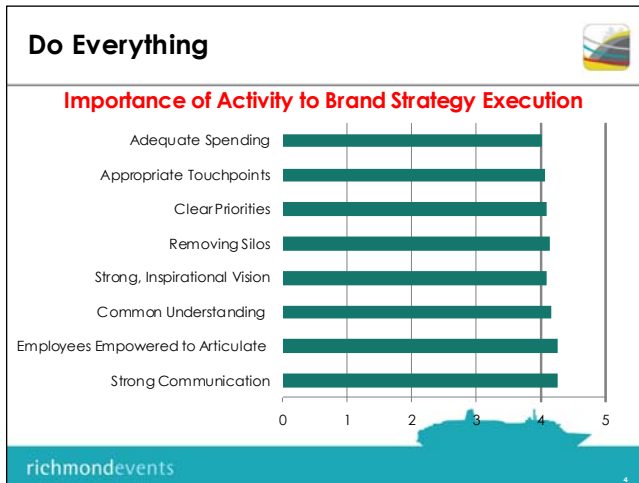
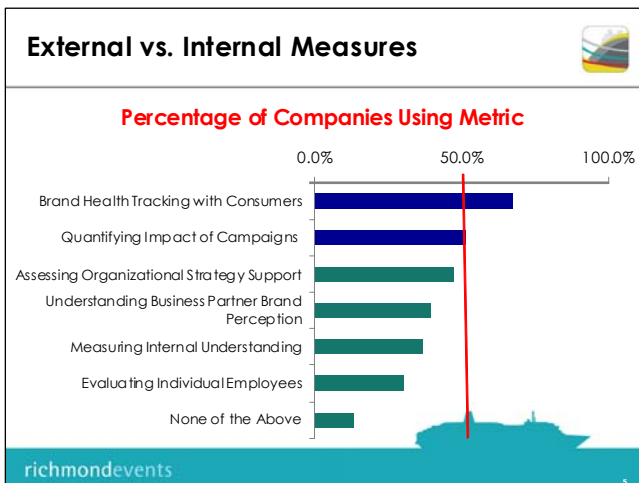


Using Internet Technologies to Operationalize Your Brand

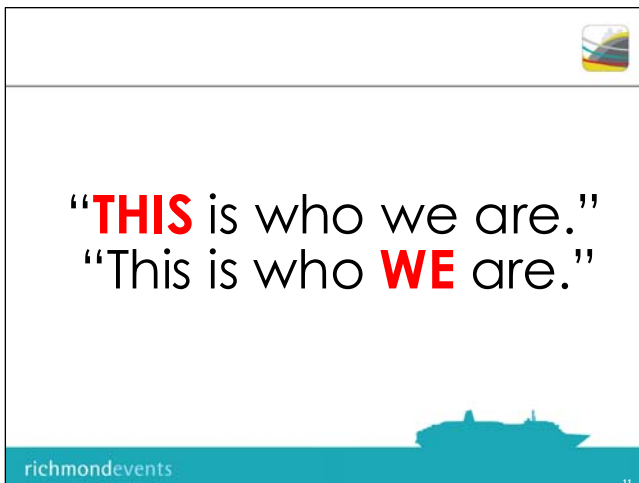
presented at the Digital Symposium 09.25.08



doing everything won't strengthen your brand



the most common measures are external



a brand captures the same idea 2 different ways

investing in the brand doesn't automatically pay off

It's clear, brands drive revenue – but as companies like the Gap have learned, heavy spending on advertising and marketing doesn't automatically pay off. Brand power must be created by something beyond advertising and marketing.

no clarity on how to strengthen the brand

There's no clarity on what are the most important brand strengthening activities. In a survey of executives from over 70 companies representing a range of industries from media to packaged goods, participants indicated all drivers are important.

But you can't do everything.

instead of doing everything, do different things

According to the same survey, marketers are only managing external brand activities – the only measures used by more than 50% of respondents are external ones. When it comes to strengthening the brand, there needs to be more focus internally.

a brand is more than your name or logo

A brand is a bundle of values and attributes that define:

- a product or service's **value that is delivered to its customers** AND
- the **way of doing business** that is the basis of a company's relationships with stakeholders

(A "stakeholder" is a person or group that has an investment, share, or interest in something – in this case, that "something" is your brand. So those who have an investment, share, or interest in your brand are employees, business partners like vendors and distributors, agencies and investors or shareholders.)

Internet technologies like social-networking sites, video sharing sites, wikis, blogs, tagging, social classification, social indexing, virtual realities, etc. can play a role for both parts of the definition of a brand.

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cont.,

Operationalizing the Brand

Brand Delivery System

Select → Make → Distribute

richmondevents

delivering – not just expressing – the brand

eBags is your 'perfect bag' expert

Bagopedia

1,506,598 customer reviews

laptop bag finder

richmondevents

eBags is 'your perfect bag expert'

Innovate and Inspire

SPARQ

NIKEiD

richmondevents

Nike provides innovation and inspiration to every athlete

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not just what you say; what you do

Certainly a brand is strengthened by what you say (what and how you communicate with customers) – but it is primarily what you do (what and how you provide to them) that drives value creation. This is what “**brand as business™**” is all about. **Brand as business** is a management approach that involves the deliberate and systematic management of the business around the brand.

Campaigns like the Doritos Super Bowl contest and bud.tv use Internet technologies to express the brand – but a brand must be expressed and operationalized.

brand operationalization

The dictionary defines **operationalize**: “to put into operation, start working.”

