

Brand Different

BRAND

Recently – well it feels like that – a dear friend of mine, Tim Pethick approached me with a great idea. Well he felt it was great I – to be perfectly frank – felt it was rather trivia. The idea was to develop another juice brand. If you happen to live in Australia you would know one thing – that is that Australia hardly need another juice brand – in fact if you happen to visit any major grocery store they display at least 10 meters of juice in the fridge – minimum. Another juice brand I said and looked rather skeptical – yes he answered knowing what my feedback already would turn out to be.

But I was wrong – and he was right. Today – less than two years later his juice brand turned out to be the biggest success in recent Australian business history. In fact – his brand – was voted Australia Asia's forth strongest brand – ranking up there with Coca-Cola, Qantas and Nike – and

his juice brand is today number one in almost every Asian country. How did he do it – here's a rather alternative story.

The alternative is, well, alternative. Alternative thinking, alternative ideas and alternative channels. Shortly after we split that evening back in 2003 the product was named, Nudie – a name you hardly forget and which offers a range of opportunities hanging interesting communication on. The product is fresh juice, without additives. It tastes fantastic, but so what? The product's success is hinged on much more than its ingredients. It lies in alternative thinking and a personal approach which exactly was the reason why Tim did so well.

The Web site (www.nudie.com.au) introduces the brand's owner as "Tall Tim," who generates dialogue with individuals. Tall Tim invites people to show up at his home at a certain

time for breakfast and juice, a freebie you qualify for as long as you show up at the exact, and I mean exact, time. The gesture couples the person behind the brand with the brand itself. That, in turn, promotes interaction between the humanized brand and the consumer. The site urges visitors to get into the act of pushing Nudie's distribution by offering a standard letter that interested parties can download, sign, and forward to their local stores. It's a simple strategy that works for the brand because individual customers have cachet and credibility in their neighborhood store. The owners know their customers, and they listen to them.

The letter reads:

Dear (insert name of favourite store)



I've recently had the pleasure of tasting a Nudie -- a new kind of juice with absolutely nothing added. (Yeah, I know, you've heard that line before about nothing added, but the people at Nudie really mean it!) Anyway, the point of this letter is to see if you'd be kind enough to consider stocking Nudie. If you do stock Nudie, I would be eternally grateful and I would buy at least (insert number) Nudies every week! To get your fridge fully stocked with Nudie today (or the next business day if you're reading this letter after hours) call now on 1-800-GO-NUDIE. Call takers are standing by...



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Tall Tim turned his distribution channels into branding channels by getting consumers in on the act, and by putting a fleet of cute, purple, distinctively Nudie delivery cars on the road all over the country. Tall Tim has managed to treat every imaginable communication channel in an alternative fashion. His small budget would probably surprise you.

Within five months, Nudie became the fastest-growing juice brand in Australia, ever. Tall Tim achieved this without any TV, radio, print or direct mail advertising. He tackled the project on a personal level. He used human communication channels creatively and directly. Nudie is not the only brand out there proving branding can be successful without spending millions of dollars on traditional media campaigns. But it offers a great working example of what can be done on a small budget.

Let's be frank – any product can turn out to become a major success if branded right – and if (and this is essential) the product won't disappoint the consumer. However it all requires a risk adverse attitude – you need to dare taking chances, identify and build strong personalities and leverage alternative communication channels.

Building new brands today is all about being dramatically different, being human and daring to have a strong opinion about life. A Canadian brand called Jones Soda managed to create one point of difference by offering consumers to design the label themselves on the Internet. In return the company guaranteed to print and distribute this on bottles across North America – well sort of – they would distribute the bottles yes – but would not tell you where to find it. Can you imagine how engaged the consumers would be in finding their own bottle?

Nudie is human – each of the bottles has its own individual label – with a individual fun story about the bottle and the content. They're so funny that close to 70 percent of all consumers has read the labels – as they're so funny. Why – because they're human – human and humor is very closely related.

However a brand as well needs to dare taking chances. Through history many brands has hit a success by being different, just think about United Colors of Bentton, Diesel or Virgin – they're all human, contains humor and dares to say their opinion about the world.

I remember hearing information technologists would never be fired for choosing IBM. I suppose you could once could have said the same of



marketers who combined the traditional media channels in their plans. But things are changing. The IT guys probably still won't be fired for recommending IBM, but marketers with plans based on traditional channels and old school thinking shouldn't get too comfortable.

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