

### **"What makes you different?"**

This is a world where you and your competitors are largely selling products with similar benefits and features.

This is a world where the fragmentation of media makes it tougher to get your message to your consumers.

This is a world where brand owners find their trade customers are not only their access to consumers - but increasingly their biggest competitors.

This is a world where you need to think about how you can ensure that you are building a long term competitive advantage based on a unique, different but relevant and compelling offer to your consumers.

In order to do this, what few key things should you be doing to make you different enough to generate value and long term growth in today's competitive global marketplace?"

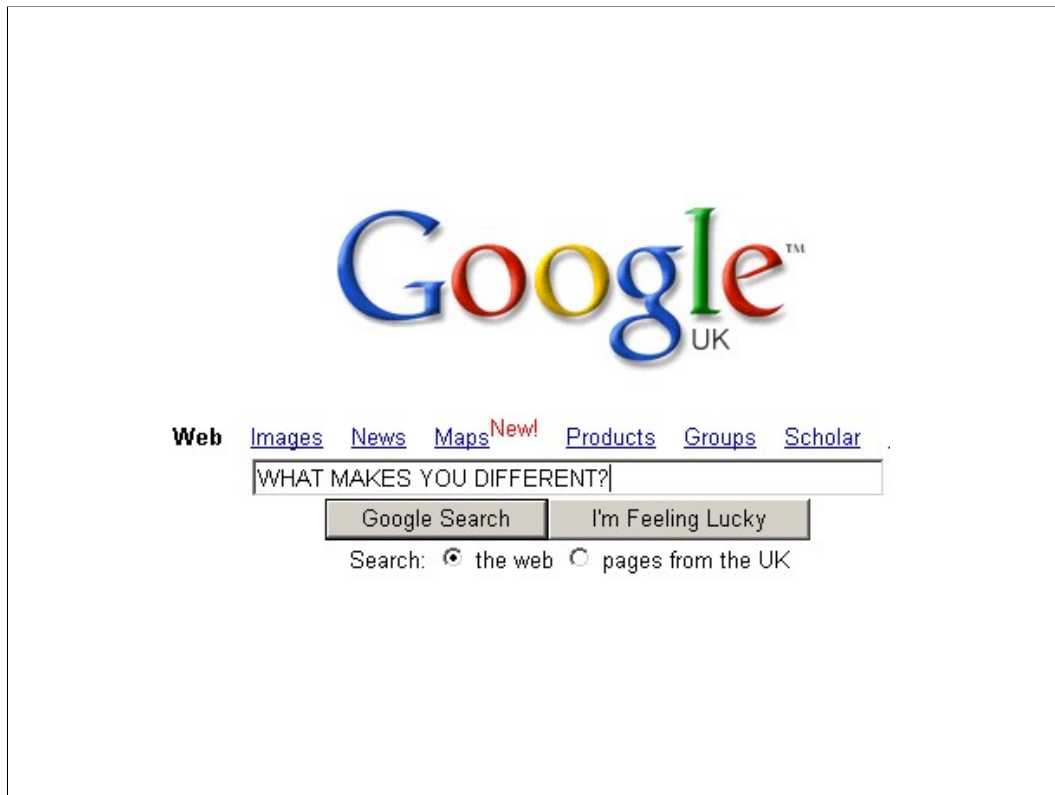
Gary Bembridge

Hello, I am Gary Bembridge. Vice President Global Strategy & Marketing for the Global Beauty Care Business Unit of Johnson & Johnson. (*More detail as appropriate*)

## What makes you different?

I was very pleased to be asked to come and talk on the topic of “what makes you different?” here at the “Marketing Forum” as being different is a topic that I am very passionate about and have a huge interest in. During this session today, I hope to convince you that there is one key starting point to being different successfully and that brands that are doing it best and the most successfully today all start with this one key thing.

But before I get on to that, I thought it would be important to start this talk by defining what “being different” means. However, I wanted to avoid just using a dictionary definition of “different”, as that would not be different enough. Everyone does that. So I thought I would find out what philosophers or great thinkers think on the subject.

