



Xanthus Communications

Media Jockey

A Newsletter from Xanthus Communications

Brand Kill



Whether you are a "company," a "product" or a "person," your brand must be in alignment with your business. Otherwise, in no time at all, your brand can be relegated to creating the perception of being a cheap novelty item. Assessing alignment poses a simple question: How much value do you bring to your customer or clients?

Issue 32 March 30, 2010

Killing your brand.

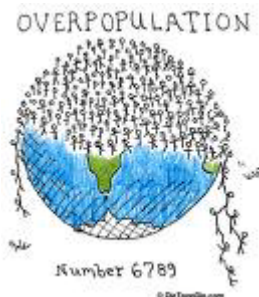
Dear Friends and Colleagues: Greetings! I recently moderated a panel at an event called PR + Mktg Camp, where the focus was on social media. An Atlanta-based marketing professional used Jones Soda as an exemplary case study of a company that really knew how to use social media to build a brand.



What good is it to have the greatest marketing in the world if your business is dying?

In the past, I have been "inside" Jones Soda. For years, the founding CEO and brilliant entrepreneur Peter van Stolk ran the company with a tight rein. The company was known among creative professionals for having a famously lean marketing and advertising budget. They didn't spend a lot of money outsourcing creative and did most of their marketing in-house. And they did an exceptional job.

Brand by the numbers



Today to become successful

Jones Soda used clever and memorable marketing initiatives that focused on people, and they interacted directly with consumers. "Run with the little guy... create some change" is the tag line printed on most Jones Soda bottles. Jones Soda successfully built a brand to achieve cult-like status around its unusual flavors of soft drinks including, Blue Bubblegum, Green Apple, FuFu Berry, and Mashed Potato. Who could forget the "Turkey & Gravy" seasonal flavor in honor of Thanksgiving and Ham-flavored sodas for Christmas? In the end, the Jones Soda's brand stood for populist innovation and had penetrated all aspects of our psyche and popular culture: Hollywood, music, TV, television commercials, the fast food nation and fashion.



as a creative or as a business professional you must compete with more people than ever. It's a matter of numbers. Back in the 1970s there were three billion people on the planet. Now there are nearly 7 billion. The world population has more than doubled and these numbers are not just an explosion of growth in poor nations. In the US alone, a population that was 200 million in 1970 is now 305 million! You must work hard to stand out from the crowd. More than ever, you need to build a strong brand so that you can be found among so many people who are vying to achieve the same things that you want to achieve.

Brand Resurrection



Storytelling is the key factor to the success of a brand. A good story well told never dies. One thing that holds true for a well developed brand, even if the business dies, the brand can be resurrected and have a second life. For a brand to have a second life, all it needs is money.

The company River West Brands LLC specializes in Brand Acquisition and Enterprise Development and acquires, redevelops, and monetizes iconic brands that have been significantly distressed. [River West Brands](#) currently owns a graveyard of dead brands: Salon Selectives Hair Care

Not spending huge sums of money on marketing is not what is killing Jones Soda as a company. If Jones Soda's demise isn't a matter of cost overruns or inefficiencies, what's the problem? Maybe the problem is with the product itself. Latke-flavored soda for Chanukah might fetch a good price on e-bay, but who wants to drink it? If I'm going to drink something as sugary as soda, I'd rather have a coke and at least get a buzz. A bottle of Jones Soda looks cool, especially when it's used as prop in a movie, but have you ever craved a bottle of jelly doughnut-flavored soda?

For two years, Jones Soda's stock price has been steadily trading for under a dollar on the NASDAQ. Jones Soda should only be used as case study of what not to do. There is no point in building a great brand if your business cannot live up to all the hype. In the end, it is all about making sure your business is in alignment with your brand.



Best Regards,
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[Visit PRforPeople to learn more about our experts](#)

Here are some sure fire ways to kill your brand:

Offer low-quality products or services.

An increasing pattern of unhappy customers or unhappy clients is the surest way to determine that the quality of what you offer is just not good enough. In the increasing competition for jobs, markets and mind share, you must deliver products and services with the highest degree of excellence. No matter what type of business you are in, always keep in mind the word-of-mouth is the primary way that we all generate revenue. You must consistently perform at your highest level, so your clients or customers have a sense that what you offer is the best.



Offer products or services that are no longer needed.

This is a toughie and requires brutal self-honesty. Your products

**Brim Fill it to the Rim with
Brim**
**Bonwit Teller Apparel &
Accessories**
Underalls Undergarments

All of these brands were once fairly large sized companies' that went out of business. And yet their brands were considered valuable enough to still be considered an asset. Always consider when you build your brand, to some extent you can retain equity. You can go to the bank with brand names and ask for credit. So how much is that really worth?



Brand + Business Alignment

Only one thing is for certain: your brand is only as good as the business it serves.

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or services may have become obsolete. The need for your products or services is no longer there or the need has dramatically decreased. This realization should put you at a fork in the road. You need to build a new brand. You need to build a new business. You need to do something else.

Fragment your brand.

If you have not firmly established your brand, you cannot afford to be a dilettante at many things. I have seen one creative professional recently do furniture design, graphic design, interior design, floral design, fashion design, art, acting, and writing, and still be available to play the clown at a children's birthday party. If your brand is not firmly established, no one will find you to be credible when you claim to have so many services to offer. You must build your overarching brand and become known for your consistency and reliability before you start creating brand extensions. If you do moonlight as a clown, an actor, or a dog walker, then set up a separate brand identity, a separate business, and use a separate business card. Otherwise people will be confused about brand and what services you offer. If you are all things to all people, you will be perceived as being valuable to no one.

PRforPeople-Seattle Networking Thursday, April 1st.

pr for people™
Be famous for who you are and what you do.



Join us for Happy Hour!

Thursday, April 1st
4pm to 6pm

Patricia Cameron Art Gallery

234 Dexter Avenue North (Between Denny and Mercer) Seattle, WA 98121

Artist Milan Heger will talk about "Art and Brand." PRforPeople-Seattle: a business networking group brings together professionals from diverse sectors and businesses to support one other in the pursuit of professional excellence in both career and

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For questions or comments,
please reply to
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*The event is being sponsored by Xanthus Communications and its subsidiary PRforPeople..
Beverages and hors d'oures will be served. There are no admission fees or any other costs.
No need to rsvp. Just bring yourselves, your colleague, your friends and plenty of business
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