, so when it's time to look for a new home, or finance an education, or simply open a checking account, give us a call. After all, we've been your bank for over a hundred and fifty years. Riggs, bankers to the most important money in the world . . . yours.

As Riggs began opening branches in the suburbs, a series of TV spots rolled out that continued the nostalgia theme, calling attention to projects Riggs had been involved with in the Virginia and Maryland suburbs. Here's copy from one of those spots. Imagine nineteenth century images of a telegraph wire being strung and footage of Marines raising the Stars and Stripes on Iwo Jima:

When Samuel Morse dreamed of stretching a wire from Washington all the way to Baltimore, Riggs made the loan that made it happen. When Felix de Weldon longed to sculpt an homage to America, again Riggs lent a hand. So when Crystal Smith had a vision, she too turned to Riggs. And now, atop a ridge in Virginia, on the same foundation where an eighteenth century farmhouse once stood, stands a brand new eighteenth century farmhouse.

The result? Making Riggs the hero of its story worked. The campaign was a huge success. Riggs met all of its objectives in terms of attracting new customers both in the District of Columbia and in the suburbs.

A Major Medical Center

Charlotte Memorial Hospital, a medical center and teaching facility, was in the process of upgrading, updating, and refurbishing its physical plant. A new maternity bed tower was under construction and a new parking deck had just been completed when I was called in to work "Brand Power" magic.

My initial research indicated the changes and improvements enjoyed fairly high recognition within the medical community, but almost no awareness existed among the general public. It soon became clear to me that Charlotte Memorial suffered from the kind of image endemic to large, public, urban teaching hospitals. It was viewed as an inner city, primarily indigent-care facility for critical care and trauma patients—so much so

that potential patients socioeconomically able to afford health insurance routinely selected its competitors, such as Presbyterian Hospital and St. Mary's.

Following completion of the internal phase of the brand research, I conducted a series of focus groups with consumers that fit the socioeconomic and demographic profile of the target audience. As a result, it became obvious to me something drastic had to be done to make it possible for the refurbished and upgraded facility to reach its ambitious occupancy and revenue goals.

Particularly disturbing were the prospects for the new maternity bed tower. Given a choice, middle and upper-middle income families with employer-supplied health insurance said almost unanimously that they were highly unlikely to choose Charlotte Memorial. They would only select the facility if there were indications there might be complications that would require proximity to a neonatal intensive care unit.

I decided Charlotte Memorial had to undergo a total image overhaul—nothing less was going to do the trick. To make a long story short, as step one I recommended changing the name of Charlotte Memorial to "Carolinas Medical Center." As you may know, Charlotte is located in southern North Carolina—some of its suburbs are in South Carolina—and so it made sense to use the plural, "Carolinas," in order to be inclusive of the area served.

I also recommended that the name-change be accompanied by a multi-media campaign to get the word

out about the new name and about the massive building projects underway. The goal was to alter perceptions to reflect my client's true stature and its growing presence as a major medical center and state-of-the-art teaching hospital. TV spots for the new maternity bed tower were created, for example, that pictured healthy newborn babies and happy mothers cuddling them in welcoming, comfortable, and homey surroundings. Above all, the commercials radiated that critical ingredient, perhaps the most fervent emotion of all—love.

A campaign slated to run three months was created and launched, and public relations activities were developed and implemented to support the advertising. Among other tactics, orientation programs and tours were instituted for medical personnel from around the city and the region that may or may not have had dealings with the medical center in the past. Tours were also created for expectant parents to view the new maternity facility.

The campaign was much more effective than expected. Halfway into the three-month schedule, the new maternity bed tower was full to capacity and had a waiting list. Tracking studies showed awareness of the new name and refurnished facilities was just about universal. The Center itself had become so popular that management found it necessary to refer many non-critical patients to what had formally been seen as competitive health facilities. This had become necessary in order to have room to

care for patients with critically acute problems.

As a result, the second half of the ad campaign was cancelled.

In the next chapter, I'll share some insight about how to create advertising that moves potential customers to action.

Chapter Four
How to Breathe Life into a Brand

Let's say you hired me to create "Brand Power" for what you have to sell, that together we have identified your "One Thing," and that we have filled out that Brand Power Statement we talked about in Chapter One. Now what? How do we bring it to life so that your target audience will choose your brand instead of a competitor's?

A bond with potential customers needs to be created, and I've found two ways that consistently produce results. The first is to start by doing some serious digging, and by that I mean you need to interview management, staff, people in sales, satisfied customers, and in doing so learn everything you can about the brand. Remember the case history in the last chapter about Riggs bank? You want to know the company or brand's story from its inception. Just about every brand that's been around for a while has a story to tell, whether it's a company, a product, or a service. In a minute, I'll explain how to tell that story in a way that will connect with prospective customers and establish the desired bond. But first, suppose it's a new product—a fledgling brand?

In that case, I recommend an approach that's been around a long time, although fewer and fewer in the com-

munications business these days seem to know about it. The approach comes from Aristotle, who said that a speaker who is attempting to move people to thought or action must concern himself with pathos—no need to look up that word. He was talking about emotions. Aristotle believed, and I've found it to be true, that if the speaker touches only their minds, he is probably not going to move them to action. Aristotle also believed, and I agree, that true motivations lie deep in the realm of passions. Let's be honest. Most of us use or manipulate facts to justify what our gut feelings [emotions] tell us we want. That's why diehards of one political party are never swayed by an argument from the opposite side of the aisle. Each side picks "facts" selectively to make their case.

The bottom line is this: to create a positive brand image, emotion needs to be the payoff of the communications that are created for it.

Imagine you're in a grocery store, in the produce department, and the assignment from your spouse or significant other is to bring home some apples. Which ones are you going to choose?

The ones that look the best, right? Of course, but why do you suppose?

Think of an apple's glistening red exterior as an emotion. It's what people feel, see and react to when they choose one particular apple from the many on display. It doesn't occur to them on a conscious level, but the fruit under the skin—not the skin itself—is the real reason to

buy and eat the apple. The meat of the apple represents a product's attributes—the logical rather than the emotional reasons to buy—in other words, its features and benefits. But just as a Mercedes Benz will look more appealing to many prospective car buyers than a Chevrolet, particularly if priced competitively, the shiniest red apple is the one most likely to be selected.
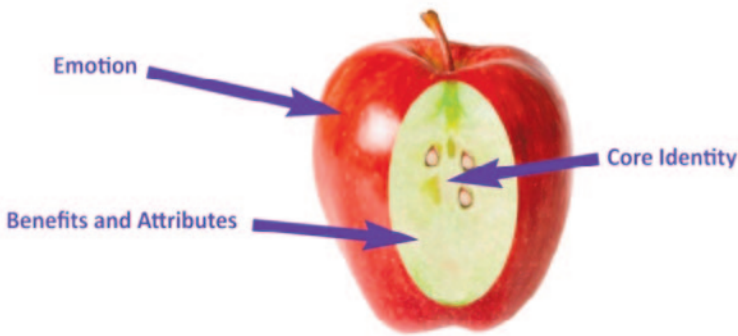
Emotion and identity are linked in a way that gives meaning, aura, mystique and value. For example, the core identity of the Commonwealth of Virginia as a travel destination is its wide variety of travel attractions, including mountains, beaches, history, and theme parks. So, "variety" might be the appropriate word to use in describing Virginia's core identity—its "One Thing"—with respect to travel. A long list of things to do and multiple attractions gives people a logical reason to vacation in Virginia. If you were given the assignment to create a marketing campaign, you might wonder, "What emotion can be attached to that?"

Years ago, a team headed by David Martin, my brother and co-founder of The Martin Agency, came up with "Love," which is perhaps the strongest human emotion there is—next to fear, perhaps. The team reasoned that Virginia is for mountain lovers, Virginia is for beach lovers, Virginia is for history lovers, and Virginia is for theme park lovers. As they kicked that around, one member of David's team had the bright idea to drop the adjectives. The rest of the team agreed, and that's how "Virginia is for Lovers" came to be.

The rest is history. Before the campaign began running, Virginia enjoyed a great deal of repeat travel business, but this loyal cohort was growing old. Only 20% of the State's visitors fell into the much sought after young family market. In three short years following the campaign launch, the figure had grown to 35%, an increase of 75%.

Emotion (love), logic (lots to do), and core identity (variety) were inextricably linked. Here's how that Brand Power Statement from Chapter One might have looked for Virginia:

> *In the domestic travel market, the Commonwealth of Virginia is the vacation travel destination with so many different things to do that you're certain to find whatever you love—so it's no wonder, "Virginia is for Lovers."*

Emotions is the underlying secret behind great and highly effective communications.

