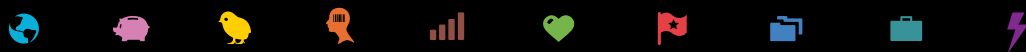


# 2010

## Trends in Branding

*A study of 10 trends that will affect brands and business in 2010*



# Introduction



2010 is going to be an erratic year. Although some parts of the economy, markets and consumer groups are recovering well, others are still struggling from the deep effects of the recession and facing incredibly challenging circumstances.

The result is a post-recession economy that is forcing businesses to make tougher decisions about their brands, a topic we explore in *Survival of the Fittest*. The new market reality has also forced people to be more creative in how they build brands (see *Jumping on the Brand Wagon*) as well as better leverage their existing brands, operate more efficiently and reduce costs. Businesses are also increasingly under pressure from consumers to change or update their social values and focus on intensifying their commitments to sustainability and the environment (see *Seriously Green*). Through social media, consumers have found a high-profile platform that enables them to change the established protocol and connect with brands about all kinds of issues on a new level (*Whose Brand is it Anyway?*). To combat these pressures, brands are thinking more creatively. They are exploring new ideas to better interact with their customers using new media and smarter strategies. And although some will always choose the quickest, cheapest creative path (see *Automated Creative*), most are trying to engage with their customers on a deeper level. This new level of engagement is also having an incredible effect within companies. Brands have always leveraged the power of their employees as evangelists for their brands. But, even here the rules are changing as employees are looking for recognition and commitment that goes beyond the traditional HR evaluation (see *Evangelism Has a Price*).

One thing that is certain not to change in 2010 is the rate of technological change that is impacting virtually every aspect of branding – especially the depth of relationship that people are seeking from the brands they trust (see *You Will Live Forever*). Never before has the brand experience been so personal (see *Minutia Matters*), connecting with individuals and communities on the most intimate details of their lives. Technology has been the story of the decade, impacting every industry at every level – from consumer to enterprise. New technology is changing how we connect with our world, and new terminology and jargon (see *The Cloud Grab*) is changing the tone of our conversations. Lastly, technology is shrinking our world even faster. Emerging countries like China and India will have an enormous impact around the globe this year – economically and culturally (see *Brand Invasion*) and continue to do so at a rapidly increasing pace.

Clearly, we are in for a year of more change. As always, there will be challenges and opportunities – and the winners will be the brands that can learn, adapt to and embrace all that this new decade has to offer.

# The Brand Invasion

EMERGING BRANDS ARE SET TO SHAKE UP THE ESTABLISHED BRANDING WORLD

We live in a global economy. An economy where we are used to seeing brands from around the world offer us the widest choice in goods and services. From German cars and Japanese computers to French fashion and Italian food, foreign brands on luxurious to everyday goods fill our homes, our stores and our lives. And through sites like Amazon's Marketplace and eBay's World of Good, the Internet has made the world even smaller and more democratized, enabling everyone to reach new markets and new sellers. We can shop the world without ever leaving homebase.

But the brandscape is changing. We are in the midst of a brand revolution where the old guard of established American, European or Asian products no longer define the market exclusively. A new wave of brands from the emerging nations of the world is dawning. Brazil, Russia, and particularly India and China (the BRIC nations), are beginning to understand the value of investing in brands. Today, many homegrown brands are the leaders within their own markets. In China, Baidu and Alibaba dominate Google and Yahoo. Huawei and Bird outsell Nokia and Motorola. Haier and GOME electronics are more established than Hitachi, SONY and Panasonic. In Russia, telecommunications are driven by Beeline and Zaitsev. In Brazil it's all about Embraer and Oi, and in India, Tata and Reliance. Companies discovering the value of brands to create loyalty amongst millions of indigenous customers, have built brands reflecting pride in their nation and relevance to their culture. But those national brands aren't staying put. They've been expanding regionally, moving into adjacent markets, increasing their footprint and profile of their products. And they aren't stopping there – they're coming here. They started by buying western brands – like Lenovo and Land Rover – and more will be snapped up in 2010. They're not just buying access, distribution and manufacturing. Most importantly, they're buying brand recognition and gaining knowledge. They've learned from the early days of failure when many of their products were treated with ridicule or contempt. And though it's still early days, they're learning about the power of brands and training a new generation of entrepreneurs, designers and marketers to create them.

