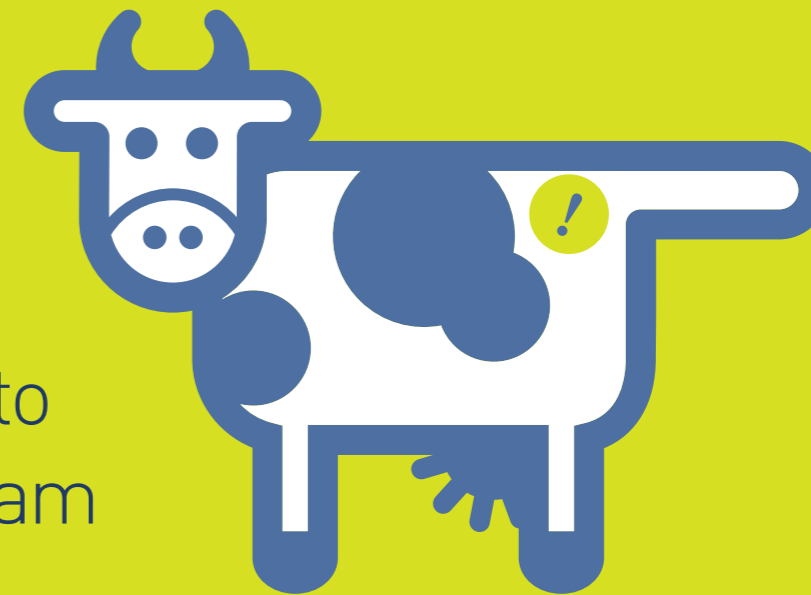


Branding!

from
sore Cows to
David Beckham



Brand
encompasses
image, look,
feel and smell;
experience,
values,
behaviour...



The Norwegians gave us the word — “brennen”, which translates as “to burn” — some thirteen hundred years ago when they burned their cows with a branding iron to distinguish them for their owners — a practice still carried out worldwide, but less painfully.

To-day, branding is in evidence in a multitude of ways from Guinness (the oldest brand — 1752- of all), to **The Observer** (the oldest media brand), to the invention of ‘Brand’ Management by Procter and Gamble in the 1930s, to consumer goods brands such as **Heinz Tomato Ketchup** or **Nescafe**, to retail brands like **Tesco** and **MacDonalds**, to 21st century products like **Sky** and **Yellow Pages** and, now, to individual brands such as **David Beckham**.

All presentations of goods, services and people like those suggested above are managed in a ‘branded’ way: easily identifiable, constant over time whilst always changing to remain contemporary, attractive to the senses (and, usually, to the pocket).

Branding is defined in **Roget’s Thesaurus** (a brand in itself) as “**A means of identification**”, but the Oxford English Dictionary (another one) adds an interesting dimension — “**A sign of quality**”, not just quality of product but of image, **look, feel and even smell**. Furthermore, not just these more obvious attributes, but a consistency of quality in terms of brand values, of employer behaviour, of corporate practice and governance.

3

Good branding is
about consistent
communication:
consistent over time

Branding has a genuine role to play in adding commercially to a business: the three key attributes of branding each contribute to the perceived value of whatever is on offer—identity, recognition and attractiveness.

Identity: the conversion of a product into a brand through the creation of a consistency of 'look', of personality, of credibility that is distinctive and attractively competitive—good examples are the **Mini** (the car not the skirt), **Toilet Duck** and **Starbucks**.

Recognition: the ability to 'spot' a brand at fifty paces in a variety of circumstances, for instance on a shelf or in a brochure, a leaflet or a lorry. Examples here are **Coca Cola**, **Silk Cut** and **Nike**.

Attractiveness: people are drawn to a brand because they like it, they believe in it, or they feel they need it above other competitors in the same category — a fine example of each of these three attributes is **Persil**, **Volvo**, **The Financial Times** and the grandfather of them all — **Guinness** — meets all three criteria.

Good branding is about consistent communication: consistent over time such as **Oxo** and **Kit-Kat**; consistent in all forms of presentation from packaging to promotions, from shelf-wobblers to websites, from billboards to business-cards, **HSBC** is an excellently broad brand communicator.

Branding: 3 Key Attributes

1 Identity

2 Recognition

3 Attractiveness





Today, the
imprint is on
the customers'
hearts and minds

Good branding also acts as a template for future development especially in the design area where successful elements of communication can be identified and taken forward as the foundation for keeping brands alive and well in an ever-changing environment. So the look of **The Guardian** is still true to the history of a famous brand but very much not out of place in today's newspaper scene.

Early branding was about literally, burning the product to aid recognition. Today, the role of branding has almost turned round — the imprint is on the customers' hearts and minds, on the consumer and not just the consumed.

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