



CARTY DESIGN + MEDIA

visual communication :: interactive by design

CD+M

Image and perception help drive value: with an

Good Design Is Good Business

Thomas Watson

Authenticity, clarity, truth
and emotion are the real
benchmarks of successful
brands.

CANADA'S BRANDSCAPE: INSIGHTS LEARNED FROM CANADA'S TOP BRANDS

CD+M: Keys to branding success

CARTY DESIGN + MEDIA

www.cartydesign.com

info@cartydesign.com

+ 1 604 609 6604

visual communication :: interactive by design



CD+M

Image and perception help drive value: will an

Good Design Is Good Business

— Thomas Watson

Authenticity, clarity, truth and emotion are the real benchmarks of successful brands.

BRANDING

CANADA'S BRANDSCAPE: INSIGHTS LEARNED FROM CANADA'S TOP BRANDS

Spirit of Place

Unique history, habitat and culture. Symbols of our most authentic gifts and essential attributes and adaptations enabling us to thrive in our surroundings and make a valuable contribution in some way.

Our values (codes of behaviour) drive long-term brand success. Understanding cultural values, the basis of authenticity, is an essential competitive advantage.

Successful organizations have their own authenticity: high quality, impeccable service, design prowess etc., that make their products or services desirable and distinct from their competitors. Each brings a unique history, culture and values (spirit of place) to bear in the way they create customer experiences. No matter how well conceived, business and marketing strategies must be in sync and then in step with authentic organizational culture.

1. Authenticity

“ ‘Rendering authenticity’ is one of the most critical factors for success in almost any business today. Consumers and B2B customers purchase offerings based on how well those purchases conform to their own self image... People no longer accept fake offerings from slickly marketed phonies; they want real offerings from genuinely transparent sources.”

– E. Joseph Pine and Jim Gilmore, *The Experience Economy*

Authenticity seems particularly relevant for the Canadian market. Based on research conducted by Environics, there is clear evidence that Canadians are more skeptical about advertising than are Americans.

“Branding is far more than a logo or an ad—it’s about the authentic truth behind

the image, the promise of performance, the consistency of experience. All effective branding happens from the inside out.”

– Judith John, Senior Vice-President, Communications and Marketing, Mount Sinai Hospital

2. Culture

Most organizations don’t realize the value of their culture as a competitive advantage. “Your corporate culture very much defines who you are as a company and what it means to be true to self. The essence of authenticity is respect for your heritage, a sense of purpose and your values. Corporate culture is the sum of your body of values.”

– E. Joseph Pine, *The Experience Economy*

Understanding and nurturing corporate culture as part of brand definition is one of the fundamentals of business success—a refrain echoed by executives with Canada’s most successful brands.

“Culture and brand are one and the same. The culture creates the brand. The brand is the experience that people have when they encounter us. Whether it’s on the phone, at the airport, on the flight or when they have a problem, it’s all the brand. Our culture is embedded in every part of our business. What has amazed me is just how powerful this really is



CD+M

Image and perception help drive value

Good Design Is Good Business

— Thomas Watson

Authenticity, clarity, truth and emotion are the real benchmarks of successful brands.

BRANDING

Great Canadian brands

- Aeroplan
- Air Canada
- Canadian Tire
- CBC
- Cirque du Soleil
- McCain Foods
- RBC Royal Bank
- Rogers
- Roots
- Tim Hortons
- Umbra
- Vancity
- WestJet

and how few people understand it. Until you live it, breathe it, and are part of it, it's almost impossible to grasp.”
 – Clive Beddoe, CEO, WestJet

3. Values

Companies trying to develop values need to realize that they already have values – they just need to discover them. Changing values is long hard work that can only be achieved through acknowledgment and understanding the limits to what you can do defined by your heritage, your origins and your history—your spirit of place.

4. Meaning

“... for companies to achieve enduring competitive advantage... they must address their customers’ essential human need for meaning”
 – Steve Diller, Nathan Shedroff and Darrel Rhea, *Making Meaning*

“The brands that we value most are the ones that feed our hunger for authenticity and belonging.”

– Jeanette Hanna and Alan Middleton, *ikonica. A Field Guide to Canada’s Brandscape*

5. Distinctly Canadian

“A brand has to be distinct, it has to have clear attributes, it has to have practical and emotional benefits...”

“The Canadian brandscape is quite subtle, it’s intrinsic, it’s humble, but it’s very passionate when you scratch the

surface. If you don’t do your homework right, you’ll get it completely wrong, essentially just a slightly pickier version of American, which is very, very off where we really are. Talk to the consumers or participants in your industry on a qualitative, non-focus-group basis... something where people don’t just give you a ranking of attributes, but give you opinions and hopes and aspirations and desires.”

– Rupert Duchesne, CEO and President, Aeroplan

6. Storytelling

“All good communications comes down to storytelling... The brand is the truth behind the image, delivering content with credibility, authenticity and emotion...”
 – Judith John, Senior Vice-President, Communications and Marketing, Mount Sinai Hospital

“For any organization that wants to endure and build long-term value, being true and genuine is essential.”

“If you start to chronicle the great stories that people tell about when they have been at their best as a company—whether it was something that they created or a crisis or how they decided to grow—it gives you signposts to the character behind the behaviour. You have to push people to look beyond the surface, beyond what they would tell someone to sound more important or more interesting than they really are. Then what you find are some very genuine, important



CD+M

Image and perception help drive value: with an

Good Design Is Good Business

— Thomas Watson

Authenticity, clarity, truth and emotion are the real benchmarks of successful brands.

BRANDING

characteristics that can be significant in differentiating why someone would want to work with them. It's those stories that are at the heart of great brands."

—Scott Lerman, founder of Lucid Brands

Great brands are continually exploring these simple, but essential, questions: What will we do in the world? What will we mean to the world? What is our character? What is our story? In addition **Successful brands share a number of best practices including:**

1. Strong, positive leadership: Their passion is for performance that attracts customers.
2. Clear brand meaning
3. Integrity in approach: Based on real values of respect for customers, employees and communities.
4. Teamwork: The brand is shared and engaged by every part of the organization.
5. Learning and persistence: Learning from successes and failures.
6. Measurement: Develop formal and informal feedback loops to keep relevant and aware of prevailing conditions.

The Best Stories Win!

Some of the preceding is reproduced in part from: *ikonica. A Field Guide to Canada's Brandscape*
— Jeanette Hanna and Alan Middleton

If you have any questions about how you can improve your branding, give us a call. Download the [Branding + Identity Process](#) whitepaper from the CD+M website.

info@cartydesign.com
+ 1 604 609 6604
www.cartydesign.com

visual communication :: interactive by design