

Love They Brand

The nicest thing about meeting someone who works for Apple, or walking into a Starbucks, is the great sense of pride they take in the company they work for and the tremendous capacity they have to communicate the brand to the people they interact with. There is little doubt that people who work for Apple or Starbucks love their brand. They live the company philosophy because they believe in what the company stands for. For marketing folks like us...it's a beautiful thing.

The benefits to loving thy brand may be apparent. The more you can demonstrate enthusiasm for what you sell, the more you are likely to sell. Yet with Apple, and perhaps with Starbucks, the devotion seems to be beyond enthusiasm. It is faith. Apple set out to cause a revolution in computing and the people employed there are still committed to the cause. Starbucks set out to redefine the way Americans drink coffee (and interact with coffee as a social instrument) and people who work there are faithful to the effort.

The true coup however is that not only are Apple employees true believers, so are Apple users. Talk to an Apple user and he/she will more or less belittle mere PC users as techno morons who are missing out on a good thing because they just don't get it. Apple users get it... and that's what's so brilliant about the Apple brand. This can be said to a lesser extent about Starbucks, but clearly they too are extremely successful in developing their brand into something that support and communicates not only what they sell, but who they are and what they stand for.

So the real question is; how do we instill in people (our employees first, and then our customers) this faith-like devotion to our company and our products? The answer is through demonstrating our own commitment, devotion, and faith.

To better understand how to achieve this we present Tudog's Top Ten Ways to Love Thy Brand:

10. Know Thy Brand's History - You can't know what you stand for if you don't know where you come from. The history of a brand will tell you what its values are.

9. Know Thy Brand's Promise – You can't sustain a brand if you do not fulfill your promise, and you can't keep your promises if you don't understand them.

8. Be Thy Brand – Make your brand a part of you. Act as your brand would act.

7. Know Thy Brand's Value – Make certain you understand the benefits you are delivering to the marketplace and be certain to express these benefits whenever the chance arises.

6. Know Thy Brand's Advantages – Be aware of why you're great and don't be afraid to use your advantages to your...advantage.

5. Believe in Thy Future – Great brands last forever. Have faith in the idea you are here to stay and then behave not as if you're invisible, but really super.

4. Live Thy Image – Great brands have a code for life. Nike is winning, Apple is innovation, Coca Cola is youth. Know your image and live it.

3. Nurture Thy Brand – You need to make sure that everything you do from a marketing and operational standpoint are consistent with your brand and all it stands for.

2. Promote Thy Brand – Your brand needs constant exposure and promotion. You should seek to promote it in ways that are consistent with all your brand means.

And the Number One Way to Love Thy Brand:

Enjoy Thy Brand's Equity – Build your brand right and it will reward you with tremendous value. How else can we explain Google's market cap?

Loving thy brand is a way to make sure that your brand loves you back. The creation, maintenance and perpetuation of a great brand is an art and a business accomplishment that relatively few companies can truly claim. Nonetheless, while difficult to achieve on a massive level like Apple, building your brand and loving your brand even within the confines of your own small region or market is a highly worthwhile and rewarding.