Story—The Other Way to Create a Bond

As touched upon above, another way I have found to create a bond with customers is to tell the brand or the company's story. You see, every person, every company, every brand that's been around for a while typically has a story, and that story can be the goose that lays golden eggs.

Let me explain.

Having written five novels, two of which won national awards, I can say with some authority that aside from the particulars of place and time—in other words, when the temporal aspects or veneer of a story are removed—the vast majority of successful tales boil down to the same basic plot. It's what I think of as "the essence of the universal story."

Consider, for example, the story of Jack and beanstalk, or Dorothy and the Wizard of Oz. A sympa-

thetic character—the hero—ventures from his or her everyday, "ordinary" world into a place or region unlike any he or she has ever known. Forces are encountered there that attempt to destroy the hero, but the hero perseveres. He or she pushes forward in what may seem a lost cause. Yet unseen hands—call it Grace or Providence if you will—come to his or her aid, and after a great struggle, and a dark moment when all seems lost, a decisive victory is won. The hero then returns home in possession of the elixir. Usually this takes the form of knowledge or newly acquired understanding that translates into power or opportunity the hero can share with the people of his community. For Dorothy it was new found realization that, "There's no place like home." In classic fairy tales, the Cinderella character gets the prince, or the once ordinary young man wins the daughter of the king, and the two of them eventually become king and queen of the land and live happily ever after.

This story, dubbed the "hero's adventure" by Joseph Campbell [1904-1987], creates an emotional bond between the reader or viewer and the protagonist (your brand) because it is the story of each one of us. When you think about it, life is a series of "hero's adventures," one after the other. We all face challenges that must be dealt with and overcome—challenges that take us out of our comfort zones. Remember when you left home to go to school on the first day, or away to college, or to your first job? You were embarking on a hero's adventure that

took you outside your ordinary world and into the unknown. Eventually, you returned home, and when you did, having faced and dealt with the challenges, you were likely wiser and on a higher plane of understanding than when you left.

What's your brand's story and the emotional payoff it can bring? If you'd like me to help you put your finger on it, please get in touch.

But maybe that won't be necessary. In the next chapter, I'll disclose what I consider to be the hierarchy of emotional appeals.

Chapter Five
The Hierarchy of Emotional Appeals

Veteran ad agency friends of mine consider the Golden Age of Advertising to have begun in the early 1960s and to have continued through the first half of the 1990s. I grew up during much of the first part of that era and experienced it at the dinner table—my father, mother, and big brother were all in the business. Moreover, I feel privileged to have experienced the tail end of it firsthand. As a result, I can say from experience that it was a time of big ideas, three-martini lunches, and larger than life personalities. One such was Bill Bernbach [1911-1982] of Doyle Dane Bernbach, the ad agency that created iconic Volkswagen Beetle ads that made the brand a cult sensation, and the "We try harder" ad series that helped Avis give number-one Hertz a run for its money.

A member of the copywriter Hall-of-Fame, here is what Mr. Bernbach had to say about creating advertising that moves and motives:

Insight into human nature is the key to the communicator's skill. He learns that most readers come away from their reading not with a clear, precise, detailed registration of its contents on their minds, but rather with a vague, misty idea, formed as much by the pace, the proportions, the music of the writings as by the literal words themselves. He learns that the reader reads with his ego, his emotions, with his prejudices, his urges and his aspirations. And that he plots with his brains to rationalize the facts until they become the tools of his desires.

These eloquent words were recorded at the annual meeting of the American Association of Advertising Agencies in May 1980. It was the last speech Bernbach made to his fellow ad agency leaders before he died two years later.

In that same speech, he also said:

Basic instincts dominate. That great salesman, Aristotle, stated it simply. He said that a speaker who is attempting to move people to thought or action must concern himself with pathos, e.g., their emotions. If he touches only their minds, he is unlikely to move them to action or

to a change of mind, the motivations of which lie deep in the realm of the passions. You are nowhere until you breathe life into facts with awareness of the unchanging fundamentals of human nature, our unchanging instincts and motivations, and our unchanging compulsive drives. Until you wrap all these facts in a talented expression to which people respond, until you cloak those facts in the artistry that makes people feel, you are not going to communicate.

Now you know where I learned that Aristotle recommended playing on someone's emotions if you want to move that person to action. I believe it's safe to say that human nature, instincts, and motivations exist at the unconscious level of the mind. A psychologist or a psychiatrist will likely tell you that the unconscious is the domain of wishes seeking fulfillment—an area of the mind that Sigmund Freud [1856-1939] said was where "primary process thinking" takes place. As such, the unconscious not only contains instinctual desires and drives, it also disregards logical connections, knows no negatives, permits contradictions, and has no conception of time. It presents all the characteristics of very young children who—as anyone who has had one knows—are dedicated fully to instant gratification and desire-fulfillment. I suspect what's housed in a person's unconscious is why the majority of people—the majority I have come in contact with—will never change their minds no matter how many

bone-dry facts and figures are set before them.

Most writers of marketing communications I know do what they do by observing how others react and by tapping into their own instincts. Nevertheless, to consistently create communications that motivate, it helps to keep in mind that among the basic human emotions are fear, pride, (brotherly or familial) love, desire, compassion, hunger, lust, and anger. When it comes to motivating an individual to take action, putting one or more of those emotions to work can be extremely powerful.

Strength Of Motives

When I conduct a brand study, as you know already, a major goal is to put a finger on a core identity for the brand in question that will trigger an emotional response—one typically rooted in one of the emotions listed above. If we can determine how and what people feel when using a brand—for example, they might feel safe, pride, happy, refreshed, confident, or satisfied—it is usually possible to work backward from that sensation in order to determine the brand's true claim to fame, i.e., what I've been calling its "core identity" or "One Thing."

It may be helpful here to list some of the key feelings that engulf humans so that you can identify one or more with respect to your brand. Years ago, when I went into business with my brother, David, he shared *Psychology In Advertising,* a book by Albert Theodore Poffenberger [1885-1977], the copyright of which is now in the public

domain. (I just checked and it was reissued in 2012 and can be purchased on Amazon. It is 654 pages in length, and the hardcover retails for $68.95.)

From his research, Poffenberger compiled a checklist in rank order of the strengths of various motives and appeals. As you are about to see, Poffenberger's rankings ranged from 1 to 10 with Appetite (9.2) at the top and teasing (2.6) at the bottom. Here they are:

Appetite-Hunger 9.2
Love of Offspring 9.1
Health 9.0
Sexual Attraction 9.0
Parental affection 8.9
Ambition/Pride 8.6
Pleasure 8.6
Bodily comfort 8.6
Possession/Ownership 8.4
Approval by others 8.0
Gregariousness 7.9
Taste 7.8
Appearance 7.8
Safety 7.8
Cleanliness 7.7
Rest/Sleep 7.7
Home comfort 7.5
Economy 7.5
Curiosity 7.5
Efficiency 7.3
Competition 7.3
Cooperation 7.1

Respect for Deity 7.1
Sympathy for others 7.0
Protection of others 7.0
Domesticity 7.0
Social distinction 6.9
Devotion to others 6.8
Hospitality 6.6
Warmth 6.5
Imitation 6.5
Courtesy 6.5
Play-Sport 6.5
Managing others 6.4
Coolness 6.2
Fear/Caution 6.2
Physical Activity 6.0
Manipulation 6.0
Construction 6.0
Style 5.8
Humor 5.8
Amusement 5.8
Shyness 4.2
Teasing 2.6

Who knows whether a study done today would result in the same rank order, but I believe it is safe to say that human nature probably hasn't changed all that much from the time when Poffenberger wrote his book. A word of caution is, however, appropriate. My experience indicates that different appeals from the list above can be combined to produce communications that truly motivate. For example, because "Humor" is listed at 5.6, and "Teasing" is last on the list at 2.6, one would think that a light-hearted, humorous approach would hardly motivate at. Yet the GEICO Gecko ads created by my old firm, The Martin Agency, have resulted in an enormous increase in market share for the GEICO insurance brand. This tells me that humor or whimsy that draws attention and entertains, combined a stronger emotional appeal such as "Economy"—which has a 7.5 ranking—can work wonders. As you recall, the Gecko's message is, "Fifteen minutes can save you fifteen percent or more on car insurance."
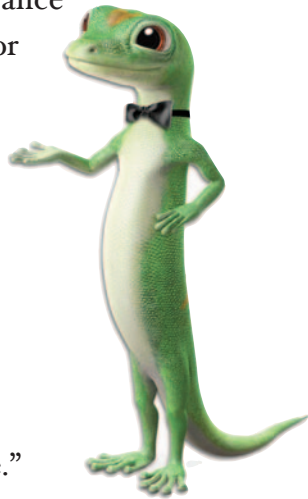
Here's something else to consider: Sports ranks 6.5 in Poffenberger's hierarchy of appeals. Again I have to wonder whether the appeal of super-heroes such as Tom Brady or Tiger Woods, coupled with the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat, has changed

that. Today sporting events can easily be experienced in everyone's living room or den. But back when Poffenberger conducted his study, the only way to become engaged in or enthralled by sports was either in-person, or via radio.

