

Selling With The Branded Customer Experience

By Ernie Chen

People buy because they need to fulfill a need or want that is being offered. That would answer the question of why do people buy. The next question would then be why do people choose the brands they choose? What are the buyers' hot buttons? In the past, if the brand was a better known brand in the minds of consumers, it would be considered a better brand. The brand would be better known because it would be big. It would be big because the brand would advertise most with a bigger budget, bigger operation and the brand would sell the most products.

Many organizations would agree today that they no longer can just advertise the most and do a 'good job,' but they must create an excellent brand that signifies the quality of their product and services. The difference lies on how innovative and creative the organization is and how they manage to create the branded customer experience to ensure sustainable competitive advantage. The branded customer experience is beyond just a captivating logo or tagline but it is about creating experience with a difference for the customers. This can be achieved through a clear understanding of the customers need by capturing the emotional requirements that will enhance customer loyalty.

Some brand names become so big they become the names of their product categories. We say Coke and Xerox when referring respectively to any cola beverage or photocopy. But majority of the products will have to work hard just to be noticed. Selling good products and services are no longer enough. This needs to be supported with a continuous creation of a buying experience for the customers. The brand equity can be created, managed and marketed through the use of research and listening to the customer, the marketing plan, understanding the core brand's personality clearly, defining the value of the brand, maximizing public relations, remembering the unique selling propositions and advertising.

Brand focused organizations will leverage and compete on their brand by providing cutting edge brand positioning and brand value propositions to enhance sales revenue. Brands will be around as long as the marketers of the brands keeps their fingers on the pulse of the marketplace. This will be a market of network branding and organizations will have to keep their brands alive or be diluted into a point of insignificance.