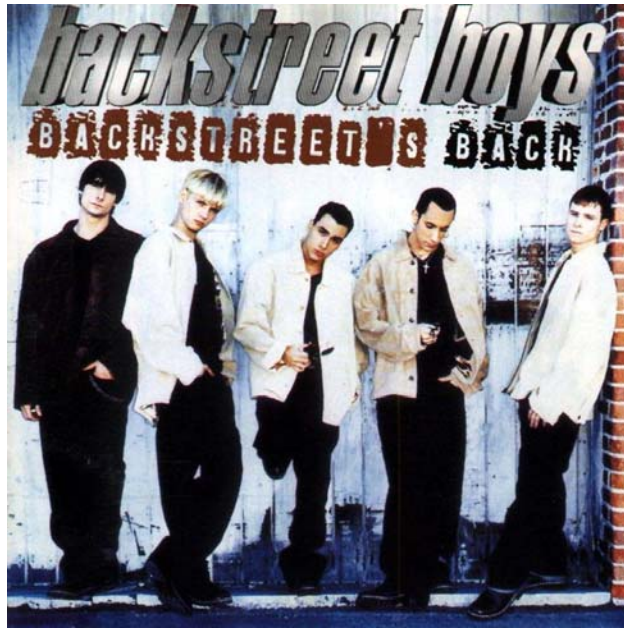


So I typed “what makes you different” into Google to see what great thinkers it would throw up, and what their answer to this deep and meaningful question would be.

I clicked the “I’m feeling lucky” button. Now if you are not familiar with this option, this is supposed to take you to the best result for any search.

So I did that.

Now, I have to admit that I did not get exactly what I had expected. On the next chart I will reveal the group of thinkers that Google provided as the best answer to the question of “what makes you different” and I think you will also be surprised.



The Backstreet Boys!

Yes the best answer to the question “WHAT MAKES YOU DIFFERENT”, according to Google, lies in the wisdom of the 1980s/ 1990s boy band the “Backstreet Boys”.

While I was at first amused and a bit disturbed, and even a little bit disturbed that my search had not pulled up anything more academic.

But in the end I decided that it may be a different enough way of starting this talk. So I went along with it, and was pleasantly surprised.

In fact, Google had suggested that I seek an answer in the Backstreet Boy's song called “What makes you different?”

"You don't run with the crowd  
You go your own way"

Backstreet Boys: "What makes you different" 2000

As they say: "You don't run with the crowd. You go your own way." This actually, all joking apart, is a great definition of what makes you different.

But there is one potential problem with not running with the crowd and going your own way.

You may end up being different ***for the sake of being different***. So how do you make sure that you "don't run with the crowd" and that "you go your own way" in a way that ensures that you are meaningful, relevant and competitive?

In a way that makes sure that you will succeed?

# What do I believe?

My observation is that marketers do not spend enough time thinking about being different, as being the same is the easiest and least risky approach in the short term.

In reality, we all get trapped into spending more time REACTING to our competition and short term events than focusing on ourselves and what makes us distinctive and different to our target customers or consumers. We know how it goes, the competition puts out a claim saying they get rid of spots in 2 days so we get one out saying we do it in less time. They cut their price and so we do.

I believe, however, that fundamentally you are selling the same products or the same services as your competition. You need to find a long-term competitive advantage in everything you do that is driven by a core brand belief that is intriguing and relevant to your target. This will drive you to be distinctive

That is what I hope to cover in this session today. I want to share with you some thoughts about how to ensure that while you are not running with the crowd, while you are going your own way - you can ensure that you are going the way that the consumer or customer ultimately loves and loves you for.

About 5 or 6 weeks ago when I was pulling together my thoughts and preparing for this session, I was wrestling with the best way of bringing alive and illustrating the point in a way that would also be different and importantly relevant for as much of the audience as possible.



The risk with doing any presentation or talk on brands is that so often people tend to use the familiar, large or admired brands like Apple, Virgin and Nike. It can be frustrating for the audience as they can sometimes seem to not provide the relevance you are looking for as you try and see how you can apply some of these brand's approaches when you are running say a small brand in a small private company or even a medium sized brand in a large company.

Lots of stories and anecdotes about what these brands can be interesting and inspiring and I will come back to them later as we will see that if you simplify down the secret of their brand success it actually very relevant and very applicable to you.

But I wanted to find something to start with that would be less grand, less well-known to first illustrate my points and hopefully show how the idea can apply to any one on any brand and category before coming back to these brands. I wanted something different! I wanted to use an example of something that was new even to me too! That (I thought) would really be a different approach!

And then I went on a weekend away to stay with my partner's family on the Devon and Dorset border





In the morning at breakfast time though I got very excited as I found a great example to use in this session.

When I looked in the cupboard where they kept their cereals, I saw there were the very standard and similar looking boxes of Corn Flakes and Rice Crispies (some were probably branded and some were probably supermarket own brand as they all seem to look the same these days) as this image of a typical supermarket shelf shows. There was also something I had never seen before.

The minute I saw it I knew I had an example, and this was what I saw



There on the shelf in the cupboard was a brand new to me that screamed out “I am different”. It was Dorset Cereals.