The Top Dozen Appeals

Nevertheless, let's boil down Poffenberger's list into the top twelve:

1. Appetite
2. Family affection / love
3. Protection (Safety)
4. Sympathy (Compassion)
5. Health
6. Economy (Save money)
7. Recommendation (Friends, Internet reviews)
8. Activity (Sports & fitness)
9. Conformity (Fashion, what's in style or accepted)
10. Superiority (pride/ambition)
11. Group spirit (Marines, home team, alma mater, etc.)
12. Beauty and attractiveness

Practical Applications

Time and again the people I've worked with and I have seen that if it's possible to use a top-ranked emotional appeal as the core identity for a brand, it will pay dividends. Drawing on the appeal indicated by one of the

words above and making that your brand's unique claim to fame, it might be possible to create an unsurpassed position in your brand's category. That's certainly the case with one brand I did some work for recently, Lenco's BearCat$^®$ brand of armored vehicle. "Protection" or "Safety" is its claim to fame, which is number three on the above list.

Developed and introduced in the early twenty-first century, the Lenco BearCat has changed the way law enforcement SWAT teams are able to operate. The BearCat is now not only far and away the number one brand in terms of market share, it is also the standard by which others in the category are judged. No wonder. Before the BearCat arrived on the scene, SWAT teams wore body armor, carried shields, and hid behind trees,

barricades, or "thin-skinned" cars and trucks when confronting a violent or a deadly shooter situation. It should go without saying that in such instances, they were exposed to mortal danger. Now they can face them with confidence because they can remain safely inside a BearCat—a vehicle that has been specifically engineered for use in such circumstances.

Talk the Talk and Walk the Walk

Let me close this chapter by saying something that's particularly important to know and remember. Whatever "One Thing" you decide upon—and the emotion that amplifies it—you need to make sure you do what's necessary for that to become the goal that pervades your company's culture, processes, and systems—as "Safety" does at Lenco. This may require significant effort on your part, and on the part of others, but take special note of the following words: *the effort will be worth it*.

Since what you select will relate to the human instincts and emotions churning around in the subconscious minds of your target audience, you cannot help but have produced a winner—provided your company's actions and practices result in a fulfilled promise that actually leads to that emotion.

In the next chapter, I'll talk about color and the impact it can have on what you would like to sell.

Chapter Six
Color and Your Brand's Image

According to experts I've spoken with who ought to know, color provides 80 percent of the information we receive about our world. As marketers, the people I typically work with and others color the world with a spectrum that includes red, orange, green, blue, indigo, and violet, and various tints and shades of those colors in between. To this they often add achromatic black, white, and gray.

A little more than 20 years ago, a front-page article in *The Wall Street Journal* reported that on the eve of the millennium, product designers were mostly in the mood for blue. The author of that article also noted that blue connotes serenity, which made it appealing to harried consumers.

Forbes magazine further supported this finding by reporting that the 1,500 designers who made up Alexandria, Virginia-based Color Marketing Group were predicting that predominant shade just before the transition from the twentieth to the twenty-first century was blue. That's a sharp contrast to the upbeat yellows and greens that reigned in prior years. That did not, however, portend the mood of gloom. Rather, it set a tone of soothing tranquility and rebirth, so they said. To quote *The Wall Street Journal* further, Color Marketing Group,

Alexandria, said that millennial hues would include "Blue Planet" and "Grape Expectations."

The other day I wandered into my youngest son's bedroom—I cannot recall why, he's away at college and about to graduate—and I recoiled from the blazing yellow that came at me from every wall. Yellow is a real attention-getter, but it can also induce stress.

Some years ago, *Forbes* magazine advised:

Color has become so integral to marketing that little is left to whimsy anymore. Twice a year, something called the Color Marketing Group gets together. The group's objective is clear: Make sure American products don't clash. The group, which includes color experts from the major automakers, paint and textile firms, toy-makers, and furniture producers coordinates the color schemes for the next year's products.

Let me ask you this: Can you guess what colors men like best?

A Ford Motor Company executive once explained that men like hot, yellow-based red. That was the most popular nonwhite color for the Mustang GT. On the other side of the sexual divide, the company's spokesperson said that women like their reds with more blue in them. So Ford offers blue-based reds aimed at female buyers.

Despite my personal antipathy to four bright walls of yellow, there is a benefit to having them around.

Apparently, many studies have shown that mentally deficient people learn much faster in a yellow room. I find that interesting. My youngest son is not mentally deficient in any way—he's a dean's list student—so maybe it also works on those with above average IQs.

The effect of color on the psyche is well documented, and so it is amazing to see how often its power is ignored—or overlooked—in planning company color schemes, logos, and advertising materials. The explanations below are meant to take out the guesswork for you the next time you're involved with such a task.

Red is active, physical, high energy, exciting. No wonder a higher percentage of red cars seem to get traffic tickets than those of any other color. It wouldn't do to spread red paint around in a factory making computer chips where precision is called for. But red would be okay as an accent wall in a reducing salon—since it speeds up the metabolism and burns up calories. It also means "Stop!" Perhaps that's why Coke machines are red—so people will stop and buy a drink.

Orange is an active color, maybe even hyperactive. Orange projects optimism, self-confidence, enthusiasm, and courage. Orange also is self-disciplined, inventive, self-assured. It makes a room seem smaller and less expensive. It's great at Halloween and not bad at Thanksgiving. In combination with blue it is

powerful/strong (good for a detergent box). Orange is friendly, jovial, and sociable. Good for Hardees or McDonald's, but not the best choice for the lobby of your neighborhood bank.

Yellow is an expression of individuality, which is something Claude Monet did well, and often, not only in his paintings, but in his personal surroundings. This included the selection of the wallpaper, Japanese prints, and the everyday china he used at his big pink house in Giverny, France. Vincent Van Gogh also slathered on plenty of yellow. Remember those bright bold thick strokes in painting after compulsive painting? Van Gogh was an interesting character, all right. I wonder what he did with his severed ear.

Yellow is happy, intellectual, outgoing, inventive, logical, organized, and innovative. Beware! Yellow can make a room seem smaller. On the plus side again, it will help one discover the heart, and recognize personal power. It is good for kitchens, hallways, fire engines, emergency vehicles, and people who want cars that are less likely to be hit by others. Why? Yellow attracts attention. It's good for highway signs, but should be used sparingly at home. Too much can be glaring, overbearing and annoy people.

Green is loving, balanced, harmonious, adaptable, flexible, and stable. It's also affectionate, nurturing, romantic, compassionate, generous, openhearted, and

prosperous. Green won't do in a divorce lawyer's office or a bank: It stands for unconditional love and prompts one to give freely of possessions and oneself. Good around food, it is recommended for kitchens and restaurants. With green, people feel tended to and secure, making it ideal for hospitals and hotels. Have you ever noticed how it draws you in to evoke tranquil, quiet, consoling, comfortable feelings? It is sometimes called the color of healing representing growth and regeneration. Remember when most walls in hospitals were pea green?

Blue inspires. It is the creative color that produces feelings such as faithful, devoted, understanding, tranquil, patient, accepting sincere, diplomatic, responsible. It's ideal for lawyer's office and bank lobbies. Blue rooms appear larger, but don't use it around food, unless you are dieting.

Indigo stimulates humans to be intuitive, wise, joyful, inspired, logical, discriminating, affectionate, and abstract. Indigo rooms seem larger. It's a good color for a bedroom, and for places of meditation such as churches. Like green, it calms, comforts—makes one feel secure and serene. Again, use it in moderation. Too much can be depressing.

Violet is imaginative, high-minded—associated with art, poetry, music. There is a sense of tenderness about

violet that brings about the emotions of surrender and wonder. It is also regal, exclusive, and dignified. If your business deals with the finer things, violet will be right at home. Besides, it makes rooms seem larger, and the people in them will appreciate such things as freedom of expression and imagination. Moreover, they will be inclined to follow intuition rather than logic.

Black is the absence of color. It is best used in body text for legibility. Black absorbs energy—it is not good for an exercise or weight room. But black does, however, project sophistication, refinement, privacy, and discretion—so use it where appropriate.

White contains all colors in a radiant sense. White is cleansing, protective, innocent, safe, and pure. It suggests a fresh start, a step toward change, sincerity fairness modesty. White walls can disturb some people who find their own less harmonious colors reflected back on them. Unemotional, it is ideal for doctors, scientists, judges, and psychiatrists. Contrary to popular belief, white cars get pulled over and ticketed the most—red cars actually come in second. That's likely because more cars are white than any other, a total of 23.9 percent; whereas only 10.9 percent of cars are red—according to a Google search that I just made.

