

10 steps to sharpen up your brand vision – part 2



Here is part two of brandgym's 10 golden rules on shaping up your brand vision and positioning to ensure brand fitness in 2010 and beyond: Enjoy!

6. Find your secret weapon

A good brand template should have at least one feature which is unique or unusual which will give your brand sort of sharp edge. This could be a personality trait, which, in a particular product category, may be unique, or a distinguishing product features, texture, shape – or brand property.

Prêt a manger, the food chain, has such a thing revealed in its manifesto: its secret weapon is... a kitchen! The presence of a real kitchen in every Pret restaurant supports the promise of freshness. No 'sell by' dates at Pret, food is given to charities at the end of each day.

This 'secret weapon' gives everyone working at Pret a clear sense of where the brand's competitive edge really lies.



7. 'Head in the clouds' is fine, but...



Keep your feet on the ground! A brand ladder can be useful to help define emotional benefits and get your team to agree on a more ambitious promise, but make sure you get your feet back on the ground. Don't ladder up too high either, or you'll end up promising world peace. Never forget the fundamental product truths. Stay obsessed with delivering core benefits better than anyone else and never take product delivery for granted.

8. Bridge today and tomorrow



A good brand vision has the right balance between the reality of 'now' and the dream of 'tomorrow'. It shows the way ahead and where the brand needs to go (we often talk about a brand vision as a sort of GPS for brands) but does not ignore the reality of the brand today, both in terms of its image and in terms of tangible product delivery. Getting there should feel achievable!

9. Get greener and better



Take a hard look at your vision: Does it suggest a broader societal role for your brand, beyond the limits of your category? Could you think of 3 ways to express your vision outside of your product category in non-commercial activation? Are your brand values aligned or out-of-synch with emerging consumer values? Your brand vision should encourage ethical and socially responsible brand behaviour, drive and inspire 'better' product development and marketing. If you have sustainable topics in the pipeline, turn them into product attributes now. Your brand vision template is to place to 'pour cement' on those features and get commitment.

10. Keep talking



One of our clients who's relentless about telling the brand story and vision inside her company has found a good trick: In every company presentation she talks at, whatever the topic, she always starts with a couple of charts or words reminding everyone about the brand vision. Repetition is good! She also lets her team tell the story in their own words, without being too precious about semantics and 'the right way'. This is key to engagement.

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