

Efficiency in Branding: what are the paradigms?

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With the idea of ‘brand loyalty’ becoming an increasingly slippery term, many companies might think that the path to success involves continually ramping up social media communication, as they try to do whatever it takes to hold the customer’s attention, even if it means swamping them with marketing messages. While this may be the dominant marketing trend, Giles Hedger warns against this “jumping on the bandwagon”



The marketing industry has embarked on an “irreversible process where it is gradually losing its coherence” to make way for disorder and chaos. In this “structureless” environment, brands struggle to make a difference as their messages get lost in an environment that fosters sameness. In the quest of drawing attention, brands opt for “virality” over “intensity.” Marketing becomes a bad investment if one simply “throws [things] into the system without knowing whether [anything is being achieved].” What is important is to create identity and defend that identity using ad campaigns that are impactful.

Amidst the continuous change in paradigms, the only thing that remains constant is the human condition. This is the resource that brands and ad agencies must tap. The strategy of marketing must be to deliver simple solutions to complex problems rather than cluttering the consumer’s mind further.

The Way Forward

Surveys conducted by [Corporate Executive Board](#) indicate that instead of inducing consumers to engage, the rising volume of marketing messages has become a major source of confusion. The study examines what makes consumers 'sticky' (likelihood of making a purchase, repeatedly purchasing the product and recommending it to others). It finds that the biggest driver of 'stickiness' is 'decision simplicity'. Hurling a large number of messages towards the consumers does little to achieve this simplicity.



Instead, marketers must redesign their communications to “aid navigation, [build] trust and [make] it easier to weigh options.” Aiding navigation would entail devising efficient purchase paths which are personalised by the brand so as to minimise the information sources that guide the consumer. This must be complemented by developments in big data and sophisticated analytics which map out consumers’ purchase path. Brands must work towards building networks of trustworthy advisors who effectively highlight the reasoning behind favouring a product. Marketers also need to provide its consumers the tools to identify and weigh the features that are most relevant to them. Giles suggests a model that integrates:

| *hypothesising, correlating, creating, learning and repeating.*

For marketing to survive, merely adjusting strategies to new paradigms is not the solution. Impact is key to restore conducive structures.

By Flavy Sen Sharma

[Giles Hedger – ‘The Disintegration of Marketing’](#) from [Polis Video](#) on [Vimeo](#).

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