

WHY BODY LANGUAGE MATTERS- ESPECIALLY FOR BRANDS.

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What we learned from Simon Uwins at Brandworks University

Walking into a store you may think that you're not noticing the way products are lined on the shelves, the layout of the aisles or the employees greeting you at the door; but, in the right stores these aspects often are telling a strong, unified and compelling story.

In fact, during [Lindsay, Stone & Briggs' Brandworks University 2010](#) Simon Uwins, CMO of [Tesco's Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market](#), pointed out that the way we communicate as human beings is actually quite similar to the way brands communicate with consumers.

"Just think about how we communicate with each other. It's a little bit about what we say, a bit more about how we say it and mainly it's about our body language. Well, it's exactly the same for brands," said Uwins, who was charged with jumpstarting the Fresh & Easy brand in the United States.

In every interaction with your brand, customers are picking up on and reading into your brand's "body language," which is expressed through the way the brand markets itself, distribution channels, and every other experience somebody has with the brand.

So, how does one go about ensuring that all touchpoints for a brand speak to one unified, relevant message? How do you tell a story that your customers relate to, employees understand and one that is manifested in the physical and emotional attributes of your brand?

Reading your audience.

First and foremost, marketers need to "read" their audience and understand what motivates them. This holds true for any company that wants to earn its customers' lifetime loyalty.

To create loyalty among U.S. consumers for Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market in 2007, Uwins and his team first needed to learn how consumers were purchasing groceries. From candid conversations, they realized people were under the assumption that they had to go to multiple stores to get healthier food as well as stretch their budget. This finding alone made the Fresh & Easy brand even more relevant to consumers.

The most successful consumer brands understand importance of “reading” their audience; in fact, they are built on well-honed insights about their target’s motivations. Coca-Cola didn’t create the desire to return to a simpler time of happiness, and Nike didn’t invent the drive to succeed, rather, they understood their audience and tapped into these human desires.

What message are you sending?

When you look around at your marketing efforts what insight are they built on? Is it relevant to the consumer? Are they all aligned and is there one unified message coming through? Does your website tell the same story as your in-store marketing? Are your mobile efforts telling the same story as your experiential marketing and public relations efforts? If not, your brand will have a much harder time connecting with your target on a relevant and meaningful level resulting in a much lower level of engagement.

In the case of Tesco’s Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market, Uwins and his team knew that they needed to be aligned internally before reaching out to consumers. So they launched an internal campaign that spoke to the brand personality, values and their outlook for the future. They even incorporated the brand’s story into job descriptions, all to ensure that everything they did as a brand reflected “fresh & easy.”

Don’t just say it, live it.

In this digital, hyper-connected world, it’s not enough to simply tell a unified story about your brand. In the case of Tesco, they couldn’t just say “we’re fresh & easy;” they had to live it.

“In a world where your business is becoming more and more transparent, where more and more people can interact with you, share data and their thoughts, and more and more will read your [brand’s] body language, your business has to live the brand, be the brand and your brand has to be the business,” instructs Uwins.

Fortunately, the Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market team recognized this early on in the process. Knowing that they were a brand that strives to be a good neighbor and provide consumers with fresh food in an easy, simple way, they reflected this in the all of their touch points. From offering easy ways to provide feedback directly to store managers to taking the very feedback they received from consumers into account, Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market engaged their audience every step of the way. They made it easy to continue the conversation with customers that had formed the brand.

Next time, you’re engaging with a brand consider what their

“body language” is telling you. Were they able to accurately read you? What message are they sending and does it carry through in every touchpoint?

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