

How to Integrate Brand and Culture (and Why You Should): 'Fusion' Author Denise Lee Yohn on Marketing Smarts [Podcast]

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Marketers have long known the importance of brand, and we've developed an appreciation for how company culture impacts things like customer experience and productivity. What brand leadership expert and author [Denise Lee Yohn](#) does in her latest book is to bring those two concepts together and use examples to illustrate how the combo can supercharge your success.



I invited Denise to Marketing Smarts to talk about her book, *[Fusion: How Integrating Brand and Culture Powers the World's Greatest Companies](#)*.

Here are just a few highlights from our conversation:

Building a valuable brand requires more than great messaging and a good tagline (04:09): "It's a lot easier to say something than do it. That applies definitely to brand-building. I've met many entrepreneurs who are very creative and have all sorts of ideas for how they want to express themselves. While those things are important—having a good tagline, good messaging, distinctive visual identity—all those things are important, but **it really comes down to what you're doing that is unique and relevant and creates real values for your customers**. That's a lot harder to figure out, but that's really what sustains your business."

Aligning brand and culture enhances customer experience in ways that grow your business (17:45): "At the high level, you deliver on your brand promise. If Amazon were to say 'we want to be Earth's most customer-centric company, so we're developing innovations that make our shopping experience so intuitive and seamless and personalized,' that's what they say their brand is about. But then if the customer experience is clunky, it's slow, it's generic, there's certainly that gap. At the high level, it makes it very clear what your brand stands for and what culture you need to cultivate in order to deliver on that brand."

To enhance your external customer experience, you must first look within (18:40): "I don't think you can expect your employees to deliver to customers experiences that they don't have themselves. If you want your employees to create this tech-enabled, seamless experience for your customers, but what they experience inside your organization is old-school systems that don't work and everything is still un-automated, it's really an unrealistic expectation for them to be able to deliver those customer experiences. By really making sure that your culture delivers on that experience for your employees, you're setting your employees up for success in delivering those experiences to customers."

Integrating brand and culture is even more critical if you're B2B (19:30): "The need for brand culture fusion might be even stronger in B2B, especially B2B organizations that are services. If you're talking about industrial manufacturers, that may be a little less the case, but for software providers, consultants, agencies, financial institutions, etc., so much of the value you're delivering to your customer is going through your people. In many cases, your people are your product, so they need to be the ultimate embodiment of your brand. Really engaging them in a culture that helps them understand the distinguishing values and attributes of your brand, helping them create services and be able to deliver those services on brand—that is so critical to ultimately developing your brand as a B2B company. It's so much more people-dependent."

To learn more, visit DeniseLeeYohn.com or follow Denise on Twitter: [@DeniseLeeYohn](https://twitter.com/DeniseLeeYohn). And pick up your copy of *[Fusion: How Integrating Brand and Culture Powers the World's Greatest Companies](#)*.

Denise and I talked about much more, so be sure to listen to the entire show, which you can do above, or [download the mp3](#) and listen at your convenience. Of course, you can also [subscribe to the Marketing Smarts podcast in iTunes](#) or [via RSS](#) and never miss an episode!

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This episode features:

Denise Lee Yohn, brand leadership expert, business keynote speaker, and bestselling author of several books, including *What Great Brands Do: The Seven Brand-Building Principles That Separate the Best From the Rest* and *Fusion: How Integrating Brand and Culture Powers the World's Greatest Companies*. Follow Denise on Twitter: [@deniseleeyohn](https://twitter.com/deniseleeyohn).



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