Not only did the Dorset Cereals pack look different, but also the minute I picked up the pack and started to interact with it, it confirmed that I had indeed found a great example to use because there on the pack were THE magic words that give away the one thing that is the starting point and drives being different successfully.

The magic words there on the pack are “WE BELIEVE”.





And this is what they say they believe

**“We believe that life really is too short to settle for second best and that simple, honest pleasures are often the most rewarding”**

Using Dorset Cereals and then a range of other brands at various stages of their development, I want to show you why I believe that a brand belief can be the starting point to transforming your brand and how it can drive making you different and more competitive. We will see how it is a catalyst to inspiring creativity and innovation and in ensuring not only are you different but you create a connection with consumers or customers.

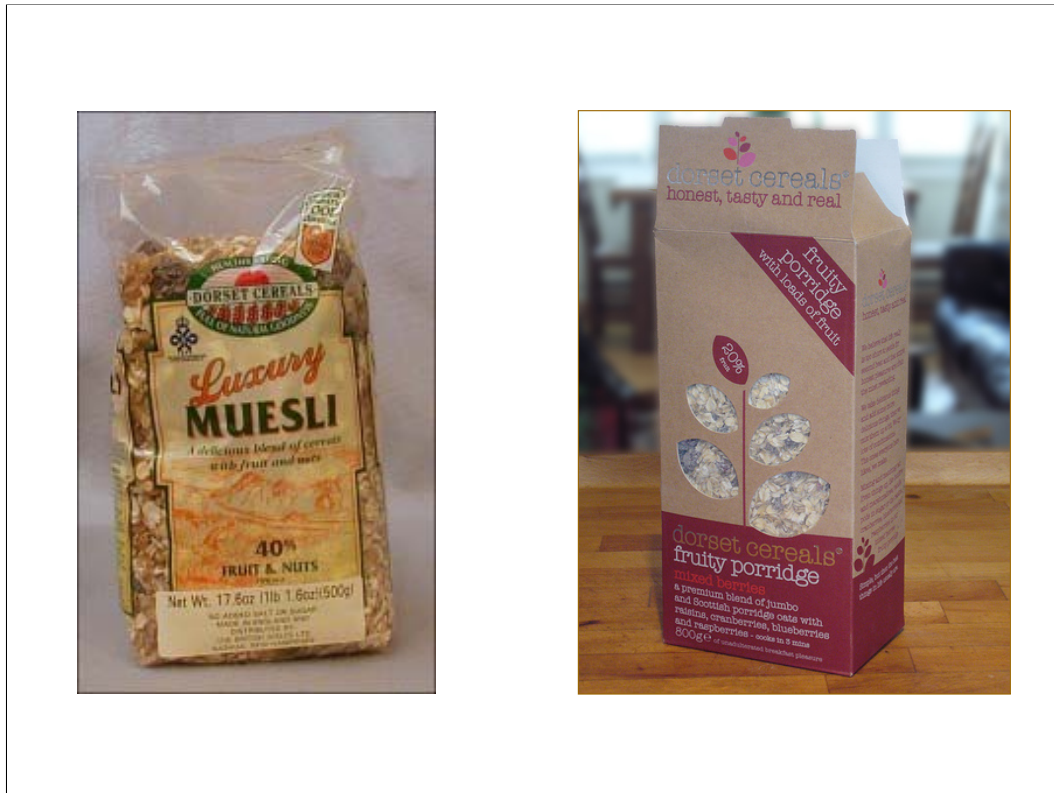
Notice this “we believe” statement is not explicitly about cereals or breakfast, but is a bigger idea. A bigger take on the world around us. We will see how this is important to a brand belief.

The minute though I saw this distinctive pack I actually knew and expected to see the “we believe” thought.

And when I got back to the office and did some investigation on the brand I found that it really was going to be a good example.

Who here has heard of the brand? Does anyone here work on the brand?


Once I have given my thoughts we need to hear from you!



This is what the brand looked like before. This was in 2005, about 2 short years ago. Quite different to what it looks like now, isn't it?

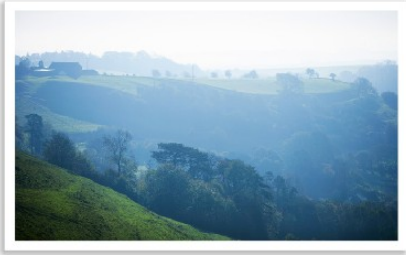
The brand at this time acted like and looked like just about every other whole food, muesli, and good for you brand. Doesn't it? So what happened and what can we learn from it? How did they get to here? ([Bring up image of new pack](#)) A brand that I believe grew 25% in its first year, is now sold in 60 countries and won Queen's Export Awards and other awards.