Gray combines black and white and for this reason can create confusion. It's not recommended for use around children, elderly, or the physically or emotionally ill. It does have positive effects, however—it can make people feel secure, peaceful, protective, safe, successful—with a touch of prestige. The downside can produce dull and boring moods. People surrounded by it might feel alone, uninvolved, uncommitted, as sometimes happens on an overcast day.

So there you have it. Because color is so important, it's essential to consider its effect the next time your company needs a video, a website, a brochure, or an ad campaign produced. It also makes sense to take into account the predictable impact of color whenever you're preparing a PowerPoint or Keynote presentation. Most important, be sure to select appropriate color scheme when creating a new logo or color palette for your brand or business. Those colors will appear forevermore on signs and company stationery, and in practically every place you look inside headquarters and branch offices— from lobbies to the restrooms.

I certainly hope it isn't yellow.

Chapter Seven
How to Stay in Front

Now you know how to create and project "Brand Power." If you do it right, it will put your company out in front of the competition. Suffice it to say, you'll leave them in the dust. But once you're there, ahead of the pack, you're going to begin worrying about what you need to do to stay there.

More than 2500 years ago, the Greek philosopher Heraclitus of Ephesos said, "Change is the only constant in life." He was right, of course, but it's doubtful he would be able to comprehend how quickly change happens in the twenty-first century. It's a brutal fact that if you aren't constantly transforming and evolving your business and your marketing effort to improve what you do, how you do it, and what you have to offer, it will not be long before you are the one left in the dust. Consider what has become over the past quarter century of once high-flying brands such as Atrari, MySpace, Blockbuster, Polaroid, Circuit City, and Blackberry. They, along with many less-known brands, have gone out of business. The point is that every organization or brand is in danger of failing and going belly up if it does not evolve at the same pace as, or preferably faster than, the culture, technology, and the market it serves.

As the words of Heraclitus of Ephesos quoted above indicate, change has always been the norm. What's different today is how fast it happens. Perhaps never before in the history of humankind has so much change taken place so quickly. For example, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793, but it wasn't until the 1830s that it started to radically increase productivity and reduce the need for human labor in cotton fields throughout the Old South.

If introduced nowadays, something like the cotton gin likely would be in widespread use within five years. To make this point, consider a widely viewed YouTube video of a mid-1990s Today Show episode. In it, Bryant Gumbel and Katie Couric wonder out loud about a new-fangled thing called the Internet. Yet five years later, a website on that new-fangled thing was as essential to a company as business cards and a letterhead once were.

Today, prospective buyers consume information only when and how they want it, and perhaps more often than not, they do so without the involvement of a sales person. It used to be that the selling funnel was simple. You made people aware and created interest with your advertising, they decided they wanted what you had to sell, and they went to a store and bought it. Not so any more.

Prospective customers today want information, but they do not want—perhaps may even resent—being sold to. They know where they can get all the information they want, and it's on the Internet.

OLD FUNNEL — AWARENESS, INTEREST, DESIRE, ACTION

NEW FUNNEL — AWARENESS, INTEREST, INTERNET SEARCH, DESIRE, ACTION
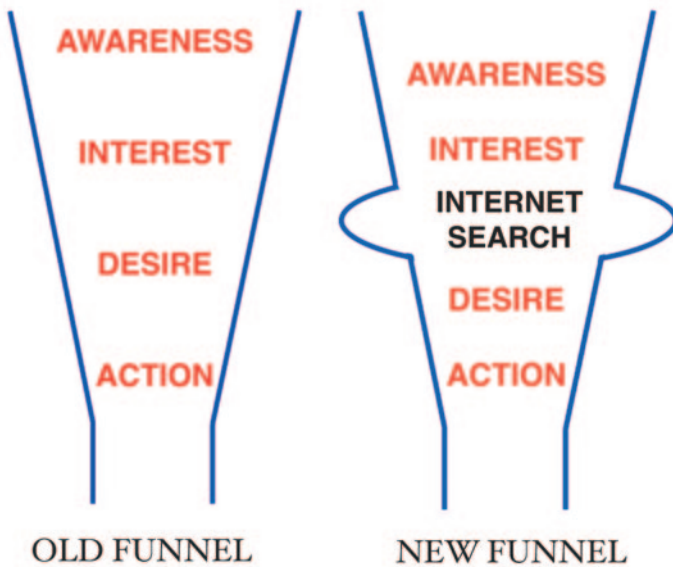
As a result, websites and inbound marketing content such as social media, podcasts, PPC ads, OTT video advertising, and blogging are now more important fac-

tors in the buy-sell cycle than many business people could possibly have imagined not so long ago. Moreover, just because a topnotch website is now essential, and Internet searches are a fact of life, does not mean a marketer can sit back, relax, and do things the way they were done the day before yesterday. It's possible that by today, things have changed.

Take Search Engine Optimization [SEO], for example. There was a time when key words and phrases could be buried *en mass* on a web page in what amounted to invisible text. The text was there, by the way, but it was the same color as the page's background. You and I couldn't see it, but a search engine could, and so it drew people searching those words or phrases to that page like bees to nectar.

It wasn't long, however, before Google and other search platforms caught on to that trick and changed their algorithms. After they did, if a key word or phrase wasn't located in text that made sense, it was disregarded.

In its early years, Google only made a handful of updates to its algorithms. Now, Google makes thousands of changes every year. Some are so slight that they go unnoticed, but every now and then, Google rolls out major algorithmic updates that significantly impact what works and what doesn't.

Google isn't the only outfit that makes changes that can disrupt the best-laid plans of mice and men (women, too). In early 2022, big changes took place in the ability

to target Facebook [now, "Meta"] ads. On January 19, Meta began removing a whole host of targeting options. The firm's public relations arm said it was because the options were either not widely used, they might be redundant with others or too granular, or because they related to topics people might perceive as sensitive, such as those referencing causes, organizations, or public figures that relate to health, race or ethnicity, political affiliation, religion, or sexual orientation.

Well, I can say from firsthand experience that these changes threw a monkey wrench into the works for quite a number of clients I know about. Fortunately, the marketers I work with were on top of the situation and were able to quickly adjust.

How can your organization get out in front and stay on the cutting edge? The following six-step process is one I developed and adopted years ago and have refined as time went by. It begins with discovery.

Discover

In Chapters One, Two, and Three, you learned about a proven branding process that has been refined and enhanced over many years. It's a discovery process that identifies and defines an organization or a brand's strengths and how well the product, service, or entity connects, or does not connect, with the market. When you put it to use, you'll want to employ primary and secondary research to conduct a thorough analysis and

examine stakeholder as well as customer and prospect attitudes to see where things stand vis a vis the competition. You're searching for the One Thing and the emotion to go with it that will set the brand apart. The way to do that is to test potential value propositions with existing and prospective customers in group sessions, one-on-one, or by using electronic surveys. This will enable you to rank messages and to develop strategies to explore and consider.

Develop

Based on what you learned, you'll want to develop that all-important Brand Power Statement. Once you have it down, you'll need to examine each aspect of the brand to make sure everything works together to support the Statement, including not only what the product or service offers, or could offer, but also pricing, distribution methods, and the types of promotions that are likely to be the most effective. You'll want to identify opportunities and challenges—things that are being done well and things that ought to be eliminated, reworked, or overcome. An action plan, what I sometimes call a "Roadmap," ought to be developed based on the findings of this analysis.

Align

Effort may be required to insure the organization or brand delivers on a new or a revised promise and that the desired emotion results from its fulfillment. The website

need sprucing up or new landing pages; copy changes or additions might be need to maximize SEO; modifications may be required to packaging, pricing, or procedures. New methods of delivery may be called for; orientation or employee training might be necessary.

By the way, I find that organizations thrive when their people are steeped in the brand, believe in it, and become involved in improving its appeal. The result can be that all the effort can pay dividends beyond what's obvious.

Engage

Once alignment has taken place, it's time to engage. That means rolling out communications and the engagement plan forged in the "Develop" stage. This may involve a push by the sales force, stepped up interaction with customers through social media, in-person events, promotions, and traditional media—whatever has been called for. This is where many marketers begin and end their efforts, but I have found more often than not that it's necessary to go further if you want the business to grow, prosper, and remain on the cutting edge.

Track

It's important to see what's working and what isn't. I currently have access to a proprietary analytics system that allows my clients and me to track page and visitor volume and visitor origin to their websites. But it's important not to stop there. Every aspect of the effort ought to be tracked in order to determine which elements of a website are most

productive, and what ads and messages are working best. If traditional media is tested in some markets and not in others, we measure and compare results as well as web traffic from the various test market areas. We use A-B testing and analytical tools to see which PPC ads, website headlines, sub-heads, and calls-to-action are working best, as well as which links in body copy get the most action.