The question is, how extensible will their homegrown brands be? Will authenticity be a boon or a boggle with potentially difficult to pronounce names, culturally distinctive aesthetics and promises created for their own cultures? And how will the nations they represent add or detract value? Like Samsung and LG did for Korea, these emerging nations recognize that commercial brands can change how their nation is perceived as well as their GDP. Their governments are complementing commercial efforts with investments, advertising and education to evolve the face of their national brands. Forces will come together to change what 'Made in China' means to the world.

Ultimately, will they adapt to us or will we adapt to them? Their concerted efforts combined with a more global society and marketplace will likely force us to change our perceptions and the stereotypes that go with them. It will take time, investment and education. But the new branding nations will move beyond just being the world's factories and start becoming the world's stores.

# Survival of the Fittest



## POST-RECESSION ECONOMICS WILL DRIVE TOUGHER BRAND PORTFOLIO DECISIONS

In 2009, we lost a lot of big name brands to bankruptcies, mergers and acquisitions. While the worst of the recession may be over and optimism growing for a stronger 2010, times are still tough for businesses and their brands. The reality of a post-recession marketplace is that everyone will continue to have to do a lot more with a lot less – and that may not be such a bad thing. The trauma of the last 18 months has forced companies to make tough decisions about their businesses and the products and services they sell. Jobs have been lost that will never come back as companies have changed processes and organizational structures to deal with the downturn. Now, as things start to rebound, companies large and small are looking at their organizations and seeing opportunity. The window is open to proactively approach business differently – to re-organize and redefine how they go to market.

Over the last few years we have seen incredible investment in the development of new brands, the revitalization of older brands and the extension of existing brands into new markets and product lines. But brand building is expensive and companies are being forced to reassess their priorities. Many are asking: do we have the right brand strategy to support the future of our business and the best brand architecture to deliver it? In many cases the answer is no. Thus we are seeing, and will continue to see, companies aggressively evaluate and streamline their portfolios. Ford is selling Volvo to China's Geely; GM eliminated or sold its Pontiac, Saturn, Hummer and Saab brands. Home Depot's Expo is now extinct. Kodak killed Kodachrome and Harley Davidson halted production of Buell. P&G sold off Folgers, Jif, Crisco and Comet and discontinued duplicate brands like Max Factor in the US. In 2010, we'll see more companies clean up their portfolios and focus investment in fewer brands. Speculations are already circulating about the next victims as over-leveraged businesses face a tough year. Borders recently closed its doors in the UK - will the US be next? Retailers, especially those with multiple offerings like the Gap, are seen as especially vulnerable. And aggressive industry consolidation in the airline, car rental, healthcare, pharmaceutical and technology industries are all looking likely.

Investment in brand building will be focused around proven core offerings. Brands that have over-expanded will re-trench and clearly define who they are and what they stand for. And these tightened strategies around the lead dogs may even spur the launch of new product extensions that focus on the brand's true expertise – such as Via, Starbucks' attempt to expand into instant coffee. While its impact on the brand remains to be seen, it's probably a smarter extension than their foray into wine bars.

Net net, look for fewer, stronger brands – even the creation of new superbrands as well-established players take this advantage to swallow their weaker competitors. More consolidation will mean the disposal of more brands that are unnecessary liabilities. Let's face it, there are still too many brands out there and only the fittest will survive.