The brand was established in 1985. In 2005 the brand was acquired by a management buy-in team backed by the private equity firm Langholm Capital and this is when things really changed. The new team did one major thing that changed everything. They started by creating something inspiring that would drive everything about the brand - they created and adopted a brand belief. The one I showed you earlier that they have on their packs.



- home
- about us
  - our story
  - news
  - press release
  - our calendar
  - our awards
  - where we work
  - what people say
  - work with us
  - privacy policy and terms
- our recipes
- where to buy
- win stuff
- get in touch
- our shop
- our friends
- sell our cereals
- international

We believe that simple things are often the most rewarding, like a windy walk, splashing in muddy puddles or a hearty bowl of our unadulterated, delicious breakfast cereals.



where we come from...

Down here in Dorset, where the gently rolling hills and winding country lanes lead to a spectacular coastline, we can't help believing that life is too short to settle for second best, and that simple, honest pleasures are often the most rewarding. Like walking barefoot in the morning dew, an ice cream on the beach or jumping in puddles just for fun.

They adopted a brand belief that was inspiring. First and foremost brand beliefs are inspiring for the people who work on the brand – employees and partners.

Imagine you were working on Dorset Cereals and the management come and say, from tomorrow I don't want you to work on cereals – I want to work on creating and selling one of life's little pleasures to go along with our consumers other healthy simple pleasures.

Isn't it?

This is sure to create innovation and ideas, and so you should expect something unusual like the packaging to emerge. Asking your people to create one of life's little pleasures will inspire people to be creative, be innovative and be distinctive and different.

Let's look at the brand belief in this case helped to drive the total offer. First of all it drove a overall brand proposition or core idea "our greatest pleasures are life's simple everyday pleasures"



So how did that drive the product?

We have seen what happened to the packaging.

The product was already good I have heard. I am not sure how much they even changed the product formulation but look how the belief and proposition set them a simple and clear “product philosophy”

See then how we see it flow through into the products, transforming a bowl of cereal for their target consumers into something more emotional, rewarding and passionate. It is now a story about indulging and being a simple pleasure.

Take a look at the product here in the bowl. It looks different though to others as well. But more importantly for each product they tell a rich story story.



At Dorset Cereals we believe a healthy lifestyle isn't just about what you eat. It's also about enjoying the simple things in life.

The moments that take you out of the daily routine, like the sound of a breeze stirring the tree tops, a game of beach rounders or the taste of the figs & grapes in these Naturally Light Flakes.



As we believe that life is too short to settle for second best, but not so short you have to miss breakfast we have launched our 2 delicious chunky slices.

These are handy 'on the go' versions of our cereals that have a high content of fruit, nuts and seeds held together naturally and they taste delicious.

#### Look at what they say about their Flakes product:

"At Dorset Cereals we believe a healthy lifestyle isn't just about what you eat. It's also about enjoying the simple things in life.

The moments that take you out of the daily routine, like the sound of a breeze stirring the tree tops, a game of beach rounders or the taste of the figs & grapes in these Naturally Light Flakes."

And for their cereal bars, look at how they link the product idea and rationale to the belief:

"As we believe that life is too short to settle for second best, but not so short you have to miss breakfast we have launched our 2 delicious chunky slices. These are handy 'on the go' versions of our cereals that have a high content of fruit, nuts and seeds held together naturally and they taste delicious".

The belief about creating one of life's little pleasures even shows up in the way they talk and communicate about their products. And it is so much easier to write and innovate on this area with the inspiring belief!



**dorset cereals®**  
honest, tasty and real

today's simple pleasures  
10th Aug '07

We're off to the Bloom Festival in Gloucestershire, where we'll be dropping off bags of our delicious chunky slices to all the happy campers! It's three days of dancing fun, so we hope to see you there.

- > [Bloom festival site](#)
- > [the beautiful venue](#)

Download our  
free daily simple  
pleasures screensaver

**new**

**naturally light flakes**

Our new naturally light flakes are less than 2% fat and are a great way to start your day. [click here to find out more](#)

**enter our simple competition...  
win a truckload of  
unadulterated pleasure**

Drives distinctive communication experience

So we saw how they already talk in a distinctive and different way linked to their belief. This sets the tone for their communication.

This being a small brand does not TV advertise, and uses more the product and PR and placing products into the right context where they can bring the little pleasures idea alive. They don't try to take the "big boys" on by running head-on straight into them and their TV and mass-media approach.

