

# DISPATCHES™

*Insights On Brand Development From The Marketing Front*

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## Don't Just Motivate, *E-Motivate*

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*"I have learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*

--Maya Angelou

*"Everything we do in marketing is a stimulus to get a behavior."*

--Richard Czerniawski

That brand-building principle of *making an emotional connection with customers*—in order to attract and sustain their loyalty—is more and more a principle that seems to be universally accepted (despite being one that's not so easily accomplished). And when you ask marketers where, exactly, in the brand's strategic make-up that one ought to "engineer in" an emotional connection, nearly all will say "you go beyond promising merely functional benefits by adding a meaningful *emotional benefit* in the brand's positioning strategy." It's that meaningful emotional benefit, after all, that serves as the glue between brand and customer. We, of course, agree. But coming up with meaningful emotional benefits that (1) link seamlessly with the brand's functional promises, and (2) are not already grossly over-used so as to be virtually insignificant is darn hard. It takes a great deal of probing, introspective customer research to glean what **are** those overriding *feelings* that most loyal customers tend to share and appreciate about our brand...much more so than about other brands?

However, just because unearthing that one emotional benefit that's perfect for your brand is quite difficult doesn't mean we don't make the effort. We must...if we are serious about transforming a mere *product positioning* into a *Brand Positioning*. But what we have found is that many brand-builders, in focusing *only* on adding an emotional benefit to the positioning strategy, miss an even more significant opportunity to make an emotional connection with customers. This opportunity starts with the strategic grounding that should precede any articulation of the positioning strategy: The Brand Idea. And the opportunity re-presents itself each time the brand issues its communications. Said another way, it's not nearly enough to own a meaningful emotional benefit; no, the brand needs to also be EMOTIVE—in its Brand Idea and in its communications. In a word, the brand needs to *E-MOTIVATE*.

Most of us commonly use words in our daily lives like *motive*, *motivation*, and *motivate*. Much less commonly, though, do we use the word *emotive*. All contain the same root and come from the same "genealogy": the Latin word *movere*, which of course means to move. Yet, while all tend to convey similar denotations, we think that the word *emotive* carries a stronger connotation—namely, something that's truly *emotive* will truly **move you**. We want our Brand Idea and all of our communications (even those that focus on product performance advantages) **to be moving, to move our customers**.

Just to be clear, when we talk about the Brand Idea, we're referring to that strategic encapsulation of the *brand's ultimate meaning* to its customers. In only a few precisely chosen words, the Brand Idea overarches the positioning strategy and makes clear:

- The WHY of its existence (What, most fundamentally, is the Brand's purpose?);
- The most meaningful DIFFERENTIATION versus competition that the Brand promises;
- And what, more than anything else, makes the Brand *moving* to its loyal customers...makes it EMOTIVE to them.

Here, for example, are two inferred Brand Ideas:

**McDONALD'S:**

**The Family Fun and Food Destination that Everyone Loves...Because It Makes Everyone Happy.**

**GLEEVEC:**

**Miracle Cancer Care that Transforms Certain Fatal Cancers into Manageable Chronic Conditions.**

Each of these nails the most meaningful differentiation each Brand promises. Unlike other "fast food" QSR's (Quick Serve Restaurants), McDonald's promises much more than the food: it's about the Family Fun without which the Brand could never lay claim to being a "Destination." And unlike other cancer treatments that at best "buy a little extra time" for patients, Gleevec can promise to become a continual treatment, rather than a temporarily deferred end of life.

And without resorting to those "usual suspect" emotion words/expressions like hope, confidence, trust, and peace-of-mind, each also imparts something compellingly *emotive*. For McDonald's, it's that state of happiness—whether from parents seeing their kids' smiles opening up a Happy Meal or from simply having the whole family together in one place, enjoying something on the menu they each like. For Gleevec, what could be more emotive—for physician and patient alike—than hearing, while they may have "the Big C," it's totally treatable and they're most likely going to die from something else entirely? We get the *ultimate meaning* of each Brand because each *E-Motivates* us.

Here's the best part of this e-motivating: since (per one of our opening quotes), everything we do in marketing is, or ought to be, aimed at getting a desired, predetermined, volume-building behavior from our customers, when we e-motivate in our Brand Idea and our communications, we're literally tapping into that original Latin meaning, "to move." As laid out in Webster's Dictionary...

**motive, motivation**, noun. Something that causes a person to act; implies an emotion or desire operating on the will and causing it to act.

So, want to get your brand's customers to use more, use more often, upgrade to something newer and better; or want to get potential future customers to start something totally new using your brand? Don't just motivate them, make them (as Maya Angelou promoted) *feel* it. E-Motivate them!

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