WBA

WORKSHOP TOOLS – BRAND BELIEF

This tool is a Boston Matrix that subdivides the Brand Audience into four different categories. This exercise lets us look at the different feelings and ideas people are developing about the brand and gives us some simple strategies for improving those relationships.

We start by drawing the horizontal ‘x’ axis which is a continuum from ‘Don’t Use Us’ to ‘Always Use Us’. This could just as easily be ‘Don’t Buy us’ to ‘Always Buy Us’, whatever works best for the brand you are exploring.

(Insert ‘x’ axis)

We then bisect that with the ‘y’ axis which represents a continuum from ‘Love Us’ at the top, to ‘Don’t Like Us’ as the bottom. (For some reason, I always hesitate to say ‘Hate’!!!)

(insert ‘y’ axis)

This creates four categories or market segments.

Let’s look at them one at a time.

Starting in the bottom left, we are combining those who ‘Don’t Like Us’ with those who ‘Don’t Use Us’. Let’s call these people ‘Sceptics’. They don’t display positive feelings or positive behaviour towards the brand.

(Insert box, bottom left-hand corner, titled Sceptics)

Above them we have a group that combines ‘Don’t Use Us’ with ‘Love Us’. Interesting. This is a group with strong emotional attachment to our brand, but something is holding them back from using or buying us. Let’s call these people ‘Wannabees’.

(Insert box, top left-hand corner, titled Wannabees)

If we move over to the bottom right-hand corner, we have a group that ‘Don’t love us’ but, surprisingly, they ‘Always Use Us’. Perhaps always is overstating the case but they are definitely in our consumer group. Even through they don’t like us, they’re still buying our products or services. Let’s call them ‘Captives’.

(Insert box, bottom right-hand corner, titled Captives)

Lastly, up in the top right, we have a group that ‘Love us’ and ‘Always use us’. God bless them. These are true devotees, and we can count on them. Let’s call them ‘Fans’.

(Insert box, top right-hand corner, titled Fans)

So, our audience is now divided into four – Sceptics, Wannabees, Captives and Fans.

The first thing we need to do is understand who these people are. What do we know about them? How can we identify them? Why are they in the category they are in?

Let’s start with Sceptics.

Who are the people who outright reject the brand? We’re not on their consideration list. Why?

It’s tempting to think of them as a lost cause. Unconvertible. Certainly, it would be expensive to move them from the bottom left corner to the top right corner!! Where would we start.

As is often the case with a Boston Matrix, it’s hard to move diagonally, but sometimes you can move laterally. So, it’s worth asking, could we turn a Sceptic into a Captive? Or a Wannabee? We’ll come back to this.

If we look at Wannabees, we’ll find there is usually a barrier to purchase. They love the brand, but something is stopping them. For example, it could be price. They love it but can’t afford it. There are plenty of Porsche and Rolex wannabees out there. So, we have to ask ourselves, is there a way we could remove the barrier or make it easier for them to sneak around it. Or it could be distribution. Maybe the product or service is not easily available to them? Is there a way around that? Or maybe is something very personal. Their partner hates the brand and so they feel it would be insensitive to adopt it. Who knows? There are many barriers that could stand in the way of a wannabee. It’s important to try and identify them so that we can consider strategies to overcome the problem.

If we turn our attention to Captives, we find the diametrically opposed problem. These people are buying the brand but they’re not loving it which also means they are not recommending it. In fact, they might be vociferously critical of the brand while still paying the money to use it.

How can this be? Well, in my case, I’m trapped in a loyalty scheme. I have so many frequent flyer miles with one airline that I feel compelled to keep flying with them. But if anyone asks me about their service, I give it a hammering. Similarly with fuel. There’s only one petrol station where I live and so I fill up there. But I have no loyalty to them. I’d never recommend them. As far as I’m concerned, their petrol is no better than anyone else’s. And no cheaper. If another fuel station opened up nearby, and offered a slightly better deal, I’d be there in a shot.

So, Captives are users with grievances or simply users with no emotional attachment. We need to strategize to identify and resolve those grievances if we are to change their relationship to the brand.

Lastly, up in the top right-hand corner we have our Fans. These people use us, are devoted to us and, importantly, they recommend us. They are a powerful albeit unpaid part of our salesforce.

In the early days of Apple Computers, I was a ‘Fan’ of the brand. On the desk in my office, I had an SE30. It was about the size of two boxes of Nike trainers with a very small screen. Anyone who came into my office, and was stupid enough to ask me about it, had to then endure my overblown sales pitch. I ended up writing a board paper that suggested we move all computers to Apple. Which we eventually did!!!

Never underestimate the power of a Fan. They are zealots!!

When looking at the Fans category, we need to ask ourselves, ‘What is motivating this adoration?’ Why do people love us and how can we ‘spread the love’?

Understanding Fans is an immensely important task.

Two key questions:

How can we make Captives like us more?

How can we make Wannabees use us?

These two lateral moves are strategies waiting to be developed.

But let’s not forget the Sceptics. They are an expensive, long-term proposition. But a lateral move may be possible. Could a sceptic be encouraged to like us? Could a Sceptic become a Wannabee? Could a sceptic be tempted by an offer, a rewards scheme? Could a Sceptic become a Captive?

You don’t know until you try.

END