

# A Brand Revolutionaries' Manifesto

Believe. Rule.



# Yes, this is a manifesto.

A declaration of what's wrong with the current state of branding. A platform of beliefs. But not anti-social. Not anti-marketing. Certainly not anti-agency — or we wouldn't be putting this out there. Even though it's a bit daring for us to do to it.

This manifesto is totally pro-marketer. You might even consider it revolutionary — especially if you've worked with brand consulting companies or ad agencies that don't subscribe to these seven, simply stated beliefs.

Why seven — not five or ten? Because in numerology, seven is the number that signifies completion. The end of something good. So start something good for you and your brand now. Consider the following seven beliefs to do what this movement should inspire you to do —

**Take control of your brand and rule your market.**

manifesto

# I believe that I'm more than a marketer.

Sure, your market is that place where your brand is sold and bought. And when you're managing all the details behind that transaction — segmenting your customers, pricing, distribution, promotion — you're being a marketer. But the place in which you establish your brand is really more of a landscape than a market. More sensitive to changes in the environment. To fluctuations in the economic climate. To human activity. It's your brand.

Your brand is the view your customers and your prospects see as they weigh all their options for purchase or their decision to engage in some other way with your brand. So when you're establishing how you want your brand to be perceived in that landscape and continually making sure your brand stands out in the field of other alternatives, you're much more than a marketer.

**More than a brand manager.  
You're a brand revolutionary.**

more than a marketer

# I believe my brand should be rooted inside my company. Not my agency.

Here's a simple truth — a brand is more than you may have been led to think. A brand is not just a logo. It's not just a slogan. It's certainly more than an advertising campaign. That's simply what you see on the surface.

It's not what you say you will do for the customer, it's how you deliver on your promise to the customer. The experience you can create for the customer. That's not something an agency can do for you. That has to come from inside your organization. Deep inside.

A brand is the sum total of its relationship with customers. It's an experience — and it should be a different experience, one that's as refreshing as it is beneficial. And that experience has many dimensions. Most of the time, the experience is all about the product or service. Sometimes it has everything to do with how your people interact and behave with your customers. Other times it's about how customers perceive your values as a corporate citizen. And at times, it's even about the customer-facing processes and logistics.

In fewer cases than you'd think, the experience is about the advertising. That's the surface of the brand — the top marketing layer — all the sensory messages in all the right places that invite your customers deeper into your brand experience.

**This is exactly why brand revolutionaries and their teams must drive the development of their brands.**

# I believe my brand must have a healthy ecosystem.

A brand is a living thing. Once it's established, it requires rapt attention and constant care — because if it's living, it's also mortal. And because it is such a valuable business asset, you want to ensure its longevity.

But that doesn't necessarily mean that the more mature the brand, the stronger it is or the more brand equity it has acquired. A well-established brand can weaken and become unhealthy simply because it doesn't have the strong ecosystem it needs to stay active and vibrant.

Your brand's ecosystem is the community of customers, prospects, employees and suppliers who surround your brand— all the relationships your brand depends upon to sustain it. To survive challenges. To generate new opportunities. To become the leader in its brand.

The more involved the community becomes with your brand, the faster it grows and the healthier it stays over the long term. But how do you get the level of involvement that your brand needs to remain viable? By inciting interaction within the community. By constantly exchanging fresh information. Sharing new experiences with the brand. Enjoying genuine conversations. By acknowledging the diversity in the community and offering content that's relevant to specific segments of the community.

## Now that's brand symbiosis.

# I believe my brand thrives on customer insights.

By “customers” we don’t just mean those people who purchase what your brand offers. We mean anyone who engages or may engage with your brand — the people who always buy, have yet to buy and may have bought at one time. Your employees, board members and even suppliers who help the brand live up to its promise. Make it prove its value.

By “insights” we don’t mean the information you get from mining customer data. Insights are much more meaningful. They’re not about what or where customers buy — but why they buy at all. You can’t get these insights from your CRM management database or a customer satisfaction survey. You get them through great dialogue. Genuine conversations with the people who prefer your brand, those who prefer other brands, and those who aren’t even aware that you exist. Real personal exchange that pulls out unmet emotional needs and undiscovered behaviors that help you differentiate your brand in a way that is completely credible, relevant and valuable to your customers.

