

BRANDING

Brand experts to reveal new age strategies at Banff gathering

Expensive mass media campaigns are yesterday's news. Today's leading brands excel in attracting customers by establishing meaningful interactions, says Denise Lee Yohn, brand expert and author of a new book titled *What Great Brands Do*.

Take, for example, outerwear-maker Patagonia's newest catalogue. In the place of traditional product pictures with price tags, readers discover adventurous stories told in images and text. While the publication features Patagonia merchandise, it also reads like a magazine. "The catalogue highlights an active and exciting lifestyle by presenting articles about Patagonia ambassadors, staff and customers, aiming to inspire others to become part of the tribe," Ms. Yohn says.

"Great brands don't chase customers, they don't try to appeal to everyone. They attract the people who share their values," says Ms. Yohn, using the metaphor of a lighthouse that projects the brand like a beacon to draw like-minded individuals in.

This is among the contemporary marketing principles Ms. Yohn plans to highlight in a keynote address called "What great brands do" at The Gathering, an exclusive conference and awards gala taking place at the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel on February 19 and 20. The event is hosted by Calgary-based marketing services firm Cult Collective Ltd. and presented by The Globe and Mail.

"The Gathering is a chance to learn first-hand from not only brand leaders, but thought leaders who have consulted with, and done research for, some of the biggest brands in the world," says Chris Kneeland, CEO of Cult Collective and co-founder of The Gathering.

He adds the Gathering's presenters' stories – which have been documented in best-selling



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Denise Lee Yohn is author of *What Great Brands Do*

books, keynote addresses and award-winning movies – provide tremendous insight into how some of the most courageous marketers are reinventing traditional marketing and advertising.

"The event is intended to celebrate cult-type brands," says Ms. Yohn, explaining that a company doesn't need to be big to generate a cult-like following. "It just needs to deliver on creating shared value," she adds. "More and more businesses state the goal to improve people's lives, and that includes making a great product, treating people well and being good stewards for the planet."

For details about *The Gathering*, visit www.cultgathering.com.

HIGHLIGHTS

THE HUMAN BRAND CHRIS MALONE, CO-AUTHOR *How (and why) your brand must become human*

With so much choice, consumers can select whom they do business with. With cult-brands, they often show irrationally devoted loyalty. They camp out for days before the latest product release or drive miles out of their way to shop. Chris Malone will show how the companies we love act a lot like the individual we trust and admire.

QUESTUS JORDAN BERG, CO-FOUNDER *Can advertising save the world?*

Drawing on his experience producing *The Naked Brand* documentary, Jordan Berg presents a look at the future of advertising. Showing clips of the film from brands that have embraced transparency, he explains how advertising, as a connection between consumers and corporations, can be the linchpin in a revolution that enables corporations to earn billions while moving the planet forward.

ONLINE?

For more information, visit www.cultgathering.com.