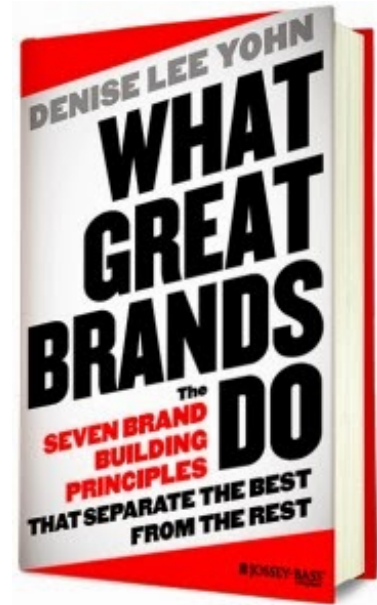


The Brand of a Great Brand

What Great Brands Do: The Seven Brand Building Principles That Separate the Best From the Rest – Denise Lee Yohn (Josey-Bass Books)

Over time I have heard brand defined as a name, a strategy, a logo, a design, a term, an image, advertising, a look and feel, a personality and even an aura of a company or business. While each one of those distinct element may play a role in a businesses overall brand, they aren't truly what defines a company brand.

In What Great Brands Do: The Seven Brand Building Principles That Separate the Best From the Rest, author/consultant Denise Lee Yohn comes close to delivering the broadest, most accurate definition of brand. Yohn describes a brand as “a bundle of values and attributes that define the value you deliver to people through the entire customer experience and the unique way of doing business that forms the basis of your company's relationships with all of its stakeholders.” While that may seem wordy, it does latch directly on to the essence of what great brands should be. Yohn boils down the approach to brand building to seven broad categories with a number of actionable steps that comprise a link in the chain.



The Seven Principles

- 1) Great Brand Start Inside
- 2) Great Brands Avoid Selling Products
- 3) Great Brand Ignore Trends
- 4) Great Brands Don't Chase Customers
- 5) Great Brands Sweat the Small Stuff
- 6) Great Brand Commit and Stay Committed
- 7) Great Brands Never Have to Give Back

While each of the principles plays an integral role in the brand process, it is the first principle that is the most critical in my judgment; great brands start inside. To begin process of building a great company and a brand extension of that company, it critical that there be an internal buy in from all of the constituencies that make up the whole. It is those internal players that will help drive the outward extension of any brand. I found myself nodding in agreement when Yohn writes about great brands ignoring trends, avoiding selling products and chasing customers.

These clearly should never be manifestations of a great brand. By committing to the process and carefully monitoring every step in the process, great brands will reap the benefits of what they sow.