



CONTENTI

Insights

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CREATIVITY / MANAGING GLOBAL PROJECTS

I've Created 100+ Global Brands. These Six Insights Are Invaluable...



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Some of the most important steps in the brand creation process can be overlooked while getting a new brand up and running. Keeping these six insights for B2B brands in mind can make a big difference in your brand's lifetime effectiveness.

What I'm thinking:

- ▶ Your brand is a language, not a logo.
- ▶ People like likeable brands!
- ▶ Use every tool available to express your uniqueness.
- ▶ Sustain your brand over time.
- ▶ Global brands have to think differently.

1 Your logo is not your brand

When you create a brand, you're creating a language with its own vocabulary and rules of use. When done well, this language gives you the ability to express anything your brand needs to say to the markets it serves, with a distinct personality and voice. Like any living language, the brand should be able to grow and evolve over time while still maintaining its core identity. Your logo does just some of the work. For the rest, you need to be backed by a strong brand system capable of communicating your values, mission, vision, aspirations and uniqueness.



2

Give people reasons to love your brand

Brands need to be interesting, intriguing, aspirational and likeable. With the long buying cycles associated with B2B, customers aren't buying your product, they're buying your company brand. Make your brand likeable. Maintain a human tone, avoid clichés and jargon, and stay grounded in your customers' reality, which includes both rational and emotional dimensions. Always surprise them by how well you understand their challenges.



3

Use all available tools to express your brand's uniqueness

Digital technologies and stock images have made it easier than ever to create professional-looking communications quickly. Unfortunately, template-driven, cookie cutter approaches lead to brands looking the same. Typography, color palette, photo or illustration style, layout style: brands need to use all these tools with virtuosity in order to establish their uniqueness. For example, imagine the huge boost your brand could get by shooting original photography for an ownable look that belongs to your brand and your brand only.

“Brands need to be interesting, intriguing, aspirational and likeable.”

-Jan Ragnartz

4

Get the right people involved from the start

You can't create and launch a new brand on your own. It requires buy-in from top management and the involvement of key stakeholders, including regional stakeholders, all along the brand development process. These people need to know that their input has helped shape the brand, and their enthusiasm will be essential in the brand's successful deployment.

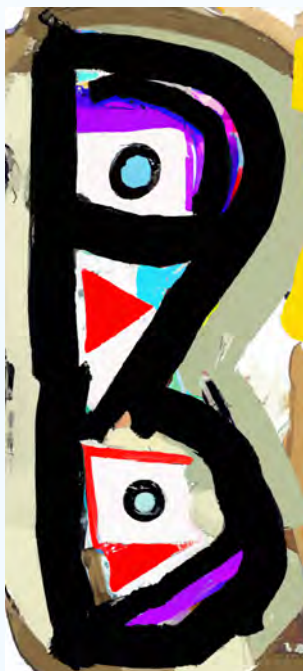


5

Plan for brand consistency

No one wants to be a brand policeman. A lot of brand consistency issues that arise when deploying a brand can be avoided by taking the right steps prior to launch. Having visible support of the brand from top management, communicating the brand's purpose internally, creating an internal launch event and other similar actions can go a long way. A brand book that gives an overview of the brand's mission, messages, spirit, look and feel, and specific applica-

tions provide global staff with a concrete notion of the brand in action. Along with brand guidelines, CONTENTI provides a kit containing all brand assets required for local deployment, including electronic artwork. This prevents anyone from having to reinvent the wheel. The main takeaway is, the more things are clear up front, the fewer problems you'll have to handle once the brand is up and running.



6

Working on a global scale requires thinking differently

Creating B2B brand campaigns that are effective across different regions and languages is a unique challenge. A lot of the tricks that local creatives depend on aren't applicable at the global level, where wordplay, narrow cultural references and purely local trends are off limits. At the same time,

you owe it to every one of your markets to deliver impactful and effective concepts. These are constraints that you learn to work with. Having grown up in a number of different countries and being fluent in four languages makes me sensitive to different regional styles and viewpoints. I know

pretty much right away if an idea can be expressed with impact across cultural and linguistic barriers. Eliminating false 'good ideas' early on saves everyone a lot of time!



About the author:

Jan's experience includes the creation of hundreds of B2B brands and brand concepts. He combines his award-winning design skills with his talent at finding winning creative concepts. Jan brings a global eye to every project and is fluent in English, French, German and Swedish

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