Enhance

As you no doubt have already concluded, the reason to track and measure is to continually enhance and refine. New or unanticipated issues may arise as a campaign unfolds, and these can result in opportunities. The competition may respond or retaliate, new technology may become available, or Google could change its algorithm and Facebook its targeting options.

I encourage the marketers I work with to hold a weekly marketing team meeting comprised of leaders from across the organization to gauge and react to marketplace metrics. Such a team develops business scorecards containing target objectives so that progress toward those objectives can be measured and tactics implemented in order to push performance to the outer limits. A continuous process of improvement is the result, and that's what can put you and keep you ahead of the pack.

A Continuous Improvement Process

More will be said about "Develop, Align, Track, and Enhance" in the upcoming chapters. Before we get to

that, however, let me say that to keep the marketing team pushing forward and continuously making improvements to the marketing effort, I recommend instituting a system comprised of non-negotiable rules, scorecards, and action registers. The system can also be used to generate continuous improvement throughout a company or organization by adding interlocking teams representing other functional areas of the business. You might want to read my currently five-star rated book, *Lean Enterprise Leader: How to Get Things Done without Doing It All Yourself.* It describes a powerful system that enables a marketing director, a COO or a CEO to fully harness the collective power of the people who make up his or her organization and keep it moving steadily forward.

Chapter Eight
Develop

Let's go into more detail about what was said in the previous chapter—and have a look at what to do after you have that that all-important Brand Power Statement for your brand.

As previously discussed, value statements that were developed and written based on what was learned in the discovery phase are tested with target customers in order to determine what to say and how to say it. Often this is done in focus groups using Zoom or Google Meet. Sometimes those tools are used to conduct one on one interviews, and in other instances, electronic surveys will provide the information needed—particularly if a company has an email list of customers. The all-important Brand Power Statement mentioned above is key, of course, but typically we find that a whole lot more also can be said that will help motivate and move the target audience along to action. Frequently, we are able to rank quite a number of potential messages in order of importance. The potential copy points and insights gained can be extremely valuable in developing articles, sell sheets, videos, blog posts, brochures, and copy for the website.

Factors that relate to every aspect of marketing are considered such as the attributes and importance to the target market of product features, product pricing versus the competition, how the product or service is delivered or distributed, and what avenues of promotion are likely to be effective in reaching the target market. Virtually every communications possibility is considered. When we survey customers and prospects we often learn what traditional media such as TV, radio, and print they use, what streaming services they subscript to, and even which radio stations and TV shows they watch. We learn about their social media habits, what podcasts, YouTube channels, blogs, influencers and so forth resonate with them.

A detailed plan of action takes all this into account.

Suffice it to say we consider how effective and efficient all forms of communications might be as we develop this plan. Nothing is overlooked. The following is a partial list:

Search Engine Optimization [SEO]
Social Media
Remarketing
Videos
Blogging
Webinars
Apps
Pay Per Click
Brochures

Sales Presentations
Events
Point of Purchase
Sell Sheets
Newsletters
eMail Blasts
Displays
E-Books
Printed Books
Television
Radio
Newspapers
Magazines
Outdoor
Direct Mail

You'll note that I have placed SEO at the top of the above list. This is done with the certainty that step one for most people newly in the market for a product is to research that product on the Internet. As a result, search engine optimization is perhaps the most important strategy and task to be undertaken by any would-be successful marketer. It ought to be a key part of the action plan created in the development stage.

An important SEO task will be to identify strategies and tactics to increase the brand's search engine rankings. This means identifying key word and phrase search terms and determining ways to use them that will result

Some Ways to Tell Your Story

in attracting the maximum number of visits to the site. Suffice it to say it will make sense to place the most important keywords in the content of web pages, particularly in headlines, sub-headlines, body copy, image tags, and links. But beyond this, there really is no secret formula. What is required for success is good, original content that's well written and posted frequently. That's because the people who run Google and other search engines want what their users want: informative—useful content. If that's what's provided, and done so often, a website's keyword rankings will increase.

As was touched upon previously, back in the dark ages of the Internet, oh, about ten or fifteen years ago, there were a host of gimmicks SEO companies used that actually worked to fool search engines into ranking a website higher than its competitors. But those days are gone. Google, Bing and Yahoo for some time now have been able to detect artificial back links and other former-

ly effective schemes intended to trick them. Nowadays, using too many back links with keyword anchor text and other such tactics can actually cause harm. Google and the others can now differentiate between what's natural and what's not. Try to trick them, and you might get blackballed.

Let me say it again. Search engines are looking for sites and content that people will enjoy, find useful, and want to share with others. And they also are looking for sites that are dynamic in the sense that they are frequently updated and added to. Search engines actually keep track of that sort of thing.

Here's what I have found to be effective in moving a website from the doldrums to page one of a Google search:

- Start by providing useful, up-to-date content that's a pleasure to read. You and your business may be experts in your field, but search engines don't know that unless you show them. High quality content and resources are what will get your website on page one.
- Understand also that your rankings will not improve from a one-time post. You need to post a new blog or new material once a week at minimum. Three times a week is better. Why? Google is looking for fresh, original

content. And as was said above, search engines keep track.

- Remember to put the keywords you expect potential customers to search in your articles and in the titles and subtitles. If, for example, you make in-bay automatic car wash equipment, as a client I once served did, and an important keyword phrase is "in-bay automatic car wash equipment manufacturer," it will make sense to write an article about what to look for when seeking an in-bay automatic car wash equipment manufacturer. Don't forget to work that phrase into the headline. This isn't rocket science. It's simply labeling your content properly.

Also, remember to put your social media share buttons on your site. Why? Algorithms are looking for them, too, because people want to share content they find worthwhile. Making those buttons available will allow online visitors to share your website and its content with their friends and colleagues.

And here's something else. Why not give people an incentive to share? You might, for example, host a contest or product giveaway to get people sharing and maybe even tweeting your website URL.

What about inbound links? Obviously, the more inbound links you have, the more important your site

must be, and thus the higher you'll rank. This suggests it's important to look for ways to get your URL on other websites. Most web magazines, news sites, as well as blogs, are looking for content. So submit some content to them. Offer to contribute an article or blog post that explains something that the news or magazine or site's readers will find helpful or useful. All this ought to be considered and much of it included in the marketing plan you develop.

A Creative Process That Works

Now that you have done what needs to be done to attract prospective customers to your website, what do you suppose needs to be done to turn those visits into leads and sales? Well, bring the brand to life, of course. Create that bond.

You should have learned a great deal about the brand, its story and identity, in the discovery phase. In an earlier chapter, you saw how a brand's story—in the Riggs Bank case history, for example—was used to make Riggs a hero and to build a warm bond with potential customers. You also saw how emotion was used to bring more young families to Virginia. You will also recall I touched upon the GEICO Gecko phenomenon. Students in advertising classes at universities will be learning about "Virginia is for Lovers" and the GEICO Gecko for years to come. Unfortunately, however, such great ideas do not grow on trees. It takes hard work to get to them.

What's the more productive way to put in that hard

work? I recommend and use a process to develop communications that I learned when ghostwriting and editing books on Toyota's production and product development systems. You see, before Toyota builds cars or trucks, they identify sets of possibilities to satisfy customers' needs, arriving at a final solution by a combination of narrowing and widening. They do this by breaking the problem down into components and creating different alternatives. They widen by increasing the number of alternatives and the number and type of people who search for and converge on the solution.

Sounds complicated but it's really not. Here's how it works. Let's say a bicycle company R&D department has been tasked to design three new bike models. It can limit its creativity to three complete bikes. Or it can develop three alternative ways to make each of a bike's major components—the frame, the drive, the wheel sets, the suspensions, and the brakes. In the first case, it ends up with three bicycles; in the second, with 243 potential bicycle combinations, i.e., 3 X 3 X 3 X 3 X 3 = 243.

Which way do you think is more likely to develop the best new bikes?

Right. You get the picture.

How do I put that technique to work to product compelling communications? My colleagues, clients, and I work hard to generate a large number of ideas over a relatively short period of time. And we do not confine ourselves just to good ideas. Everything—the good, the

bad and the ugly—gets scribbled onto paper and masking-taped to a conference room wall or whiteboard. There the individual ideas can be sorted in to groups of shared concepts and directions where ideas can be mixed and matched. There may be ways to strengthen one idea by, say, combining it with parts of another. This may create a whole new direction, or perhaps it may cause some of the turkeys to turn into swans.

