



# Image and Emotional Marketing

Companies are increasingly turning to image and emotional marketing to win customer mind share and heart share. Although this has gone on from the beginning of time, today it is accelerating. The old marketing mantra advised companies to outperform competitors on some benefit and to promote this benefit: “Volvo is the safest car”; “Tide cleans better than any other detergent”; “Wal-Mart sells at the lowest prices.” Going under the name of *benefit marketing*, it assumed that consumers were more influenced by rational arguments than by emotional appeals. But in today’s economy, companies rapidly copy any competitor’s advantage until it no longer remains. Volvo’s benefit of making the safest car means less when customers start seeing most cars as safe.

More companies are now trying to develop images that move the heart instead of the head. Those addressed to the head tend to state the same benefits. So companies are trying to sell an attitude like Nike’s “Just do it.” Celebrities are shown wearing “milk mustaches.” Prudential wants people to have a “piece of the rock.” These campaigns work more on affect than cognition.

Companies are turning to anthropologists and psychologists to develop messages that touch emotions more deeply. One ap-

proach is to build the image of the product around some deep archetype—the hero, antihero, siren, wise old man—that resides in the collective unconscious.

You can readily find out how your customers and noncustomers see your company and your competitors. A marketing research firm would ask: “How old a person is this company?” (The answer may be a “teenager” in the case of Apple Computer and a “grandfather” in the case of IBM.) Or “What animal does this company remind you of?” (Hope for a lion or a monkey, not an elephant or a dinosaur.)



## Implementation and Control

There is a constant debate about whether strategy or execution is more important. Peter Drucker observed that **“a plan is nothing unless it degenerates into work.”** Yet a poor plan with great implementation is no better than a good plan with poor implementation. The truth is that both are necessary for success.

Implementation snafus are legion. Kodak’s ads for a new camera drew people into stores only to find that the cameras hadn’t arrived.