

**JEFF MANNING;
BUILDING BRAND & CATEGORY POTENCY**

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Objective: Help you generate one decent idea that will build your brand and/or category.

Origins of Brand Potency:

- Application of Got Milk? to mature brands and categories.
- Reflects over a decade of marketing milk vs. Coke, Pepsi, Gatorade and bottled waters.
- What we learned has been adapted and evolved for each client and audience.
- Brand Potency has been presented to Clorox, General Mills, H-P, the AMA and marketing conferences globally.
- Brand Potency is highly tactile and does not lend itself easily to hard copy.
- Below are thoughts on reigniting the credit union category.

Found the Brand:

- A powerful brand or category strategy is not expressed in paragraphs.
- It is a painfully lean, carefully chiseled statement that answers one question...
- “Why should anyone choose my brand or category?”
- Got Milk? was founded on the premise that no other beverage, not Coke or OJ or water, can replace milk with certain foods.
- When your bowl is filled with Honey Nut Cherrios or your mouth is crammed with Oreos, you must have milk. If not, your world comes to a screeching halt.
- This “Deprivation Strategy” was the genesis of Got Milk? and its guiding light.

A Strategy Must Be:

- Competitive
- Proprietary
- Potent
- Pliable
- Sustainable
- True

Worship Ideas:

- The greatest strategy is the world is only as powerful as the ideas to execute it.
- Never stop seeking ideas.
- Even if only 1 out of 10 hits the market, it help transform a brand or category.

Recognize the Brand:

- We failed miserably publicizing “milk”.
- People, including reporters and writers, believed that milk was white and came in gallons.
- They were right and declined to cover our category.
- However, after flushing \$300,000 down the marketing toilet, we came to the rather profound conclusion that our brand was “Got Milk? not “milk”.
- What followed was over a decade of unprecedented media coverage.
- Ask the question... What is our brand?

Make The Brand Pervasive:

- The issue is not if one reaches your target audience.
- It is how many times and in how many ways each day.
- Changes behavior takes massive repetition.
- Internet marketing, and social media in particular, can help.
- But one needs to think much more broadly, unearthing multiple ways to intersect your brand or category with the people who can choose them.

Avoid Death By Command:

- Human beings generally do not do what they are ordered to do.
- They certainly don't race out and buy brands of food or cars or financial services just because a marketer tells them to.
- Imagine the theme line "Get Milk".
- Would it have captured the attention and hearts of America the way Got Milk? did?
- Enthrall your customers. Intrigue them. Engage and involve them. Please do not command them.

Own Your Brand's Mistakes:

- It is hugely tempting to shift responsibility for soft sales or lost distribution or shrinking share.
- Often service suppliers, advertising agencies in particular, become scapegoats.
- However, one of the most critical moments in a brand or categories maturation comes when management or industry leaders accept responsibility.
- Only then can substantive change happen.

Make the Brand Smile:

- It only takes a glance at the WSJ or New York Times to reinforce the massive issues facing the country and world.
- People, especially those facing financial decisions, need to be uplifted, need to smile.
- One of the great, unacknowledged engines of the Got Milk? campaign was its ability to make people smile, even laugh out loud.
- Without knowing it, humor, intelligent wit, became the bridge between the category and the end users.

Embody the Brand:

- The people who speak for a brand or category should be considered ambassadors, not pitch people.
- Looked at this way, their role is to build relationships, not sell.
- Got Milk? had many ambassadors, many glamorous celebrities.
- But the most important were the parents who, on their own, talked about the campaign (and milk) with their friends and family.
- Perhaps the most telling moment came in a focus group when a mom related that her 7 year old daughter asked for a "glass of Got Milk?" with her cookies.

Recognize Brand or Category Boundaries:

- Every brand or category has logical and/or emotional boundaries.
- We tried to promote milk in upscale, white table cloth restaurants.
- Despite an opportunity to increase their beverage revenues, they closed down the idea.
- Milk simply did not fit with their menus and, they believed, their clientele.
- It is critical for category marketers to probe and recognize these boundaries and not spend time and money “swimming upstream”.

Embrace Intelligent Risk:

- Jeff Goodby, the creative force behind the Got Milk? advertising taught me this lesson.
- He encouraged his people to push far beyond logical limits for new TV ideas.
- And he asked me to stay open, not make early judgment and be willing to not just take, but embrace risk.
- This is especially important when a category, like credit unions, faces a volatile market, intense competition and sliding sales and share.

Empower the Brand:

- There are many ways to empower a brand or category beyond doing cutting edge advertising.
- New features and services can add great value.
- Often, dismantling barriers or exploding misperceptions can transform consumer perceptions and behavior.
- Got Milk? The Book was hardly a literary feat.
- But it added enormous credibility and distinction to the campaign and was the spring board for unprecedented publicity.
- The internet provides an ever expanding (and highly cost efficient) array of brand value options.

Establishing Category ROI:

- Establishing an ROI for a category marketing program makes brand evaluation look easy.
- A multitude of factors, including branded efforts, complicate the issue.
- And, to up the ante, evaluating a service sector category is more difficult than consumer packaged goods like milk or cereal.
- The best measures are consumer awareness, attitudes and usage frequency.
- The best approach is to field a benchmark study before any category marketing is done and follow with research waves at regular intervals, starting at a year or 18 months.

Act As If Your Category Will Never Die:

- This means taking intelligent risks, setting aside brand issues for the good of the industry, assuming a highly competitive stance and being willing to invest in the category.

What Category Marketing Can and Cannot Do:

Category Marketing Can:

- Unearth category issues/barriers
- Reposition entire industry
- Counter competitive assaults
- Drive top of mind awareness
- Get in consideration set
- Engage media
- Build platform for brand growth
- Unify an entire industry

It Cannot:

- Address price
- Sell products & services
- Gain distribution
- Lobby, internally or externally
- Support individual brands

Credit Union Issues:

- Objective: Get in Consideration Set
- Obstacles are Category, Not Brand Centric
- Metrics: Awareness, Perception, Trial, Share of \$ Services
- Optimum Target
- Category Versus Brand Development
- Funding: Where Do dollars Come From?
- Budget: What is Minimum to Accomplish Objective?
- Management: who makes Category Decisions?
- Leadership: Industry, Association or From Outside?
- Who Develops the Plan?
- How is Category marketing Evaluated?

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