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Helping companies
compete

Unilever, Sainsbury's,
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Branding insights for 2024

The legacy of our shared covid experience and ongoing economic turbulence is combining with new customer trends to fundamentally change the marketing landscape for many brands. They have to work harder using innovative ways to appeal to customers keeping them happy and loyal. Brand communications also need to reflect this change. Here are 3 key insights that will help to keep a brand successful and relevant for this era:

1 Authenticity

Customers now have far greater sensitivity to cultural nuances and social responsibility and look for brands that live and work by their values in an authentic way. Storytelling is important, for example, describing tangible actions towards sustainable and ethical practices. This can be enhanced by demonstrating involvement in activities that go beyond financial gain.

2 Clean and clear

There is a focus on innovative visual identities and clear messaging that enables interactive brand engagement across both traditional and digital communication formats. This requires a clear and consistent approach that can work effectively on web sites, mobile apps, social media campaigns, etc. Styling is simple, clean and distinctive, standing out from the competition.

3 People make a brand

Human connections are important and we like to understand the personalities behind the brands we buy into. This builds trust and an emotional link beyond the product or service. Customers want to have a positive feeling about the culture of the business and what it is like to work there. This is also vital to attract the very best talent and build a strong workforce.

Effective brand communications can only come from well-defined brand values. As brands evolve over time in terms of business focus, market changes, social responsibility, etc. there is a need to review and reset brand values every few years to ensure consistent and relevant messages are presented. This can be a daunting prospect for many clients who see it as a time consuming and expensive 'can of worms'. However, our experience is that clients find that it invigorates their brand and they often wish they had done it earlier!

The key to an effective and efficient strategic brand development process is a dedicated stakeholder team. They are involved at every early development session helping engagement and ownership. It's also vital to get off to a good start so we run an interactive workshop

to kick things off. It allows everyone to have a voice and get excited about the project. It's a fast moving session that usually includes:

- Review of brand objectives going forward
- Key competitors and what's new?
- Distinctive brand equities
- Brand values modelling exercises
- Key messaging start points

This foundation provides valuable input for the development work that follows. It will inform all communications both internally and externally, and ensures that brand is fit for the next era.

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