This is a screen grab from their website taken in early August. This shows, as are the packs, all about suggesting and celebrating small pleasures and so builds and reinforces the belief. Getting consumers, for example, to send in photos of their simple pleasures that are shared, a daily pleasures screensaver and tips, a competition to win simple pleasure everyday and then sampling via Bloom festivals to reinforce naturalness and pleasures again.





Drives distinctive shopper experience

When it comes to the “shopper experience”, the packs are the main area of differentiation and creating a different shopper experience. They leap out from the wall of sameness. They will need to evolve and change and maybe do more here to bring alive the “daily pleasure” as people try and copy their look.



Drives passion within your consumers

But probably more important that what they do, is what response they get. If you have a belief you are more likely to engage with consumers as they get excited about what you are doing and the impact you make.

I have already mentioned how reports say that they grew over 25% in their 1<sup>st</sup> year but also they got a reaction beyond just sales that is important for longer term loyalty and differentiation. They got a response as they aroused PASSION in their consumers. You should expect to get a response to a belief and people identifying with you if you have a belief and are distinctive.

This is an image I found on Flickr the photo sharing site. There are many of people commenting, celebrating and discussing how they feel about Dorset cereals, and showing how and why they enjoy the brand and what it stands for.

flickr UNOFFICIAL


Signed in as [garybembridge](#) Help Sign Out

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## i love the design of my favorite breakfast cereal


★ ADD TO FRIES BLOG THIS ALL SIZES



this muesli rocks!

### Comments

 **dhania\_ pro** says:  
sounds good, if this is all what is in it (no extrafats or flakes or sugars?) and the packaging is very simple and attractive.  
Posted 10 months ago. ([permalink](#))

 **"Sakura" pro** says:

Uploaded on September 28, 2006 by [cinnamint](#)

**cinnamint's photostream**

617 photos

This photo also belongs to:

**tastiness (Set)**

67 photos

- + packaged (Pool)
- + Expat Experience (Pool)
- + Americans In the UK (Pool)
- + Yummy Yummy (Pool)
- + FOOD FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD (Pool)
- + Americans in Europe (Pool)
- + England, Americans in (Pool)
- + Food around the world (Pool)

And here you see people discussing the product. It got a response, It arouses passions.

I want to explore why that this.

"We humans want to believe in our own species..

And we want people, companies and products in our lives that make it easier to do so. That is human nature"

"it's no longer just enough for people to believe that your product does what it says on the label. They want to believe in you and what you do"

Hugh MacLeod. [Gapingvoid.com](http://Gapingvoid.com)

There is quite a bit written on the topic but I found something very short and snappy that I think captures it well and cuts through all the blah-blah and will work in a short session like today's one.

A guy called Hugh MacLeod is a consultant and has an interesting blog called "Gapingvoid.com" where he posts his thoughts and also cartoons of business issues he draws on the back of business cards (which is what he does to prove if an idea is clear and simple – if he can draw it on something as small as a business card it probably is a clear and simple idea! He wrote this..

"We humans want to believe in our own species..

And we want people, companies and products in our lives that make it easier to do so. That is human nature"

"it's no longer just enough for people to believe that your product does what it says on the label. They want to believe in you and what you do"

"People will forget what you said.

People will forget what you did, but

People will never forget how you made them  
feel"

Anna Farmery. [TheEngagingBrand.com](http://TheEngagingBrand.com)

A lady called Anna Farmery runs a blog and podcast called "The Engaging Brand" that can be found at [theengagingbrand.com](http://theengagingbrand.com).

She has a quote that summarizes her approach to leadership and branding that builds on this point.

**She says** "People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did, but People will never forget how you made them feel"

This helps explain why having a brand belief is so important. It helps drive how you make people feel about your company and brand.



Earlier on in this session I showed you these 3 brands, behind each of them is a person. A visionary. A person who had some clear beliefs which they did something about and created these large, distinctive and widely admired brands. They are Richard Branson (Virgin), Steve Jobs (Apple) and Phil Knight (Nike).

All of these 3 are visionaries and succeeded by doing things differently. I would argue actually they have done things **DISTINCTIVELY** rather than differently as the risk with doing things “differently” is that you may not be relevant. I also believe that the way and reason they did things distinctively is that they have a fundamental belief for their brands.

The best way to illustrate this is to hear directly.



