As “branding practitioners” it is our job to advise our clients on how to turn their products into products-for-markets and thereafter into product brands. Not all products are brands, but all brands are products or services.

A product is not a brand because you say so or because your brand manager title suggests so. The axiomatic statement (not proven) says that products live on shelves and brands live in consumers’ heads in the form of perceptions. Let’s assume that it is axiomatically correct for this discussion. Let’s also assume we got our market segmentation right and we are now confronted with the task of turning a physical product or a service promise into a core message/experience that we can transfer through experience and communication into the heads of our target customers. This alone will take time to explain (I only have 400 words for this article). So let’s only concentrate on the crafting of the message/experience.

We must start by defining our unique value proposition. Our product offering must have functional utility, be differentiated (faster, cheaper, better) and be relevant (semiotic [signal], social, individual or economic) before we can construct a product value offering that is so compelling that our clients will enthusiastically, and of their own accord, using their own resources and risking their own reputations, promote our value proposition to their networks in order to build or enhance their own images or to reinforce their membership to certain consumer groups or movements.

We live in a world of fractal interdependence. The key to the above “branding” process is the creation of “fractal self-similarity”.

Fractal (a small piece of the whole) self-similarity (the small piece is similar to the whole) is a mathematical equation/postulation developed by the mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot in the 1950s.

Simply put, a product’s compelling offering is communicated to/experienced by a customer who encodes, decodes and transmits it as a self-similar fractal (DNA) of the value proposition to the next person, who in turn may pass on the message and or buy the product, get the same experience and message and continue to pass on the brands fractal self-similar DNA by recommending it to the next person, etc.

Non-experimental research leads to pseudo knowledge. Reading branding books alone does not give us knowledge of branding. Only experimental science will give us real knowledge. Hypothetically we suggest that this is how branding practically works.

At Espial’s BrandLab we are testing the following branding hypothesis:

Branding Velocity (verb) = f (translation of a product’s “truth” statement into a fractal self-similar experience/message (DNA) x (multiplied by) the consistency and intensity of Word of Mouth transfer of the offerings’ DNA as measured by the Net Promoter Score)

How do you recommend an experience to a friend?

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