

26 Marketing Insights from A to Z

ing the problem more carefully. Peter Drucker says that his greatest strength as a consultant is to be ignorant and ask a few basic questions.

There is a lot of cynicism about consultants. As early as the first century B.C., Publilius Syrus, a Latin writer, noted: **“Many receive advice, few profit by it.”** Robert Townsend, former CEO of Avis Rent-A-Car, described consultants as **“people who borrow your watch and tell you what time it is and then walk off with the watch.”** William Marsteller, of Burson-Marsteller public relations, added: **“A consultant is a person who knows nothing about your business to whom you pay more to tell you how to run it than you could earn if you ran it right instead of the way he tells you.”**

The cynicism simply means that there are good and bad consultants and your task is to be able to tell the difference.

orporate Branding

There is great payoff in building a strong corporate brand. Sony can put its name on any electronic device and customers will prefer it to the competition. Virgin can enter almost any business and be successful because its name means brings a fresh approach to that business.

The major requirement for corporate branding is for the company to stand for something, whether it is quality, innovation, friendliness, or something else. Take Caterpillar, the heavy con-

struction equipment manufacturer. Caterpillar's brand personality triggers such associations as hardworking, resilient, tough, bold, and determined. So Caterpillar has been able to launch Cat jeans, sandals, sunglasses, watches, and toys, all designed with the same traits in mind.

A strong corporate brand needs good image work in terms of a theme, tag line, graphics, logo, identifying colors, and advertising dollars. But the company shouldn't overrely on an advertising approach. Corporate image is more effectively built by company performance than by anything else. Good company performance plus good PR will buy a lot more than corporate advertising.



Companies formerly won their marketing battles through superior efficiency or quality. Today they must win through superior creativity. One does not win through *better sameness*; one wins through *uniqueness*. Winning companies such as IKEA, Harley Davidson, and Southwest Airlines are unique.

Uniqueness requires developing a culture that honors creativity. There are three ways to increase your company's creativity:

1. Hire more naturally creative people and give them free rein.
2. Stimulate creativity in your organization through a myriad of well-tested techniques.