Let me say, parenthetically, that this way of brainstorming is not confined to any set of formal processes or procedures. The only rule is that no one gets to criticize or put down any idea. That only stifles creative thinking—it causes folks to withdraw into their shells like turtles. More often than not, the creative work finds its own path to follow, and like white water through a canyon, it flows quickly. You'd expect no less from a process based on continuous-improvement.

According to an old friend of mine who worked there at the time, the Doyle Dane Bernbach revolution of the 1960s emphasized adding time to the creative process, so that the creative team would have time to give the project enough thought to make it right. Maybe so. But, paradoxically, most people in advertising, regardless of specialty, are at their best and most creative as time runs out. Give them weeks, and they'll take weeks—with relatively little to show for the time until the final day or two (see Parkinson's Law, which is that "work expands to fill the time allowed for its completion"). As the clock

runs down, the adrenaline starts to flow, and that's when miracles happen. Good teams and good creative personnel have shown themselves over and over to be capable of creating literally dozens of big ideas in a matter of days, not weeks. So why not start the process with days instead of weeks to go?

Here's an overview of how it works.

I typically pull together a team of colleagues and explain and discuss the challenges and opportunities that have been identified in the discovery process. This includes the Brand Power Statement and as much factual information as possible about the brand, the audience, the competition, and the marketplace. During this meeting, a number of preliminary ideas are discussed. Potential problems and issue are identified. The idea is to begin to get everyone on board, and to start winning client buy-in.

The Fun Begins

After that initial client meeting, everyone goes of on his or her own and thinks about what they learned and the messaging that could come from it. Maybe they doodle and write things down. Then, usually after a couple of days, the team comes backs together and spends a half-day or so generating ideas. What's important in this meeting is not who comes up with a particular idea, but rather to work together, to support instead of backstab, and to develop all the ideas further. Every idea gets writ-

ten down. No idea is criticized or mocked or discarded. Many, however, get built upon.

Then the core creative team—usually an art director and copywriter—takes all the pieces of paper on which all the ideas to date are written down, and they retreat to their own work area. They spread the ideas out on a wall or big table. They stare at them. They talk about them. They find a compelling nugget in a confusing line. They change visuals. They mix and match.

Then the entire team comes together again. The core team puts all the ideas up on the wall—ideas that survived their scrutiny, new ideas they came up with, ideas that resulted from combining or revising some from the first meeting. They physically group these around common themes, benefits and marketing directions. Frequently, they name each direction. All this gets discussed. New ideas may surface that they missed. The group may decide to shift some of the ideas from one group to another. Maybe they combine two or more groups that have a lot in common. Maybe they combine two or more ideas. They come up with more ideas to fill the holes they've identified. They look at ideas that aren't quite working and figure out how to help them work.

Finally, the creative team (mainly the art director) will take a day or two to lay out all the ideas as roughs—one to a page, roughly sketched or downloaded low-resolution images that simply convey the idea, all headlines in the same simple font, and so on. Just tight enough to

convey the idea, but not so tight the effort wastes time and money.

And that's when the process of elimination starts, with the client's decision-makers as part of the team. Together, our team and the client will go through all the ways the team could think of to meet the client objectives and bring the Brand Power Statement to life. These ideas will all be in clear but rough form (often simply headlines and rough images), before too much financial or emotional investment has gone into any one approach. All the work will be there, unscreened and unedited. Together, our team and the client will compare all the ideas. We compare them to each other and to the Brand Power Statement, and to what the competitors are doing. We analyze the ideas, group them, combine them, and discover parts of the strategy that the executions don't cover. We see which ones are just plain wrong, either from a factual or a marketing standpoint. Together, we discuss what makes the good ideas work and why, discarding as many concepts as possible along the way.

Sometimes the combined agency-client team will learn some new facts. Or work our way into a new strategic approach that invalidates much of the work already done. Maybe the agency will have to start over a second or third time. As you recall, that happened when ideas were presented to the CEO and leadership team at Invensys Software Systems because they realized the value propositions about to be tested on customers were off the mark.

No problem. It only takes another week or so to get the work on its new track. And the final campaign will be sharper and more focused—to say nothing of getting done faster and cheaper—than if a typical agency creative team had developed it in secret, the straight-line way, then sprung it on the client at the last minute.

Many ad agencies view client participation at the genesis stage as fatal, but it is vital to the way I work. For one thing, clients have brains as well as pocketbooks, and they just might come up with something good that no one else has thought of. Or maybe they'll tell you that you don't need that ad campaign to recruit more of a certain kind of traffic to the website because volume isn't the problem, but rather, the closing ratio is what needs to improve.

One of the most important things about this process is that clients almost always start to take a sense of ownership in the work. This sense of ownership breeds a comfort level in work they might actually have rejected out of hand if it had been presented to them cold. This is why I often find my clients select the most adventurous, most unconventional, but solidly grounded concepts. Why play it safe when something on the edge will sell more widgets?

Development Phase Summary

In the development phase, the information gathered in discovery is used to develop actual communications

and a plan of action to engage prospective customers. Often, what has been learned is also used to modify or to enhance a product or service in order to elevate its appeal. Value propositions are tested and a messaging strategy developed. Vehicles are chosen to deliver the messages and a search engine optimization strategy and plan devised. Finally, emotion is employed in creating executions to deliver the brand story and thereby to create a bond between customers and the product or service a client has to sell. A process is used that generates a plethora of ideas. The client is brought into the process, becomes part of it, and the result is typically that clients feel a sense of ownership in the work. This sense of ownership breeds a comfort level in work they might actually reject out of hand if it were presented to them cold.

Chapter Nine
Align

Having identified what customers truly want, and perhaps having modified a product or service accordingly, it is sometimes the case that effort will be required to ensure the organization will deliver on the newly identified brand promise and positioning. In addition, the website may need work, modifications may have to be made to packaging, also perhaps to decor in the case of retail establishments, and even to the product itself, or to pricing. New or alternative methods of delivering the product or service to customers also may make sense.

Training, or at minimum, orientation of employees, may also be necessary. After all, an organization thrives when its people really know their brand, believe in and live it. Often I have found that more than training or orientation needs to take place if a company is going to be able to rise to the top of its field and stay there. In such instances, the discovery process typically has turned up major structural issues. For example, at times I have recommended that the way a business operates should be altered so that when a problem develops, the employees closest to it have the authority and the responsibility to act quickly in order to extinguish what might otherwise

turn into a raging, three-alarm fire. Matters can get out of hand if the staff in Paducah is forced to wait for someone at headquarters in Los Angeles to be informed, brought up to speed, and then, to make a decision. This is especially tragic when common sense exercised by an employee on the spot could have headed off what instead turns into a disaster.

This raises an important question. How can a business best make the sort of major structural change that may be required?

How to Institute Major Change

In the past twenty years, it has become clear that companies around the world are finding that in our fast-moving global economy, the old way of managing through "command and control" just doesn't cut it. The top guy and his surrogates simply cannot be everywhere at once. Employees and workers down the line need to be empowered to make decisions on the spot in order to keep things moving forward. For most businesses this means organizing into empowered, interlocking teams.

How can this kind of wholesale change be implemented?

At least two methods exist for implementing major change. The common approach is called the "define and convince" model, in which an assigned expert (or expert team) defines the change specifics and convinces the rest of the organization to follow its blueprint. This model

works best in small companies, largely because of the close link between the company's leadership and its workers. But in large companies, the process is slow, seldom wins widespread buy-in, and often requires extensive infrastructure and procedural controls to maintain the change.

The other method is the "participative model." The leader defines change goals and challenges the work force to define and execute the changes. The actual process involves a series of facilitated large-group sessions for convergence and decision-making, positioned around smaller group activities. This is where the testing and learning takes place. This approach works best because rapid assimilation of knowledge and buy-in usually takes place across the organization. Nevertheless, old-line managers often hesitate to use it because it requires the leaders to trust workers with the details, instead of those at higher levels of the organization, or outside consultants, whom they perceive as experts.

Participative change roles are quite different from those in the design-and-convince approach. Leaders are not order givers, but participants in learning and decision-making. Experts do not define specific changes, but rather, they provide substantive knowledge. Workers are not "change targets," but full participants in learning and decision-making.

Even though it is rarely used, participative change is not new. I won't go into detail as there are several books

on the subject including *Whole Scale Change* by Dannemiller Tyson Associates, and *Large Group Interventions: Engaging the Whole System for Rapid Change* by Barbara Bunker and Billie Alban. These books propose many tools and techniques for engaging the work force. Often they are different in style, but both are based on the idea that the work force should be engaged and involved. Be aware that the approach may benefit from special facilitation skills for orchestrating the large group sessions. Plus, an organization's leader ought to understand the process and have the confidence to empower the work force.

