

## Pampers: The Comeback



Just picked up a copy of [What Great Brands Do](#), which is packed with great case-studies focused on Nike, Apple, and the usual suspects, as well as brands that have struggled recently, like Kodak and IBM.

In her chapter called “Great Brands Avoid Selling Products,” author [Denise Lee Yohn](#) takes a close look at Pampers, which had been losing market share to Huggies, in spite of the fact that Pampers was clearly superior at keeping tiny tushies dry.

*When Pampers marketers convened focus groups to study the problem, they soon discovered that dryness wasn't really the ultimate benefit that young mothers wanted from their babies' diapers. The deepest concern expressed by the mothers was for their babies' health and development. Dry diapers were important, but for reasons that Pampers' marketers hadn't fully appreciated: dry diapers allow babies to sleep better, and sound sleep addressed the mothers' fundamental emotional concern about their babies' well-being and development.”*

*Design engineers who worked on Pampers were instructed that improved dryness was no longer their ultimate goal. The new measure of success was how well babies slept, which required the engineers to focus more on studying comfort, fit, and texture.*

*Eventually, Pampers created a new ideal for itself as a brand that would partner with parents throughout their baby's stages of physical, social and emotional development.*

To that end, Procter & Gamble redecorated the Pampers offices with new baby-friendly color schemes, invited mothers and newborns to visit with employees, set up maternity parking and in-house day-care services, and was one of the first companies to offer parenting advice and medical information on its website. Consumers responded to the brand's new emotional connections with them, and global revenue rose from \$3.4 billion in 1997 to \$10 billion in 2001.

How often do those small but pivotal changes come from simply asking customers what they expect of a product?

[Learn more about What Great Brands Do and download a free chapter here .](#)

*Diaper icon by David Lopez from The Noun Project*