

A note from us

We've been talking a lot about the recent Forrester Research survey of consumers that revealed the following statistics:

- 67% feel the brands they know don't keep their promises
- 89% feel no personal connection to the brands they buy
- 47% believe there's no real difference between competing brands.

These are truly sobering opinions and we as business leaders need to take them seriously.

The next several issues of BrandReturn will be devoted to the problems raised by this survey. You'll get tips to address these three issues because they're critical to your business's success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Winnie", with a horizontal line underneath it.

Winnie Anderson

Featured Article

Develop an emotional connection with your customers to grow profits and lower costs

We may buy from those we know, like, and trust; but we continue to buy over the long term from those we feel a genuine emotional connection with.

In a recent Forrester Research consumer survey, a whopping 89% indicated they feel no personal connection to the brands they buy. Without that emotional bond, customers can be easily persuaded to try a competitor's product.

The amount spent to acquire a new customer varies from business to business and industry to industry. Depending on your overall strategy you may barely break even or actually lose money on the first transaction.

Profits really come from repeat business.

But the true objective of advertising should not be to get customers to merely like you. It should be to get customers to recognize that your product and yours alone will meet their needs 100% of the time. When that happens, the emotional connection becomes so strong that customers will resist the savings offered by a competitor's sale price or the convenience of a competitor's location and will continue to choose your product.

How important is it to develop that emotional tie between your product and your customers? A strong emotional bond takes customers beyond the level of mere purchasers of your offerings and turns them into Brand Champions. They become advocates for your brand, introducing your product to those in their circle. That action lowers your marketing and advertising costs and raises profits.

Developing an emotional connection isn't easy but there are three ways to do it: visually, verbally, and through the customer experience.

The Eyes Have It

You must first get consumers' attention with your brand image, product packaging, and advertising images. But package designers and product manufacturers must walk a fine line between being different and being odd. Otherwise Heinz would still be making green ketchup.

The logo's design and color all send messages to consumers that impact the emotions raised by your product. Colors seen as irritating or images that don't translate well in the various advertising mediums used can annoy or repel customers.

It's What You Say and How You Say It.

While the designer may grab the consumer's attention, it's the copywriter who draws them in and holds them. Or not. The words and phrases should be selected with great care to not only inform and educate the consumer but to also hit the right emotional buttons.

It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing

The most visually appealing image and most literate copy in the world can't overcome poor delivery. If your customers' experience doesn't match the brand promise communicated through the visual and verbal messaging, you're wasting time, effort, and money. Customers develop a series of expectations based on a broad range of things including your industry, product category, and your competition to name a few. If you fail to deliver on any aspect of your brand promise, you will spend your life struggling to stay above water, to constantly fight for new customers, and to retain the decent employees you have.

Your next step: Review all of your marketing and packaging to see if the messages being communicated are sending the right emotional messages. If not, it's time to make a change.



About Abiah

Abiah is an award winning brand strategy and full service marketing firm that helps mid-sized businesses uncover and leverage what makes them unique to become the recognized leader in their market segment. Find out more about them and take the Brand Alignment test at www.abiah.com or call them at 866-982-2424.