

Absolut Branded Language

BRAND

Disney, Kellogg's, and Gillette are three completely different brands with one commonality. Over the past decade, they've established a branded language, whether they know it or not. In my latest book, we found 74 percent of today's consumers associate the word "crunch" with Kellogg's. Another 59 percent consider the word "masculine" and Gillette as one and the same. Americans formed the strongest association of masculinity to Gillette, by an astounding 84 percent. Disney scored higher in purloined language than any other brand. This brand welcomes you to its kingdom of fantasy, dreams, promises, and magic. If you've stayed at a Disney resort, taken a Disney cruise, or eaten in a Disney restaurant, it doesn't take long to hear "cast members" greeting guests with, "Have a magical day!" For over half a century, Disney has consistently built its brand on a foundation much larger than its logo. A substantial chunk relies on songs and voiceovers that almost always include Disney-branded words. Associating words with brands comes at no extra cost. Disney's manages to

"own" six of them: "dreams," "creativity," "fantasy," "smiles," "magic," and "generation." Our BRAND sense study shows over 80 percent of the world's population directly associates these generic words with Disney. The keywords are repeated over and over in Disney's advertising copy, song lyrics, and story lines and on Disney Channel. The words cross all media channels, from TV to the Internet, with ease and fluidity. No opportunity is wasted in making strong connections between Disney and "magic," Disney and "fantasy," Disney and "dreams," and so on. What's more, Disney's language survives what I call the smash test. Pick a word, sentence, or column from any Disney publication, remove each brand reference, and -- voilà! -- the brand's still recognizable. To create a truly smashable brand requires consistency and patience. This is difficult, in a corporate world where the only constant is ever-changing branding strategies and CMOs. Add to this a fluctuating financial market that demands instant results, and the brand message becomes just another bit of brand information in an

overcrowded field. With annual reports, TV commercials, and Web sites often handled by different divisions, you lose any opportunity for language synergy. It takes years for words, phrases, and sentences to be identified and accepted as belonging to specific brands. The first step to integrate specific language into your brand is to identify the words you want to own. Select them based on those words that best reflect your brand's personality. Choose words that are easy to integrate in many different kinds of sentences and are the most flexible. There's no mistaking Absolut Vodka's language. Its "Absolut Home" page lets you jump to "Absolut Reality," "Absolut Pictures," "Absolut Generations," and other "Absolut" destinations. Should you wish to contact the company, go to "Absolut Contact." Everything on the site is consistent with Absolut's advertising campaign, which has been running for over



20 years. The campaign's based on continuity and variety; 1,400 ads have been produced since 1980, all related to the original vision that launched Absolut Perfection. The key to forming a smashable language is to integrate it into every piece of communication your company is responsible for, including all internal communications. Evaluate your branded language, and determine the words you would like to own. It costs nothing and might lead to free advertising in your national dictionary.

Further Information

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