

# Brand integrity

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Brand Integrity EXECUTIVE SUMMARY The article Brand Integrity written by Tom Peters and Valarie Willis, at the outset questions how one can sustain the power of a brand. The authors of the article are of the opinion that if the focus is only on profits, the brand may lose its customers. It is therefore important to ensure that the brand always delivers what it stands for even in tough business conditions.

The brand manager should be able to think through the maze of financial data and disturbing news and should be able to keep focus on the brand. The authors suggest that in case of a difficult situation, the brand manager should go back to the drawing board and revise the goal, if required. He should communicate with the employees, and recognize their contribution towards the brand promise. In an unfavorable economic environment, holding on to the loyal customers is the key to success.

The article poses five questions as part of the ‘ Excellence Audit’. These questions focus on team members being committed to a common cause and giving in their best to achieve that cause. This audit uncovers the strengths and weaknesses of the organization with the help of quantitative data. A quiz comprising of ten questions that helps examine how connected the employees are to the brand promise is also mentioned in the article.

The article puts forth a potentially controversial argument that the customers come second and that, in reality, employees of the organization who serve these customers come first. The article, through a dialogue conveys that the marketplace customer is “ first” but the employee serving the customer is “ more first”. The internal ambience, excitement, exuberance and spirit of the organization should create that magnetic pull on

the customer, asserts the article. The article also suggests that every employee has the potency to become a leader if the leadership development process is initiated early.

#### ANALYSIS

When the business environment is not propitious, say there is a recession, cost cutting, layoffs are a common phenomenon. The pressure on profitability may lead managers to ignore the needs of the employees as well as the customers. I feel that gains obtained by compromising the brand promise or not treating the employees in a fair manner would be short-lived. An organization gains the most through its loyal customers. It is important to remember that customers will remain loyal only if the brand delivers on its promise. Thus, any attempt to hoodwink the customer will have adverse consequences on brand performance.

As stated in the article, the employees of an organization are of paramount important. At the end of the day, it is the employees who make or break the organization. The argument that employees come “ more first” fits perfectly for service originations. If employees are not happy, the service quality will fall and the brand image is bound to take a beating.

The importance of people has been recognized in the service industry. It is for this reason that services have an extended marketing mix. In addition to the 4 Ps that products have, services have ‘ people’ as part of their marketing mix. It is always great to visit McDonald’s or KFC because the employees are well trained, adorn a smile and are happy to help the customers. Southwest Airlines has been immensely successful because of its top-notch customer services, an aspect that could not have been achieved

without a team of satisfied employees. Disney World is another example wherein a company has reached dizzy heights because of its employees who help deliver the Disney's brand promise of 'exceptional experience'.

In the present day competitive world, experts talk about holistic marketing concept, of which internal marketing is a vital component. Internal marketing highlights the importance of inspiring and empowering employees to achieve organizational goals. The same message has been conveyed in article 'Brand Integrity'.