## Steve Jobs: What Apple Believes

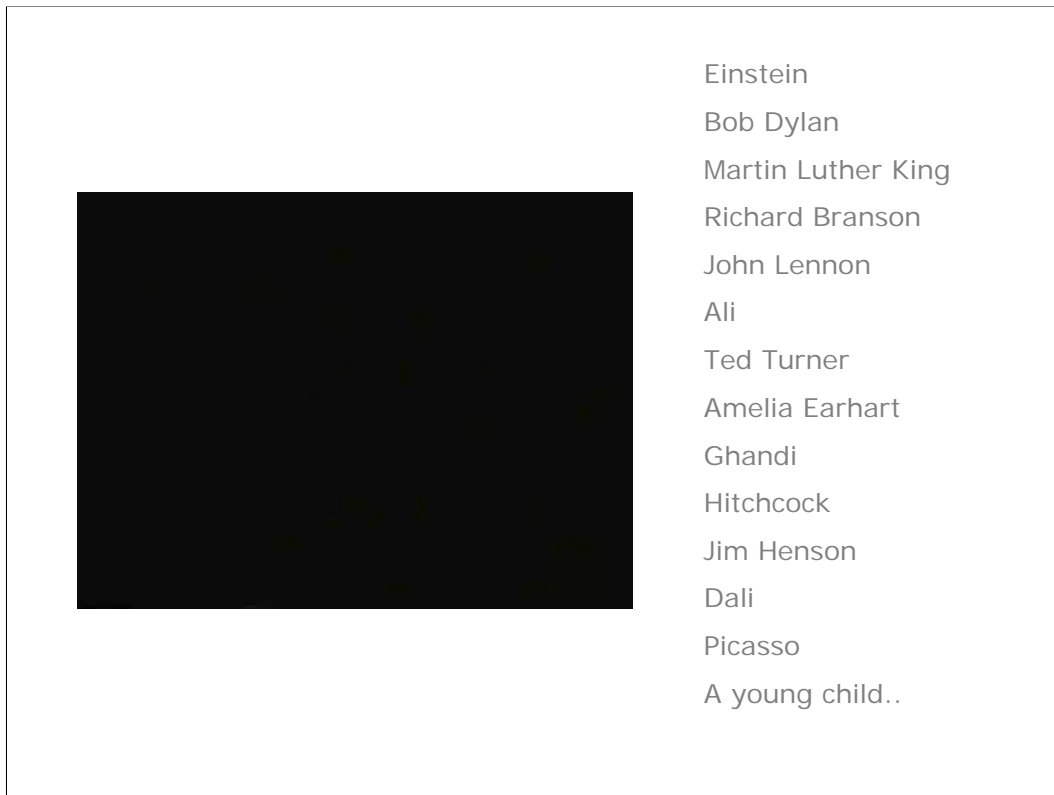
I came across a video clip online about a year or so ago that I want to play for you to illustrate the point. It is of Steve Jobs talking to his employees about Apple.

In the video you are going to hear him say that Apple is NOT about making products to help people do their job (although he says they do that better than most) but he says those magic words: WE BELIEVE..

Let's take a look.

He says: **We believe that people with passion can change the world for the better**

**Back up: Text of his speech:** "For me, marketing is about values. This is a very complicated world. It's a very noisy world. And we're not going to get a chance to get people to remember much about us. No company is. And so we have to be really clear on what we want them to know about us. Our customers want to know "who is apple? What is it that we stand for? Where we fit in this world". And what we are about isn't about making boxes for people to get their jobs done – although we do that well. We can do that almost better than anyone else can in some cases. But Apple's about something more than that. Apple at the core, it's core value, is that we believe that people with passion can change the world for the better. That's what we believe"