# Jumping on the Brand Wagon

ENTREPRENEURS ARE FINDING A QUICKER, CHEAPER WAY TO BUILD BRANDS



3

In 2010, entrepreneurs will still find capital tough to come by. Venture Capital investment in 2009 was down by 50% as they raised less money and spent it more carefully – fewer big bets and less backing of copycats. One direct result of this lack of funding is a concentration of new businesses piggybacking on existing technologies. The blazing success of consumer-oriented platforms like Facebook and Twitter, the Apple iPhone and Google’s Android is due largely in part to the ecosystem of entrepreneurial developers who are extending the base experience with a host of innovative, practical and entertaining applications. Instead of building their own competing services, a new generation of start-ups – both companies and individuals – are going where the consumers already are. They are quickly, simply and cheaply creating new offerings around these popular platforms without the need for huge investments, resources or marketing budgets. The returns might not be as big, but start putting a few of them together and they can quickly add up.

Facebook with over 350 million active users and over 500,000 applications has created new markets for brands like Zynga, Playfish, Oodle and Glu. Twitter (which didn’t exist two years ago), now has 10 million users and 50,000 applications. Services like Tweetdeck, Twellow, Twitpic, Twit-terrific, Twirl and Stocktwits all tap into and extend the Twitter service and user base. The iPhone supports 115,000 applications with over 1 Billion downloads and a host of branded services. And other consumer propositions like Google, LinkedIn and Yahoo are all moving in the same direction.

So far, there’s been little issue with this mutually beneficial model. Each party recognizes the other’s value and while there’s definitely a mother ship enabling everyone’s success, the feeders are doing their part as well. What’s interesting is, as these new brands seek to leverage the platform’s technology, they are also aligning their brands. To create a synergistic experience, entrepreneurs are acceptably tapping into the established brand’s equity – leveraging their brand names, logos, look and feel and user interface (UI) – somehow without infringing on intellectual property. It makes for a happy ecosystem of entrepreneurial development around a few key technologies – until one brand suffers a major technological glitch or scandal that sets off the domino effect. No matter how small the bet, no one ever said entrepreneurship wasn’t risky!

# You Will Live Forever

YOUR INFORMATION IS ONLINE, HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST THE BRAND THAT HAS IT?



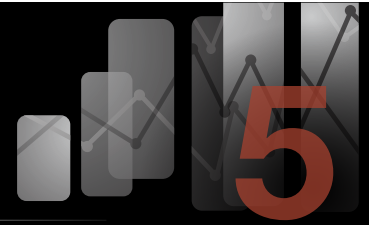
You started with Friendster, MySpace and Facebook. You've Fickr'd, Flixster'd, Twitter'd, Tag'd and Yelp'd. You've StumbledUpon Orkut, then hung out in the Qzone, the MetaCafe and the Black-Planet. You've Mixx'd it with Baboo, LinkedIn with Netlog, Hi5'd with Habbo, Bebo'd with Ning and Reddit on Vimeo. You've Digg'd, Mash'd, Scrib'd, Fark'd, Zynga'd and it has all been Del.icio.us. You've spent the last few years building your online presence, making friends, uploading, downloading, blogging, chatting and putting yourself out there. Millions and millions of connections, comments, links and photos. Social Media will continue to be the largest and fastest growing component of the Internet over the next few years.

But what do you do when you want to turn it all off? Or when that one seemingly harmless personal tidbit you put it into the public domain ended up somewhere you didn't expect? It's happening more and more frequently – users get bored, grow out of or get paranoid about social networks. As this first wave of social experimentation draws to a close, users are reviewing their profiles, changing their preferences and becoming more selective about where they go, what they do and what they say. They're realizing they've been tracked, spam'd, cookied, located and tagged, willingly or not. And although some sites make it easier than others to delete information, they are not in the de-friending business, nor do they ever plan to be. Even services like ReputationDefender, Removeyourname and Web 2.0 Suicide Machine, developed to help users eliminate their profiles, maintain privacy and reputations on the Web, can't beat the Waybackmachine – archiving the history of Internet content for all to access.