To make change happen, leaders need to set targets and make strategic decisions. The people who have to live with the details make up the group that ought to determine the details. Administrators are not needed to control the process or define the results. To make sure change happens in a timely fashion, milestones ought to be set that will mark key points of system integration. These large group sessions are forums for defining what needs to be done and who need to do it, and for making decisions on major integration issues.

System integration points are milestones at which the forced narrowing of possibilities takes place. Directional decisions might be made prior to the large integration meetings in change-agent cross-functional team meetings to winnow down the options. These decisions will be reviewed and the rationale explained at the

larger meeting. But to assure buy in, final decisions selected from viable options should be left to the larger group. For this reason, milestone events should be attended by virtually everyone in the company who will be impacted by the change and the new procedures. The more who take part, the better. This is how ownership is achieved. Also, large sessions make the progress highly visible and provide opportunities for visible support by upper management. This is important to maintaining momentum.

Scorecards

I recommend that regular meetings take place with the marketing staff or with marketing agency personnel during which scorecards are reviewed in order to measure progress toward marketing goals. Such goals might include the number of sales leads generated, website traffic, progress toward the objective of lowering the bounce rate, and so forth. The laser focus this creates inevitably speeds up progress.

The same system can be used as well to implement continuous improvement in other areas of the business—if management so desires. The reason I recommend the use of scorecards is that change for the better typically must take place incrementally. It's almost always unrealistic to think an organization can go from good to great in a single step on day one. Business scorecards are an integral component of the system because

they are repositories of an organization's goals—the key destination points on the corporate journey to the front of the pack.

Scorecards do not have to be confined to marketing goals. The can be employed companywide. When that's the case, an important feature of scorecards is that they can be brought together from each area of an organization to form a picture at any point in time of what is going on throughout the business. Having this picture in focus helps leaders make the critical and timely decisions.

Focusing on more than one or two areas of the business typically is required if companywide improvement is the goal. The task might be compared to that of a Little League baseball coach who is trying to build a better team. He needs to do what he can to improve every aspect of the game that he possibly can—the pitching, hitting and fielding of the young players that make up his team. To overlook any one of these three major areas could be what brings about a losing season.

Each business area has a number of activities that affect its overall performance—just as in baseball. Under hitting, for example, there would be different things to work on such as hitting curve balls, fastballs and change up pitches. Fielding would, among other things, include handling ground balls, flies, throws from the outfield to the cutoff man, and throwing the ball from third to first base.

Each player on a baseball team has different metrics he needs to work on, depending on his position. The

catcher has to worry about getting the ball from home to second on a steal. The short stop has to think about handling a short hop and the accuracy and speed of his throw to first. All these activities combine to produce a winning or a losing team based on how well they are performed. It is the same in a business organization. It's likely marketing, manufacturing, and customer service each have metrics that can be improved—from the landing page bounce rate, to throughput, to the number of customer complaints.

In the discovery stage of my engagement with a client, I am continually on the lookout for areas of the client's business that could be improved. I often am able to identify a metric that might be established as a target to shoot for. Obviously, the target needs to be realistic, and frequently a client's organization will be far from where I think it could be or ought to be. If, for example, world class is 99 percent and the client is at 75 percent, it would not make sense to set a goal of 99 percent, knowing it would be unrealistic to believe that such a goal could be reached in less than a year. A glide path needs to be established by setting milestones. Perhaps the goal for the first three months could be to move from 75 to 80. Once reached, the goal might be to move from 80 to 85 and so forth. Goals need to be achievable while moving the organization in the right direction.

Alignment Summary

Having identified in discovery what needs to be done, and having created a plan of action and specific communications in the development stage, certain aspects of the brand or company may need to be brought into line so that the brand delivers fully on the promise we have identified to be communicated. As I wrote on page one of Chapter One, "Nothing kills a bad product faster than good advertising." How so? The advertising will persuade people to try the product, and once they do, if it doesn't perform up to expectations, they will never buy it again.

Alignment may involve everything from modifications to the product itself, to training or orientation of employees, to a wholesale change in how the organization operates. There are methodologies for accomplishing such change. Moreover, it may not be possible to reach every goal right out of the box. Some may take time. This is when business scorecards may come in handy in that they can be used to establish milestones and to monitor progress toward what, at the outset, may be a lofty goal.

Chapter Ten
Engage & Track

Once alignment has taken place, the time has come to go to market. That means rolling out the communications and engagement plan. This may involve a blitz by the sales force, heightened social media activity, PPC advertising, Internet remarketing, CTV and OTT advertising, events, promotions, and traditional media—whatever the plan calls for.

Engagement is where many marketers and marketing agencies begin and end what they do. They think they've done their job just as the executives at Warner Communication thought they had done their job when they bought Atari for $28 million. History showed they were wrong. They needed to continue pushing to get better and better. As has been said, in today's world if you are standing still, treading water, you are most likely losing ground to a competitor that's hungry to take away your share of market. That's why tracking is so important.

Track Everything That Can Be Tracked

It should go without saying that you need to pay close attention to what works. For example, are Google search rankings increasing? Which ads are delivering the most

leads, where are the most leads coming from, and what percentage of those leads turning into sales? Is the new message getting across, and are attitudes of prospective customers toward the product changing in a positive way?

How do we find the answer to that last question?

Many clients have compiled email lists. If a client isn't collecting emails, I typically recommend implementing a program to do so—newsletters and giveaways—an eBook, for example—are excellent ways to collect opt-in email addresses. Such a list can be invaluable because it can be used periodically to electronically survey attitudes, likes and dislikes, toward a company or its products.

But how customer prospects view the effort, and whether or not a client's message is getting through, isn't all we want to know. With respect to the website, for example, it's possible to measure which headlines and sub-headlines, and which calls-to-action are working best, as well as what links in body copy are getting the most action.

I usually recommend testing copy to see what elements of a website are most productive. Winning headlines in PPC ads can be determined by using A-B testing to see which garner the most clicks.

Google Analytics should be put to work to track visitor volume and where visitors are coming from. Let's say for example traditional media is run in a particular geographical area. Google Analytics can reveal what sort of

boost, if any, occurred in the number and quality of inquiries from that area.

For a number of years at The Martin Agency, I ran a project that involved hundreds of thousands of interviews that tracked awareness of clients' advertising. Eventually, we were able to construct a mathematical model for participating clients that correlated advertising exposure and brand message awareness. Eventually, I was able to relate that awareness to the sales achieved.

The goal was to determine what amount of advertising exposure produced sales at maximum efficiency. Over time, my colleagues and I were able to see a direct link between unaided recall and product sales. We found that this linkage for transaction-oriented products existed when a competitive point of difference—the key benefit—was registering on the target audience. It was as though the selling funnel discussed earlier had been brought to life. We could actually reproduce it graphically and ascribe percentage figures to each layer.

In that study, which continued for a number of years, unaided recall was compared week by week with actual sales. The products we studied ranged from packaged goods, to whiskey, to agricultural chemical sales, to theme park visitation. Our primary task was to determine precisely how much advertising weight was required to bring awareness to the desired levels. What we learned enabled us to adjust our media spend to the optimum level. In other words, we were able to tell

clients what return they could expect from a particular media plan. The plan that delivered the highest profit for the money spent was the one to go with.

Usually, advertising builds on a base of awareness. Past efforts are a springboard, which is one reason maintaining a consistent brand aura or personality is important. We learned that message inconsistency can actually cause harm. Our tracking showed that awareness would change weekly as a campaign unfolded and that inconsistent advertising executions—ads with messages unrelated to those that had been running—failed to move the needle. In fact, awareness often declined, meaning the cost of running those ads was a waste of money. This clearly demonstrated the importance of messaging synergy.

Since we tracked product sales and advertising over a long period of time, we eventually were able to predict what sales would occur based on how many target rating points (TRPs)—a measure of ad exposure against target customers—were run over a given period of time. This allowed us to calculate the TRPs needed to push awareness to an optimum level. All media, including broadcast and print, were reduced to TRPs for this exercise.

To put the question we wanted answered simply, our goal was to know how much advertising had to be purchased to achieve the awareness needed to generate a given level of sales. That may sound logical. You buy media exposure to make people aware of what you have

to sell and of the benefits it offers. Some will buy. So why do we need a media model?

The reason is that people forget. They remember with repeated exposure and forget with the passing of time. Also, the rates at which people remember and forget vary, depending on such factors as competitive advertising activity, availability of the product, and the inherent interest in what is being sold. The model we developed took all this into account. It allowed both learning and forgetting to occur during the same week. The formula is:

$$A = bX + cY$$

"A" equals the amount of unaided advertising awareness at the end of the week, "X" equals the number of TRPs run during the week, and "Y" equals the percentage of unaided awareness at the beginning of the week; "b" is the learning coefficient, "c" is the retention coefficient. These variable factors were identified through an awareness tracking study for a particular brand. Once the learning and retention coefficients were known along with the relationship of unaided advertising to sales, it was possible to construct a media schedule that would result in reaching or exceeding a specific sales goal.