To **operationalize** a brand is to use it -- to drive your business with it and develop an organizational system for delivering brand values and attributes. What we're talking about is a brand delivery system -- identifying, prioritizing, and implementing programs and initiatives based on to deliver the brand through the core organizational operating system.

Internet technologies can deliver the brand

eBags and Nike provide good examples of brands that use new media applications and tactics to deliver their brand platforms.

They show Web 2.0 is not just a way to facilitate communication about your brand – it's a way to actually deliver your brand. If you fail to operationalize your brand, your marketing rings hollow. Even the most innovative campaign doesn't produce results because of the disconnect between the aspirational vision of what you say you are and the stark reality of what you really do.

Moreover, companies that don't develop their brands beyond symbols and ads fall short of their potential. Like a sugary snack that might produce a boost of energy but never fully satisfies, a salient brand might drive short-term results -- but unless it's also substantive, you miss out on the opportunity to create something of enduring value and to stand for something truly meaningful.

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Brand Operationalization

Driver of and **Guide** to Everything You Do

richmondevents

brand as driver and compass

Actual

richmondevents

all stakeholders need engagement and alignment

During the Jam

richmondevents

IBM's ValuesJam

brand as a way of doing business

The second half of the definition of a brand speaks to its value to internal stakeholders. Your brand should drive the organization, aligning and guiding every single business task. And it should serve as a compass, defining what the company does and does not do. Virgin and HP have used their respective brands this way to grow successfully.

internal brand engagement and alignment

Conventional wisdom suggests internal brand efforts should focus on line employees, e.g., employees working the counter at McDonald's or those who play the characters greeting you at Disney World.

But the fact is all internal stakeholders are responsible for the brand. It is as important to ensure strategic management decisions are made through the same filter across the executive committee. Middle managers and agencies and other business partners must also be engaged and aligned.

Stakeholders must be engaged on 2 dimensions:

- horizontal engagement – that is, across the organization all internal stakeholders share a common understanding of the brand
- vertical engagement – that is, each individual person is fully engaged from their:
 - heads -- they're knowledgeable about what the brand stands for and how it is positioned, to
 - hearts -- they're inspired by the brand and motivated to change what they do and how they do it in order to operationalize the brand, to
 - hands and feet -- they're equipped with and empowered by tools to use to interpret and reinforce the brand appropriately.

technology facilitates brand alignment and engagement

Examples of companies using Internet technologies to achieve internal alignment and engagement with the brand include:

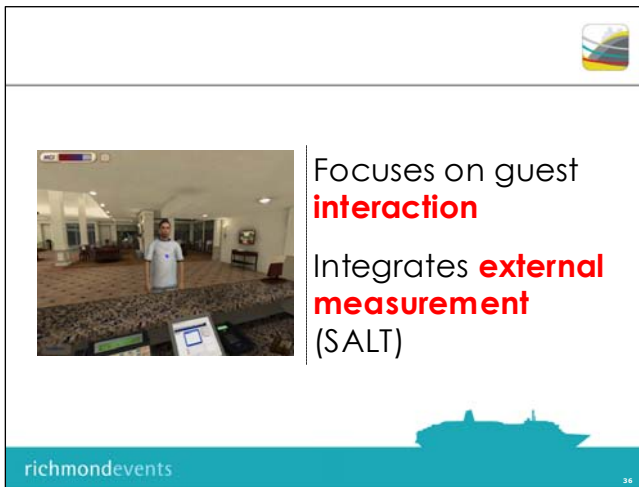
- **IBM** – using unique online collaboration tools and moderation techniques, IBM undertook a 3-day,

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Hilton Garden Inn's videogame-based training



Sony's virtual brand toolbox

enterprise-wide ValuesJam to affirm IBM's reason for being, what sets the company apart, and what should drive their actions as individual IBMers -- in other words, their brand.

- **Hilton Garden Inn** hotels employs a ground-breaking approach to training. "Ultimate Team Play," an interactive videogame program, places team members in situations in a virtual hotel. By linking their actions and the simulated customer responses to external brand tracking measures, employees learn how their actions directly affect the guest, the hotel, and ultimately the brand.
- **Sony** developed a virtual Brand Engagement Toolbox, a collection of tools that inform, inspire, and instruct internal stakeholders – tools like decision trees that guide people through key decisions so that the outcomes support the brand and interactive experiences that help employees learn from each other.

the brand as business organization

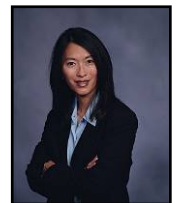
Brand as business requires everyone in your organization to shift their identity from their traditional job description -- instead thinking of themselves as operators of the brand, who develop, maintain, and activate the brand across all of their activities.

The understanding of customers, development of value propositions, and delivery of brand value must be aligned and integrated throughout your company. Customer segmentation, brand platform development, concept testing, etc. are worthless if all that knowledge and insight is not translated into the development of a complete system for delivering value. And new Internet-based marketing techniques employing social media and customer collaboration are great tactics, but we must remember marketing is not an end unto itself.

The goal is a **brand as business** organization.

denise lee yohn is a respected and engaging authority on brands. A sought-after speaker and consulting partner, Denise inspires and teaches companies how to operationalize their brands to grow their businesses. She provides keen insight to how brands can be assets for value creation in today's business. World-class brands including Sony, Frito-Lay, Burger King, and Nautica have called on Denise to improve brand impact.

To book her for a speaking engagement or to learn more about her services, please contact her at 917 446 9325 or mail@deniseleeyohn.com. Visit www.deniseleeyohn.com to read articles Denise has written for Brandweek, American Marketing Association, and other national media, check out her blog, and sign up for her newsletter.



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