

Brand marketing



A strategic approach

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Clarify your strategic vision as a brand promise

Brand marketing strategy and business strategy are like the left and right hand. They are the yin and yang of well-planned businesses. Your brand promise must be evident through:

- Internal service quality, which drives employee satisfaction and commitment; and
- External service quality, which influences customer satisfaction and retention.

If the service qualities of both are aligned with a compelling brand promise then your brand marketing strategy vision will be clearer to your target audiences, making the business more attractive and ownable. Perceived business relevance, profit growth and increased value will naturally follow.

The 'idea' brand marketing strategy

Some people say that a brand is an 'idea' and that, while the product/service can be easily categorized, it is actually the promise of this idea that people buy into. This is what we call the brand promise and to define it will help your business address three key challenges.

1. Be different – motivate with a distinctive and clear proposition.
2. Be valued – attract the right relationships with the right audiences.
3. Be smart – encourage your audiences to support you in your marketing efforts.

Being different in a world that is constantly evolving is the

first. Just think of some of the changes you have seen in your lifetime. It is the same in the business world – nothing stands still anymore. Anything that does stand still gets left behind. Understanding how your business stands out is essential. Presenting a unique and memorable offering is a basic requirement for a successful brand marketing strategy. Wrapping this offering in a story is the best way to own a unique and motivating brand promise.

Secondly, your brand is a design, strategic marketing, communication and human resource tool, which will enable your business to build trusted relationships with audiences. Being valued by each at any one time is the key to strong performance. Making a promise and then keeping to it will help substantiate your story. This tangible evidence delivered across every point of interaction with your brand will help build loyalty. The more the whole story lives the idea, the greater chance your business will have in attracting the right relationships with the right audiences.

The third challenge continues to build on the thought that everything you do, everything you own and everything you produce, helps to communicate the brand promise. In today's world your audience will play a big role in developing the wider story. This is something brands actively seek; after all "word of mouth advocacy is worth millions spent on advertising". It is therefore important that your audience understands your vision as a brand promise and can see how it belongs in their own world. They must be allowed to see the promise as something they can own. Make the story personal and they will write themselves into it and so support you in your brand marketing strategy. □

2008 Asia-Pacific Biotechnology VC Directory

The 2008 Asia Pacific Biotechnology VC Directory provides the most accurate and current profiles available of venture capital (VC) firms in China, India, Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand and nine other countries in the Asia-Pacific region that are currently looking to invest in biotechnology companies in the region.

This directory provides an excellent resource for biotechnology firms at any funding-stage: Seed, Series A-B, Series C-D, Mezzanine, Bridge and Buyout. More than 100 VC firms are profiled at over 240 locations. Multiple contacts are included for most firms, with direct contact details, including e-mail addresses. With this directory, you will be able to: Pinpoint the firms in Asia that are investing in biotechnology companies; find out if the VC has a specific scientific/technological interest; and learn the stages of investment for each VC. For more information, contact:

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Branding and positioning in the Indian IT industry

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Branding...segmenting...positioning...marketing – mantras that you would usually associate with consumer goods and services companies, which rely on the power of their brands to carve out a unique place in the consumer's mind-space. Often, the very existence of the company is defined in terms of its brand's core values and how consumers perceive it.

The (Indian) IT/software industry has traditionally adopted a hands-off approach to branding as a philosophy. But this trend seems to be changing. Recent days have seen the emergence of the very first corporate branding and positioning campaign in the Indian IT/software industry. And the company bucking the trend is HCL, which (though not considered in the same league as the holy troika of the Indian software industry – Infosys, Wipro and TCS) was the original Indian 'garage startup' way back in the late 1970s.

HCL is the first Indian IT major, that has recognized the power of branding as a business strategy. It is trying to position itself as a pathbreaking, pioneering IT solutions provider. By adopting a high-pitched, mass media-driven corporate branding campaign, it is trying to differentiate itself from other Indian IT companies. With computers becoming mainstream in Indian society, HCL wishes to reinforce the historical fact that they kickstarted the computer industry in India.

This strategy is being effected through a well crafted, high-voltage, multimedia led advertising campaign titled 'Talking

Numbers'. The main protagonists in the campaign's storyboard are two numbers, Shunya (0) and Uno (1), the ubiquitous binary integers, which are the building blocks of the digital world. The campaign is brilliantly conceived, though its execution could probably have been better.

One might presume that the rationale behind HCL's current campaign is its more broadbased exposure to the IT industry as compared with others; for HCL is into software consulting services, hardware importing/manufacturing, ISP, BPO/ITES, IT education, etc., while other Indian IT majors are essentially software services companies. While that is certainly true, to my mind, the current campaign seems just one part of a well orchestrated corporate branding strategy. For, the 'Talking Numbers' campaign was preceded by the equally thoughtful (and brilliant) 'Fearless' campaign in the print media.

The 'Fearless' campaign showcased a series of ads highlighting HCL's heritage as the early risk taker and innovator in the late 1970s. That campaign was very bold, audacious and thought provoking; for it celebrated the spirit of entrepreneurship and risk taking, very 'unIndian' values in a nation that regards having a well paying, stable job in a big company as the epitome of one's professional existence.

The two campaigns seen in continuation, are indicative of HCL's belief in corporate branding as a strategic initiative.

Hats off to India's first start-up that had the courage to think differently! ☐

Asia-Pacific Biotech Directory 2008/09

This new directory features a comprehensive list of biotech organizations, research institutes, universities, biotech/pharmaceutical companies in the Asia-Pacific region. It also describes the companies in great detail, covering 14 countries in the region: Australia, China and Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, The Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Special features of Asia-Pacific Biotech Directory 2008/09 is easy to read, and has more than 4,000 country-wise listings that include useful contact details such as names of organization, addresses, contact numbers, e-mail addresses, URLs and areas of expertise.

It is a must-have for researchers, scientists, academics, venture capitalists and biotech/pharmaceutical-related professionals who want easy access to useful information about the biotech industry in the Asia-Pacific region. An online version of the directory that is updated regularly is also available at www.asiabiotech.com.

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