

**Centre for Public Communications Seminar on
“Branding Public Service”
By Jörg Dietzel, Chairman and CEO,
Jörg Dietzel Brand Consultants**

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Mr. Jorg Dietzel began his talk with an introduction of himself as 5 days younger than the Berlin Wall.

Jorg refers to the history of Branding and how it came about in the history with cattle. Branding is about differentiation. How you express yourself.

Sometimes, companies use a one-liner to brand themselves. For example, Nike uses “Just do it”. They sometimes call it “the claim”. “The claim” comes from the wild wild West. In the older days, people rush over to dig for gold and get rich instantly. People stake their claims by marking the ground with sticks.

Branding is about finding that space that you claim is yours and nobody can claim it. We want to own the space and we want to be the only owner.

In the commercial world, often we have many products. These days it is very hard to find the differentiation in the products and people are looking for others way to differentiate them.

There are several differentiating ways:

1. Price can be one of it.
2. Designs can play a part.
For example, in the case of Apple vs. Creative, it is probably not so much about the product but more of being creative and having a different positioning for your products.

Brands are a quality promise. If you go overseas and you are not sure if it’s safe to drink their water. You can buy a can of Coke and you know it will be safe.

If the Brand promising can convince you, people will stick to it.

Brands allow us to make a statement of who we are. People use brands to say who they are.

We judge brands by experiences. We have to create positive experiences to support the brand.

Does branding apply to public sector?

Eg: President Obama a very good branding example.

Public Service Branding myths:

Myth 1: Branding is only for the private sector

Public Service Branding at the macro level. Jorg gave an example of Changi Motor Sports Hub. Research was done and people gave feedbacks on what they expect. It is branded as a family event package.

When a tourist visit Singapore, the first part of the Singapore Brand they encounter will be staff from ICA.

As compared with Hong Kong, Singapore is much more modern. Which brand you choose depends on who you are and what you want.

You are a touch-point for the Singapore brand.

Myth 2: Branding is just advertising

It is also about the way you deliver your service. Research shows people don't like spending time at government offices. It is also important for the people you want to work with. Brand and positioning is important to retain workforce. You need to empower and motivate them to upkeep the branding.

Myth 3: Branding is expensive

Not true. Branding is actually free. You do the things that you would do anyway. People who comes to your office, you need to do what they want, what are their problems anyway.

Expressing your business through logos, uniforms, letterheads and answering the phone. You have to do all these anyway. It makes sense to look at these touch points and make an extra effort to make them more consistent.

Branding at the organisation level.

You want a positive impression. You want to be able to attract the right people and retain the right people. Everybody around the world is working on it.

Communicating what you do...

In Germany, the police department is always struggling with its image. It is hard for them to have a positive image. Around the world, the police have been trying for a long time to image it. Their tagline: "Your friend, your helper"

The challenge is to be relatable and credible. Most of the time you, should be able to deliver what you promise.

Do your homework. Understand what people's need are.

Think Positioning.

Differentiated. Relevant. Credible. Extendable.

Think Touch-Points.

Corporate Identity

Look and Feel

Consistency

People

(Just to make sure you create an experience that works across the board)

Naming.

URL

Brand Measurement – ask people what are their impressions

Brand Audit

Brand Communication

Brand Positioning

Internal Branding – how are we communicating with our internal stakeholders?

Touch-point Management

Is branding different in Asia?

1. It is all about face
 - a. Amount of face given is equal status
 - b. The cult of luxury brands
2. Dynamism + materialism prevail
3. Quality living + experience – people are starting to upgrade their living spaces.
4. Asian Pride – 10 years ago, everything from the west is good, everything from the east is bad. Time has changed. In terms of hospitality, service.
5. New Idealism – Your parent’s generation are about work, work, and work to give you a better life. Now, the newer generation will say that there must be more to life than work. Young people getting more active in NGOs, churches, causes.
6. Brands rule.

Learning from Crisis: Post

- Rationalisation
- We Care
- Design
- Quality and Reliability – People need something that will last longer. It is about buying things that will last longer even if they are more expensive. In the long run, it pays off.

8 Branding Tips!

1. Do your homework – understand what people want, do your research
2. Branding is more than a logo. – What are we trying to say? What is the positioning?
3. Be Consistent – What does that mean and what does it mean for the way we deliver?
4. Look at all touch-points. – All details are your touch points and they need to be consistent.
5. Before you look outside, look inside. – How do you ensure that your own stakeholders carry your brand correctly? Motivate them
6. Think about communication. – Various forms of mediums to communicate message. Do you need to engage people?
7. Be responsible. – Consumers / citizens have become more critical than before. They are more vocal now. They have a voice.
8. Be a hero. – Lead by example. People are looking at you to follow your examples. Some people still live by “Do as I say but don’t do as I do”

Q&A Session

Participant: You mention about not over-promising. We try to stretch our target. How do we get other departments to work with us?

Jorg: The problem is every department looks after their own target. Branding is an inter-department responsibility. It should be spearheaded at the very top level and the tops need to buy in to it. You need the person on top to make everyone understand. It is a matter of how far can you stretch yourself. You have to decide how far is too much. If you promise too much and can't deliver it, you are hurting your brand

Participant: What happen when a company already has a culture of brands? Would the chief be equal to the brand of the company?

Jorg: When your chief has a very strong personality, they will transfer the influence into the brand of the organisation. In the Asian context, usually it's the organisation that is stronger. Otherwise, it will change all the time.

Participant: Should a brand promise be different for different medium? Can we alter what we say or what we promise based on different mediums?

Jorg: No we can't. What we promise to deliver has to be the same regardless of medium. However, the ways we express it differ depending on platform.

Participant: Change management. How do you convey the message to different departments?

Jorg: You can look into existing structures and how to use them to engage as many people as possible. If you change, it's a question of what can we do to translate it down into the smallest department and making them into the champions of their brand. Then they go out and they in turn convey the message to their colleagues. It will be easier for them to communicate within people of their same level. It needs to work top-down but at the same time also bottom-up.

Participant: How do you do brand damage control? How do you suggest the company do a recovery and rebuild reputation?

Jorg: The first thing is do not try to hide it when something bad happens. It is not that something happened; it is how you deal with it. Be transparent and give information. The public is forgiving when they have the impression that you are taking them seriously.

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