

# DISPATCHES™

Insights On Brand Development From The Marketing Front

---

Sunday, July 13, 2008

## AN INTERVIEW WITH BRENDA BENCE—ABOUT YOU™!

Recently we had a chance to ask Brenda Bence, our partner living in Bangkok, Thailand, a few questions about her new book, How YOU™ are like Shampoo. Whether we're aware of it or not, as Brenda points out, each of us is a brand. And, especially in the workplace, we spend much of our lives “building” our own brands. Brenda's book applies the principles we have always espoused in building corporate brands to building our own personal brands—with many practical techniques. But let's hear more straight from her:

**Q: How does personal branding relate to corporate branding?**

**A:** Just as corporate branding is about the way you want consumers to perceive, think, and feel about your brand versus competition, *personal* branding is “the way you want people to perceive, think, and feel about *you* in relation to others.”

**Q: So, how can a person be compared to shampoo?**

**A:** The same elements that are used to craft a corporate brand can be applied to you – as an individual – to help you define and effectively communicate your unique personal brand in the workplace. So, just as you use a proven system to successfully brand a shampoo, an individual can use the same system – with a few adaptations, of course – to brand him or herself.

**Q: What does YOU™ mean?**

**A:** “YOU™ is a phrase I created and trademarked to stand for *your personal brand* – the ‘trademarked you.’ So... who are YOU™?”

**Q: Why is it important to brand oneself?**

**A:** Whether you know it or not, you already have a personal brand. Just as corporate brands exist in the minds of consumers, your own personal brand exists in the minds of your “target market,” which is called the “Audience” in my personal branding system. So, each one of us is already branded. The question is whether you have the personal brand you *want*. I encourage readers to ask themselves: “Are you living up to the potential that YOU™ could achieve if you created your personal brand consciously rather than leaving it to chance?” *That's* why it's important to take control of the trademarked YOU™.

**Q: Isn't personal branding about first impressions and looks?**

**A:** That is a common myth about personal branding, but real personal branding is not just about wearing the right suit, just like successfully branding a product isn't all about its packaging. While your “Look” is one important part of how you communicate your personal brand, your brand is made up of many more elements than just your appearance.

None of us would ever market a corporate product without following through on all of the promises that brand is supposed to deliver, and the same holds true for YOU™.

**Q: What is the impact you hope to achieve with this book?**

**A:** My hope is to open readers to the power that comes from successfully branding yourself. I want readers to have the satisfaction of knowing they are reaching their full work potential.

**Q: Does your Personal Branding System work across various cultures?**

**A:** My experience with speaking and training on this topic with international audiences has been terrific! From Dubai to Denmark to Denver, people all around the world have a love affair with brands, and the idea that each one of us *already has* a personal brand is intriguing to so many. The **How YOU™ are like Shampoo** system is not a self-centered approach. It's not about how to stick out in a crowd. Instead, it's about correctly identifying your personal brand Audience and their Needs and setting out to meet those needs in a way that allows you to be the best you can be at work while still staying true to who YOU™ really are on the job. That concept applies to all of us and transcends cultural and national boundaries.

**Q: How is this book different from other existing branding methods/books on the market?**

**A:** **How YOU™ are like Shampoo** offers the only start-to-finish system for defining, communicating, and taking control of your personal brand at work. It illustrates consistent connections between corporate brands and personal brands. The examples are both fun and easy to follow. Through a series of exercises, the book reads almost like a “workshop” of sorts, helping the reader step-by-step through the key tools of mastering their personal brands. No other book on personal branding offers such a no-nonsense, comprehensive system.

**Q: How long does it take to master your method and put your theories into practice?**

**A:** It depends on the state of each reader's *current* personal brand. Some people discover that their personal brand is already doing well and only needs a little adjustment here and there. Other people find that they have a long way to go from where their *current* brand is to where they want their *desired* personal brand to be. Whatever the state of your personal brand, the faster and better you apply this personal branding system, the faster you will achieve your desired personal brand.

**Q: How will readers benefit from reading this book?**

**A:** As the subtitle indicates, this book is about embracing and mastering your own unique personal brand in order to bring you the kind of job and career success you both want and deserve. It will help you to gain more recognition, promotions, and higher salaries. Even professional marketers need that, don't they?

**Q: You share a lot of case studies. Did you use yourself, friends, or acquaintances as models while writing this book?**

**A:** I use numerous examples of past and present colleagues as well as my own experiences of crafting and communicating corporate brands - and my own desired personal brand - over time. I share real-life stories throughout the book, especially when it comes to the *Personal Brand Busters*™ chapters.

**Q: What is a “Personal Brand Buster™?”**

**A:** Personal Brand Busters™ are Actions, Reactions, Looks, Sounds, or Thoughts that are inconsistent with, or contrary to, your desired personal brand. Left uncaught, *Personal Brand Busters™* can drastically undermine your attempts to build the personal brand you desire.

**Q: So, what do you think of your brand?**

**A:** Since my brand is the way I want people to perceive, think, and feel about me in relation to others, it doesn't really matter what “I” think of my own brand. To follow good personal branding principles means I need to ask others what *they* think of my brand. If their perceptions of my brand are the same as the definition of my own desired personal brand, then that's how I will know I've met success.

Richard Czerniawski, Mike Maloney & Brenda Bence

**NOTE:** If you are interested in learning more about **How YOU™ are like** Shampoo, you can copy and paste on the link below into your address bar. As a special discount for *Dispatches* subscribers, you will receive 25% off the purchase price of all orders on any paper-book, e-book, or MP3 audio downloads.

Just copy and paste <http://www.howyouarelikeshampoo.com/?q=products> and place the code **BDNI25** in the “Comments” box when checking out.

**Richard Czerniawski**

.....  
430 Abbotsford Road  
Kenilworth, Illinois 60043  
tel 847.256.8820  
fax 847.256.8847  
.....

reply to Richard:  
[rdczerniawski@cs.com](mailto:rdczerniawski@cs.com) or  
[richardcz@bdn-intl.com](mailto:richardcz@bdn-intl.com)

**Mike Maloney**

.....  
1506 West 13th Street, #17  
Austin, Texas 78703  
tel 512.236.0971  
fax 512.236.0972  
.....

reply to Mike:  
[mikewmaloney@cs.com](mailto:mikewmaloney@cs.com) or  
[mikemaloney@bdn-intl.com](mailto:mikemaloney@bdn-intl.com)



---

© 2003 Brand Development Network (BDN) International. All rights reserved.