

Right or Wrong, Make a Decision!

by Paul Tepperman | October 16, 2018



*"Right or wrong, make a decision.
The road is paved with flat squirrels
who couldn't make a decision."*

Developers of technology-related products confidently make hundreds, if not thousands of decisions in the course of product development. And yet, when it comes to the company's brand or marketing, some of these same people waver, unable to commit to a direction. In an attempt to get beyond the impasse and make a final decision, they resort to one of the following tactics.

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A brand is sometimes thought of as a mask or facade created for public view that allows the company to control how they'll be perceived. That's wishful thinking. A brand needs to be an accurate representation of the company and what it promises to deliver. Being truthful and delivering on its promise builds brand value, which in turn increases a company's influence, both inside and outside its walls. A brand value that's strong can also offer some level of protection should some unforeseen calamity occur.

A more accurate way to look at a brand is to think of it as currency — a symbolic representation of its actual worth. A dollar bill isn't really worth anything, it's what it represents that has the real value. It includes tangible things that a country possesses. Things like natural resources, people, manufactured products, and agricultural goods, as well as intangible things like principles, beliefs, and laws. The dollar's value can also be affected by both internal and external factors that may be beyond its control — political turmoil or unrest, conflicts with other countries, or natural disasters, to name just a few.

Similarly, all aspects of a company — what it does, its personnel, how well it fulfills its promises — contribute to the value of the brand. And like a dollar, a company brand can also be impacted by forces outside of its control, including actions by competitors, disasters, and malicious behavior. But the more value a brand has earned, the more it allows the company to control the narrative and minimize ups and downs caused by disruptive factors outside of its control. In the event that something negative happens, the company can "spend" some of the goodwill it's earned to minimize the impact. And as the brand builds value and becomes more known, the more influential it becomes to its customers, competitors, vendors and even its own employees.

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