A new brand needs customer insights to get a solid start in its brand. An established brand needs them to make sure it’s always placed in the best possible light.

# I believe branding should be less complex. And more complete.

It really isn't rocket science. But some people have made it seem like it is. You've read their books. Each presenting a new approach that contradicts the last. Each defining the same terms a bit differently. And you've probably been through more than a few different branding exercises yourself. But even then, do you know what a good approach really looks like? It should look as streamlined as this:

**Discover New Customer Insights > Establish Brand Identity > Develop Brand Drivers**

And what should you expect when “branding” is done? Well, you should expect documentation of the results of this process — a working guide to use as your brand evolves with its brand. At a minimum:

**Customer Insights.** A synthesis of the key observations and findings of your dialogue with customers and prospects that helped pollinate your brand identity. These insights will change over time, so it helps to have a point of reference as they do.

Continued...

**Brand Identity Elements.** The facets of how your brand presents itself in the brand to create the experience that appeals most to its customers.

- Connections** All the ways in which the brand connects emotionally to the customer. Its human attributes – its personality. The way it reflects itself visually — its style. The way it speaks to its “people” — its voice.
- Promise** The single point of your brand’s difference that provides a relevant value to the customer — and that you continually and consistently deliver.
- Experience** A visualization of the experience that customers will have as they engage with your brand.
- Positioning** A statement of how you wish the brand to be perceived in the marketplace — what your brand hopes to achieve.

**Brand Drivers.** A system of elements that will help you establish and nurture your brand over the long term.

- Logo** The visual representation of your brand name and icon.
- Tagline** The one line which sums up your promise.
- Messaging** The system of consistent messages that describe the experience customers have engaging with your brand.



# I believe branding should be faster to implement. And more affordable.

Here's a little ditty to remember: Over a year to create — you're way too late.

If the development or re-development of a brand takes months and months to launch, it's likely your brand has already changed from the time you started. That's a waste of time and resources.

If you have a streamlined process, most brand strategy development shouldn't take more than five or six months — usually even less. Having an outside person — an objective branding professional — facilitate your team's brand development work accelerates the process. Generating customer insights. Leading working sessions. Keeping your team on task. Synthesizing all the input. Documenting your work.

**The result — faster and more cost-effective implementation.  
At the right time in the right time frame.**

more affordable

# I believe my brand must be sustainable.

The fittest brand. The healthiest ecosystem. That's what it takes to have a sustainable brand. One that holds competitive advantage over the long term. Always increasing its ability to compete because it has strong roots. Having the ability to adapt quickly to changes in its environment even before the change happens. Knowing that it has the flexibility to evolve with your business and new brand architectures.

And you can measure sustainability. It's based on the scope and depth of customer engagement with your total brand experience. The more often they engage, the more comfortable they become. The more deeply they engage, the more loyal they become. The more loyal they become, the more they invite others to share your brand experience.

So how does a sustainable brand contribute to the success of a business?

It is seen as trustworthy, so it reduces customer risk and accelerates the customer acquisition process. That requires less time and fewer resources.

It lowers customer churn — that is, it increases customer retention. The cost of acquiring a customer is estimated as five times greater than the cost of retaining a customer. That's money saved.

It creates an uneven playing field among competitors. Strong brands have the advantage. They have the power to compete on something other than price. You can take that to the bank.

# We believe in full disclosure and complete transparency. This eBook is brought to you by an agency.

TMA+Peritus is a branding, content marketing and web development agency with offices in Madison and Wausau, Wisconsin. TMA+Peritus helps companies create and take control of their brands with a fresh, understandable, fast and affordable approach to establishing and sustaining their brands in ever-changing landscapes. The approach is called branding.

But we just facilitate your work. Remember, you're the brand revolutionary.

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Madison  
33 W. Main Street  
Suite 451  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

Wausau  
One Corporate Drive  
Suite 404  
Wausau, Wisconsin 54401

