

1

The Machine

IT WAS JANUARY 20, 1759, when English author Samuel Johnson said in his magazine *The Idler*, “Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused, and it is therefore become necessary to gain attention by magnificence of promises, and by eloquence sometimes sublime and sometimes pathetic.”

That was 252 years ago. Nothing has changed.

Every day we are hammered with thousands of messages that are pushed on us by brands regardless of whether or not we want them. Interrupting people over and over with your marketing message is the craziest way to do business I know. Yet every day, it’s like a machine is producing message after message and shoving them down people’s throats, hoping they will buy. This is the machine you and I are setting out to destroy.

People are bored to death about the way brands market themselves. The machine is producing sales pitch after sales pitch at an exhausting rate. People’s attention spans are getting shorter by the day. Marketing isn’t getting any easier.

It’s time for change. The old ways of branding are ineffective. Are you ready to make a shift and stand out against the machine that pumps out crap day in and day out?

2 BRAND AGAINST THE MACHINE

The future of branding is marketing *with* people and not *at* them.

Today's marketplace is overcrowded and noisy. There's no shortage of competition. The good news is that despite an overcrowded marketplace, it's easier than ever to be unique. The Internet has provided us with so many tools and resources that allow us to build real relationships with our target audience. The relationship you have with your audience is critical to your brand's success.

Branding has hundreds of definitions. Your brand is simply the emotional connect people have with you or your business. Branding is about relationships, perception, positioning, and I could go on. Your brand lets people know who you are. It answers these questions: Who are you? What do you do? Who do you do it for?

Branding isn't about market share, it's about mindshare.

Your goal is to position your brand in the mind of the consumer as one of, if not *the*, top authority in your industry, to be seen as a valued resource rather than another service provider. Advertising legend David Ogilvy once said, "Any damn fool can put on a deal, but it takes genius, faith, and perseverance to create a brand."

You have to know how to promote your brand and position it as something different than the competition. That's what this book is all about. I'm giving you the strategies you need to get your brand noticed and to build a community of raving fans.

You can become a highly successful personal brand in any field or industry. The sky is the limit. Personal brands are increasing the value of businesses dramatically. Think of a few of the world's most successful personal brands such as Oprah, Richard Branson, Martha Stewart, or Steve Jobs, and you can see the impact their brand has on their business.

It's often the case that people don't believe they can be a brand. The reality is you already have a personal brand because people already have a perception of you. Everyone who has ever met you has an opinion about you. Imagine if Charlie Sheen quit show business to

start a babysitting business. Would you let him keep your kid? I hope not. You have a perception of him. In branding, as with many things, perception is reality.

You have to be prepared and equipped to harness the power of personal branding or prepare to become obsolete. Even if you are an employee (not an entrepreneur or business owner), you have tons of competition. The world is full of talented people ready to take your job or promotion. Your personal brand can be used for job promotions, and it should be used to help promote the company you work for.

You're about to discover many insights and strategies that are easy to implement and will increase your brand's presence and attract the right customers. This book is your guide on what to do and how to do it when it comes to increasing your presence and dominating your niche.

To brand against the machine is to create a reputation as a leading authority who provides value to people rather than being another "me too" business that blasts marketing messages at those who do not want them.

This isn't a book full of fluff or filler. It's to the point and rapid-fire. It's full of useful ideas, tips on executing those ideas, and the occasional example thrown in for good measure. This isn't a book about laws and rules. I hate rules. It's a book about what works. Do you have to do everything? Nope. But take what you can implement today and put it into action. You can always come back later and implement the rest.

This book isn't about using the newest thingamajig or tactic. It's about implementing strategies to build a sustainable brand and a business that serves you. It will give you a lot to think about. But I don't want it to stop there. It is full of things to do. My advice is to do them.

We don't have time to mess around.

If you've already got a brand and would like to strengthen it, you're in the right place. If you have a business but your brand isn't well known yet, you're in the right place.

The world we live in is extremely cluttered and even chaotic. The business world is no exception. People have developed a pattern of effort to ignore all marketing methods. You must work hard to build a brand that stands out and goes against the grain.

4 BRAND AGAINST THE MACHINE

Your brand is not a campaign. It's a commitment.

People embrace those who challenge the status quo. Those who win brand themselves against the tiresome mundane noise. They are the new leaders, a new form of brand that unites people and makes a difference.

Let's make a ruckus.