

# Customer DNA Summary

## What A Business Is

A business is an organization that innovates and markets.

Every business has the same three resources with which to innovate and market. They are: talent, time, and money.

Success or failure is determined by the way resources are used, not the quantity in which they are held.

## The Essence Of Customer DNA

You may not know exactly what your customers are thinking, but you can know how they think. Customers buy what they think of first; and think in terms of story's not product's.

Being the first man and woman to fly the Atlantic is a good story. That is why Charles Lindberg and Amelia Earhart are remembered.

Being the second person to fly the Atlantic is a lousy story. That is why Bert Hinkler is forgotten - even though he did the flight better than Lindberg and before Earhart.

## Successful Marketing

Marketing succeeds when it creates remarkable stories that make your brand first in the customers mind.

There is no clearer example than William Johnson's own words, "...when consumers think of ketchup they think of Heinz."

## Brand And Price

A brand is the story that exists in the customers mind.

Price is part of that story.

Absent a remarkable story, price becomes the whole story. That is why we say, "If your brand equals another with a lower price, you have lost a customer."

## Differentiation Is Not A Story

Differentiation is the process of distinguishing the differences of one product from others. It assumes a comparison.

Folgers, Maxwell House, Sanka, and countless others spend lots of time and money trying to differentiate themselves from each other because they are so often compared to each other.

Starbucks doesn't have to respond to comparison because Starbucks tells a story of human connection; a story than can be told through coffee but not compared to it.

## Unusual Mind

Black & Decker added motors, batteries, wheels and sticks to their product because they were focused on making a better blade trimmer.

The inventor of the Weed Eater wiped out Black & Decker with a popcorn can and fishing line because he was not in the least interested in making a better blade trimmer. He was interested in a better way to trim grass.

After the fact it seems obvious, even a little silly, to say the purpose of grass trimmers is to cut grass, not to be incrementally better than last years model.

But it took an unusual mind to stop focusing on making a better trimmer and start focusing on a better way to trim grass.

## Broadcasting

The way to seek direction is through observation not inquiry.

Inquiry assumes the respondent can accurately express their feelings. Very few of us communicate as accurately as we feel. There is always something lost between our feelings/beliefs and our ability to express our feelings/beliefs.

Observation makes no communications requirement of respondents.

For many years customers told Scott's their seeds did a good job. It wasn't until a customer mentioned how lousy a job planting seeds was that Scott's began loaning equipment and increasing sales.

Scott's would have been loaning equipment and increasing sales much sooner had they spent time observing instead of inquiring.

## Sculpting Persuasive Communication

Communication is what our mind makes of the messages that come through our senses.

Our mind creates meaning by comparing the messages that come through our senses to the thoughts we already understand.

The thoughts we already understand are called bias.

The reason the same picture of a factory with a smoking chimney can mean either prosperity or pollution is because of the bias held by the viewer.

A UAW member sees prosperity.

A Greenpeace member sees pollution.

The way to create persuasive stories is to parlay with the meaning customers create in their mind. We call this empathetic storytelling.

Empathetic storytelling is powerful. It does much more than persuade. It creates new meaning. Would you be willing to pay \$4.00 for a cup of coffee if the story it told came from Folgers, Maxwell House, Hills Brothers, etc...

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## Reading And Reference Materials

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