Enhance & Track Summary

Nowadays tools are available to measure just about everything to do with a marketing effort, from awareness

and attitudes to website visitation and lead generation, to which headlines and subheads do the best job. Obviously, we want to do more of what's working, and we want to eliminate what isn't, and the tracking effort ought to be designed to allow a marketer to accomplish that objective.

Eventually, if you do enough tracking and record keeping, you may be able to construct a mathematical model, as we did for participating clients at The Martin Agency, that will make it possible to determine what level of activity, and therefore what amount of spend, is likely to generate a predetermined amount of sales. With this information, you will be able to adjust the dials until you achieve the maximum return on your investment in marketing and promotion.

How to Build *Esprit de Corps*

A final note about the branding process you've just read about: Thoroughly involving employees in it gives them ownership in the end result. Once engaged in the process, they help shape the brand's essence and, in so doing, they participate in the drive the company to a new competitive level. This instills pride of ownership and a sense of loyalty—emotions that motivate and are difficult to achieve in any other way.

A Call to Action

If you'd like to set up a Zoom meeting with me to discuss the possibility of having me conduct—or to help you

or your firm conduct—a branding study, please get in touch. Simply go to my website and send me an email. It won't cost you a thing for us to talk, and it could be the start of something big.

To get to my website, simply type this URL into your browser:

www.shmartin.com

About The Author

Besides being a former principal of The Martin Agency, Stephen Hawley Martin is the author of more than three-dozen books, including five published novels, half a dozen business management titles, and quite a few self-help books and metaphysical investigations. Today, he is the editor and publisher of The Oaklea Press. Listed in *Who's Who in America,* Stephen is the only three-time winner of the *Writer's Digest* Book Award, having won twice for fiction and once for nonfiction. He has also won First Prize for Visionary Fiction from *Independent Publisher,* First Prize for Nonfiction from *USA Book News,* and a Bronze Metal for Visionary fiction from *Readers' Choice Book Reviews.* He is actively looking for books to ghostwrite as well as businesses leaders to consult with about their branding efforts. To get in touch with Stephen, visit his website and send him an email via the contact form: *shmartin.com*

**More books by Stephen Hawley Martin to help move your operation to the next level**
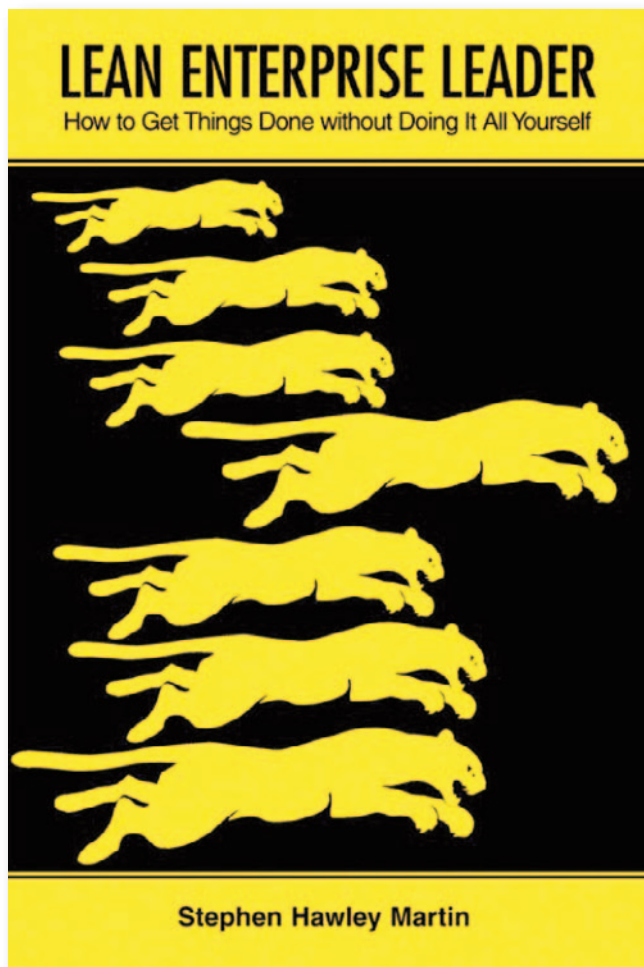
For the Kindle edtion, search: B00UY3VLFQ
For the paperback, search: 1512375251

How to create a vision for your business and then realize it by getting everyone on board, pulling together to reach the goal.
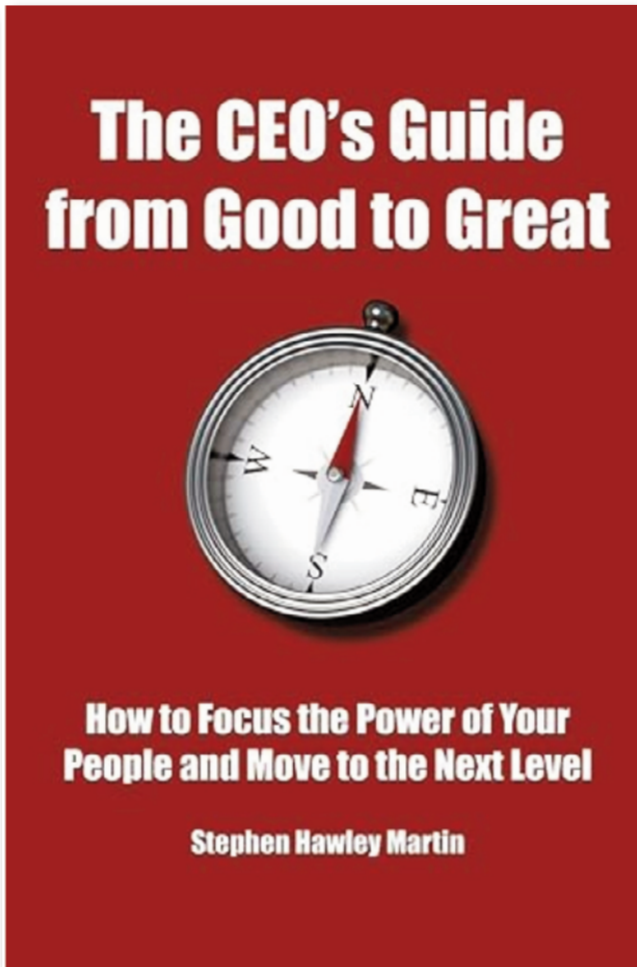
Available in paperback, search: 1512110493

How to create advertising that actually works.
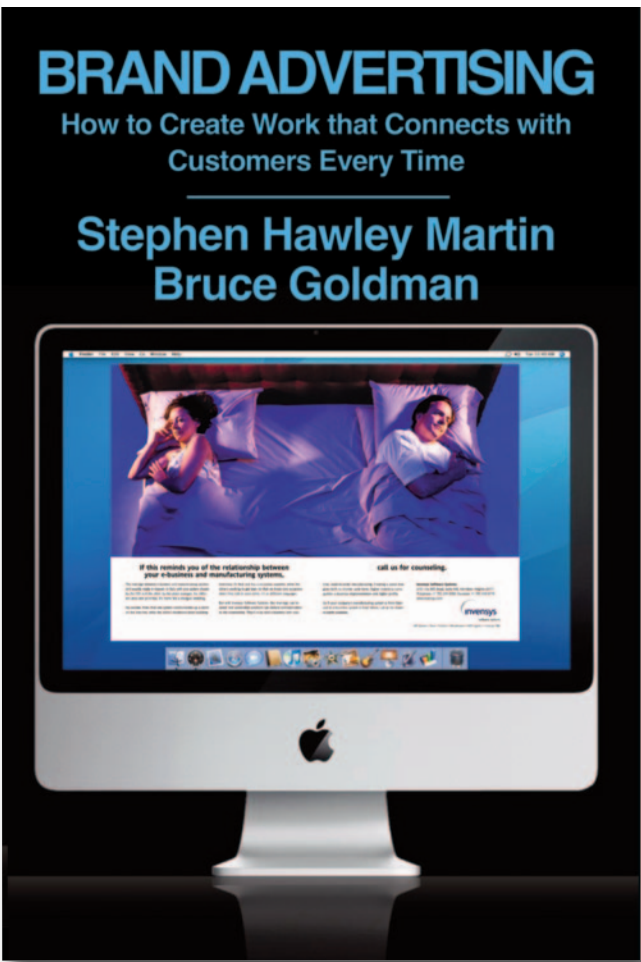
Available in paperback, search: 1537048627