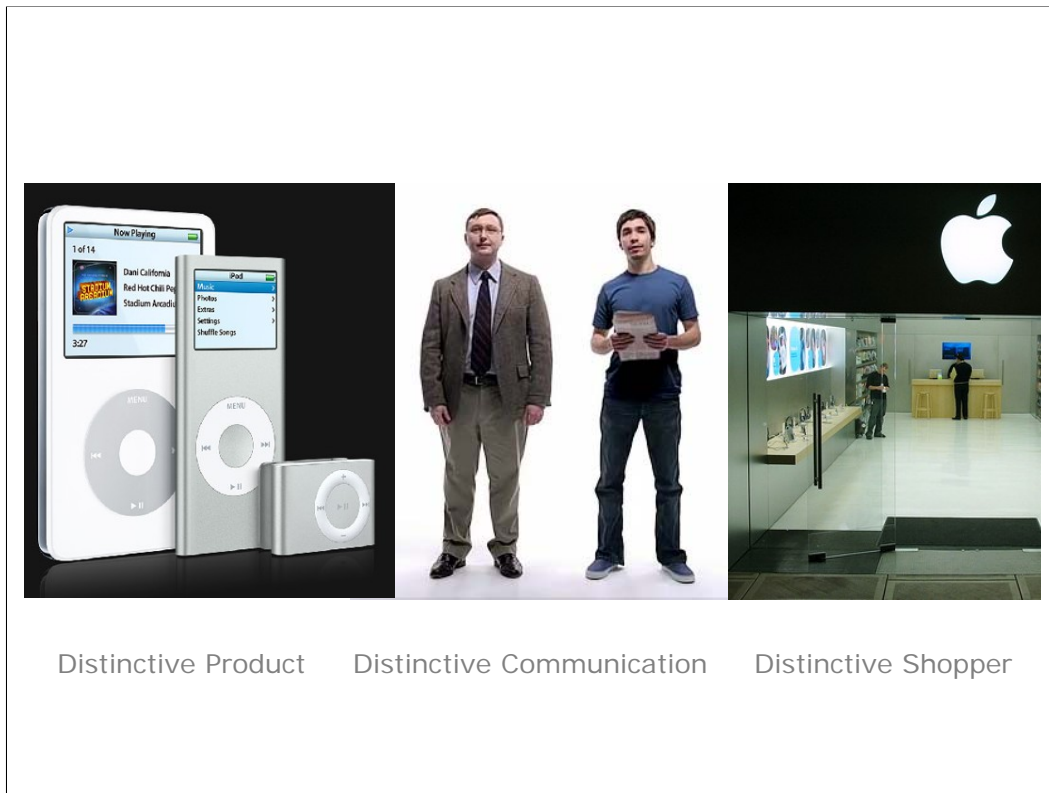
I also want to show you a TV that brings this idea to life that Apple made.

The reason I want to show it is not only because it brings the “We believe” alive and shows what they mean but also listen to the words as a lot of what the words say applies to the whole topic of this session about being different.

Here is a list of most of the people in this ad. Take a look at the list. Each had a belief and each went out and did something distinctive and bold about it. I really believe that the reason they did distinctive things that were truly superior to what was out there was because they were **DRIVEN**. Beliefs Drive people

**Back up: Text of the ad:** “Here’s to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The trouble makers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They are not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them. Disagree with them. Glorify or vilify them. But the only thing you can’t do is ignore them, because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do. Think Different.”





Distinctive Product

Distinctive Communication

Distinctive Shopper

But what has happened from the whole approach of starting with a belief?

Steve Jobs told his people ( as we heard in the video) that “we believe that people with passion can change the world”. What his people go out and do? Change the world by creating exciting, different and distinctive products, distinctive communication and distinctive shopper experiences that consumers get excited about and communicate with. (have you see how many videos, blogs, podcasts are out there about Apple!)



If we did the same exercise on Virgin and Nike we could see the same thing. Each starts with a belief and this in itself inspires

Virgin: customer champion / David & Goliath – for too long consumer has been abused/ poorly treated by large monopolistic companies

Nike: Every body is an athlete – “Just do it”

Out of these belief they created distinctive products, distinctive communication and distinctive shopper experiences. I am not going to go into detail about them here as time does not really allow – but if you explore these brands you will see the same pattern.



The question you may be asking then is, ok I get it, But what if my brand does not have a belief today?

The first thing I suggest is to go back to the creation of the brand, and if still alive or around the person who created it and find out what they believed at the time. Your brand is likely to be successful today because they had a take on the world that drive the creation of your brand and led to its success.

**BUT CAN YOU CREATE A BELIEF** for your brand? I think we saw that with the Dorset Cereal example that you can.

But I believe that you can also do it with a large brand too. I am going to use a skincare example as it is the category I work in and the example is Dove



Dove was a brand that came from a fairly rational place. It was milder than other soaps based on its quarter moisturizer story and adopted a belief based on a take on the market place that was quite “against trend” based on belief that the brand has taken that “for too long media has created and projected the view about what beauty is. A view that is unrealistic and unattainable”. They therefore celebrate the beauty of “real women”.

Like the other brand examples we are seeing more and more distinctiveness across all their elements – after was what was largely distinctive communication led approach (PR, Workshops, Copy, Online viral including the “Evolution” 2007 Cannes Grand Prix winner”) which was very distinctive versus other beauty advertising using real women and celebrating flaws.

We are starting to see them taking the distinctiveness into product (e.g. pro-age not anti-age) etc.



Dove: aspiration response

People, thinking about the belief, argued that in fact aspiration was a good thing not a bad thing. And responded. It shows they understood the issue and point of view and FELT moved enough to get engaged and respond.

Let's take a look..

