

“Yo man what’s up, you’re through to Baz.”

“HEY MY STUFF’S NOT *?@# WORKING!”

“No worries, what’s the issue?”

“IT GETS STUCK WHEN I PRESS ENTER...”

“ No sweat. Sarah is already onto it. You’ll be up and running again in a mo and I’ve got a flat white on its way round to you.”

“OK NICE”

MAKE
YOUR
BRAND
STICK.



INSIDE OUT BRANDING

This is the latest in a series of thought pieces by Steven Giannoulis, CEO and strategy director from branding experts Insight Creative designed to help business leaders and owners realise the value derived from brand thinking.

Many people think brand and immediately picture the logo, colours, fonts and other outward manifestations. A brand isn’t just make up you put on to look younger, prettier, sexier or to give the appearance you are something you’re not. To me, a good brand captures the ethos of an organisation, becoming the glue that binds everything you say and do together internally, while also allowing audiences to know and experience what you stand for.

I’m big on the notion of inside out branding. In order for a brand to resonate with its audiences, the brand experience must match the brand promise. And that means getting the brand fully baked into everything the organisation does. Every time the customer comes into contact with the company its brand is reinforced and further embedded into the customer’s mind. Making the brand rhetoric true has wide-reaching implications, requiring a review of everything from organisational design, culture, sales practices, products and services and operational processes.



Most brand projects have a discussion early on about what the company stands for. We work with clients to help them define their story, to understand why that story would appeal to their target audiences and to express what makes them unique from their competitors. It’s interesting how different

companies approach this – it always tells me something about what sort of company they are. Some take an aspirational view, expressing what they’d like to stand for, often based on what they think customers want or what sort of company they personally want to work in. Others begin with their feet firmly on the ground considering what the organisation is actually good at today. Neither approach is better than the other, with both resulting in a gap analysis of actual vs desired, allowing the required brand perception shift to be identified.

The question then becomes how to shift the brand – internal or external change first? And again it’s different depending on the company, the brand proposition and the degree of perception shift needed. Furthermore, you need to consider how critical one is to the success of the other to decide what comes first. We worked with one of the tier one law firms for two-years on an internal culture change programme before taking the brand to market. The rebrand was so different, and unexpected for the category, that we felt existing audiences could respond with a big ‘yeah right’ unless they’d had some previous experience to endorse the brand claims.

Another rebrand we were involved with recently was built around an innovation platform. From a brand perspective, there were few touchpoints that made the brand proposition ring true in the mind of customers, so the client launched the brand at the same time as an innovative new product offering. The new product reinforced the new brand, and vice-versa.

For many organisations, launching a new brand becomes a catalyst for internal change, galvanising the team behind the brand. We’ve seen a significant drive for government agencies to be more customer focused and we’ve worked with a few of them to help them achieve this. On a number of occasions this has meant following the brand’s new visual and messaging platforms with a major behavioural change programme, covering everything from internal communications, office layouts right through to performance management systems.



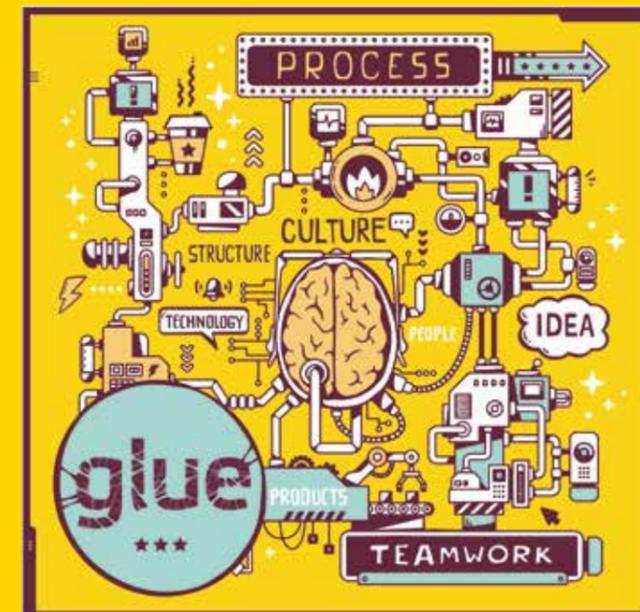
In many ways, developing an appealing brand and sales story is the easy bit. Making them true is how brands go to that next level in creating enduring value. I encourage my clients to think about a three-level process for baking their brand into the organisation:

- First, consider all the major client touchpoints – beyond just promotional campaigns - that really shape brand perceptions. This is broad, covering things like sales material, product support, visiting the website, coming into the office, ringing the 0800 number, after-sales service, invoicing or lodging a complaint.

- Then, given your brand proposition and positioning, what should the brand experience look and feel like at each of these touchpoints. Phoning the help desk of a hipster digital start-up will inevitably sound and feel different from an experience with a brand built on family values.

- The final level says, if that’s what it needs to look and feel like, then what sort of people, processes, communications, technology, products and channels need to be in place. Our innovative hipster company will use different technology, language and people from our family business, even if they are marketing exactly the same thing.

A good brand isn’t cosmetic but a strategic binding-agent that permeates all aspects of a business and the customer’s experience with you. It aligns all aspects of the business from the external visual identity and marketing communications right through to the internal culture, process, people, technology and operations.

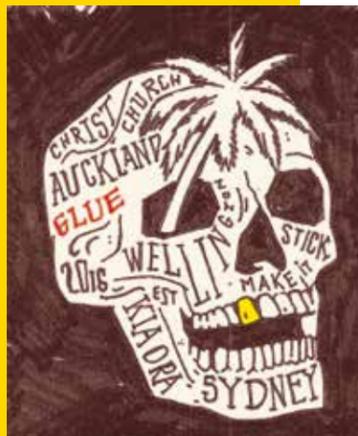


IN BRIEF

Insight Creative is a branding and design agency with over 40 years’ experience in developing and working with some of NZ’s best brands. They are a strategic creative agency, delivering big thinking and innovative design – across both print and online - that changes perceptions, drives behaviours and delivers results for their clients.

insightcreative

insightcreative.co.nz



STEVEN GIANNOULIS