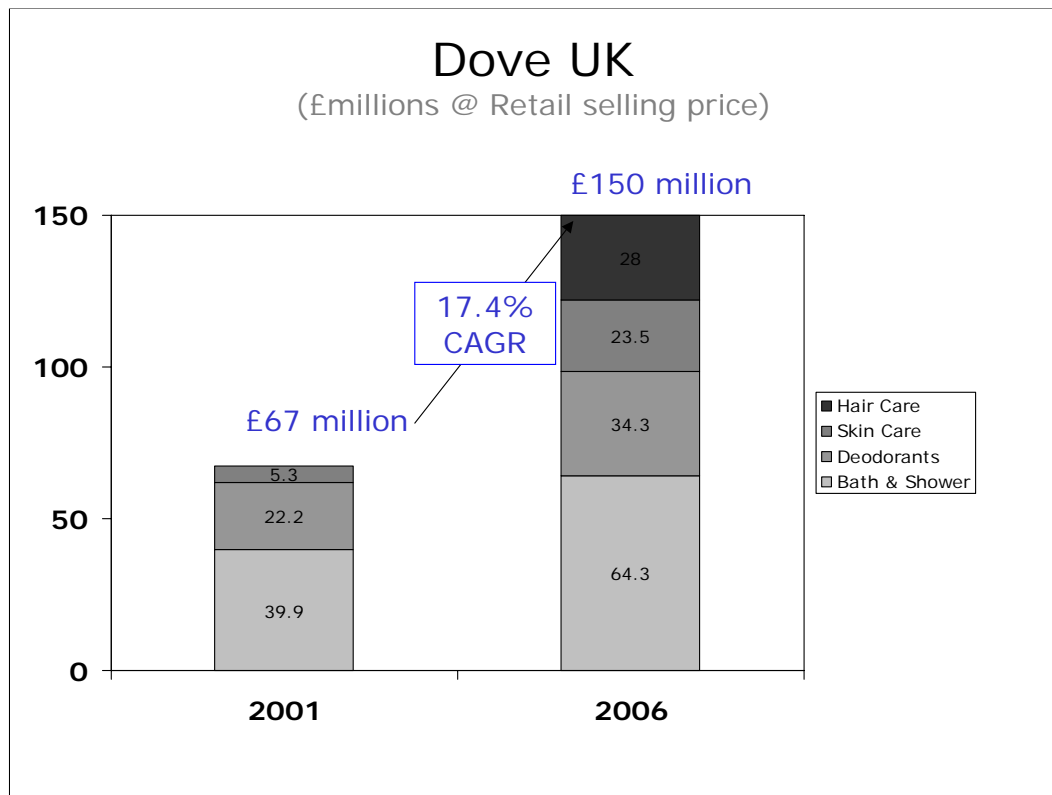


Dove: product response

Others argued that Dove, far from celebrating real beauty, was actually selling products to correct and deal with the very problems they felt should be celebrated.

Again the belief got people thinking, got them feeling something.

Let's take a look



Most of important of all, it generated a DRAMATIC increase in sales. This is just the UK data form Euromonitor who track sales. It shows the brand growing at 17.4% CAGR on average a year versus a category average growth of just around 5%. It also shows growth came from the traditional core categories for Dove: Bath & Shower, Deodorants and Skincare.

Brand belief creates passion  
Passion drives uniqueness  
Uniqueness makes you different

Brand belief creates passion  
Passion drives uniqueness  
Uniqueness makes you different

Adopting using the brand belief the visionary had when creating your brand will help you to bring passion to the brand. Firstly, as it is more likely to liberate and excite and create passion within your company at all levels. People will be more innovative working for something that makes them FEEL more about.

Passion in your teams will mean you get more innovative and distinctive ideas and solutions that are about you and your brand and not just about reacting to the competition and events. This will make you different.





What makes you different?

What makes you different?

Hopefully in this brief session I have been able to show how re-adopting or adopting a brand belief for your brand is worth looking at and exploring as a key way to make you different. Different in a way that will ensure you have a real long-term competitive advantage.

# Backstreet Boys What do ~~x~~ believe?

So let me leave you with the final thoughts from the Backstreet Boys who helped me set up this talk! If you look at more of the lyrics of the song “what makes you different”, they say:

"You don't run with the crowd. You go your own way  
Got your own kind of style. That sets you apart"

"What's there inside you, shines through to me  
You got something so real. You touched me so deep"

"What makes you different,  
Makes you beautiful to me"

Backstreet Boys: "What makes you different" 2000

"You don't run with the crowd. You go your own way. Got your  
own kind of style. That sets you apart"

"What's there inside you, shines through to me. You got something  
so real. You touched me so deep"

"What makes you different, Makes you beautiful to me"

This is another way of saying what Anna Farmery of "The engaging  
brand" said when she said, "people will remember you for how you  
make them feel"

Thank You

.