The fact is, all the data we so innocently share will continue to reside (and be tracked) somewhere on the Internet. Simply deactivating your account is not enough to erase your past. Once it's out there, our information is generally going to live somewhere on the Internet – in a search engine, on a website, in an archive – FOREVER. Over the next year we will start seeing new rules and guidelines about the privacy and use of online information, impacting our trust in the brands we share with. The stakes for access to online information are going up. Just as people have willingly posted personal details to social networks, more and more companies and organizations are now putting critical and sensitive information in the cloud. With information from medical records and financial transactions to education and entertainment being stored through cloud-based apps (SaaS), people will start asking where it all lives and who can see it. In 2009 there were numerous incidents of brands providing governments, organizations and companies access to users' personal information. And we can't ignore that this voluntarily posted information is a marketing goldmine.

The consumers and businesses that use social media services will start demanding transparency, better security and more control over who can review their details. Information is currency, but it's also a liability. Brands will have to judiciously decide how to balance ethics and business objectives to ensure they remain the trusted destination for our insatiable desire to share. It seems that on the Internet, the promise of eternal life may not be as promising as it sounds.

# Minutia Matters



## LIFE-TRACKING IS TAKING BRAND RELATIONSHIPS TO A WHOLE NEW LEVEL

Brands are increasingly depending on data, metrics and analytics to drive branding decisions. To that end, they want to know all that they can about their customers – their habits and behaviors, likes and dislikes, attitudes and associations. They are obsessed with digging for data to better understand motivations, perceptions and preference and now through the Web – they can. Industries are being upturned as sophisticated tracking tools enable marketers and businesses to scrutinize every search query, purchase pattern and behavioral decision – it truly is the rise of the algorithm culture.

But this obsession over details and micro-metrics is not confined to businesses. With the rise of social media, individuals have become addicted to publishing, tracking and sharing up-to-the minute details of their daily lives, no matter how mundane. Suddenly anything is worth documenting, journaling and publicizing, just because you can. A wide range of specialist websites are tapping into this phenomenon, enabling you to track, measure and share whatever daily activities are most relevant to you – from the most intimate to the most mundane. Many combine personal information with databases, GPS tracking and mobile devices to keep your personal details continuously current. Those passionate about personal fitness have been early adopters, triggered by Nike and Apple's introduction of Nike+. But now Dailyburn, Fitday, Gimme20 or My Fitness Journal all provide tools, analytics and perhaps more importantly, a supportive community to share it with. The more adventurous can track their sexual habits at Bedposted or Boffery. Women can monitor their menstrual cycle at Monthlyinfo.com or analyze their sleep at MyZeo. You can aggregate it all at sites like Dayturn or Profilactic, analyze it with Twitgraph or download the iPhone app to scientifically Trackyourhappiness.org. And businesses have taken note. Intuit's acquisition of Mint.com (personal finance) and Facebook's purchase of Friendfeed are just recent examples. Life-tracking is about to become big business.

A flurry of new brands is becoming ingrained in people's lives. The personal nature, frequency and instant gratification of the dialogue between these brands and their consumers is bonding them overnight in deep relationships that would traditionally require significant time and cash. Serious monetizing of these voluntarily initiated relationships is grossly inevitable.

Over the coming year we will see more and more of these highly individualized services become part of our daily lives and the ever-evolving brandscape as we expose ourselves to greater introspection. Soon we will explore everything about every aspect of our lives, right down to our DNA – you can track that at 23andMe.

# Seriously Green



## SUSTAINABILITY IS BECOMING BIG BUSINESS, BUT ARE BRANDS REALLY COMMITTED?

It's about time, but people are finally seeing green. Not the green-washing of the last few years, where slapping a leaf logo or some vague environmental sensitivity tagline on your product seemed to be enough. No, this appears to be the real thing. And although the standards for clarifying what makes something officially green are still ambiguously undefined (a convenient escape clause) and the rules for enforcing them non-existent, there is an undeniable shift towards enacting meaningful environmental policies. Some of the world's leading brands are beginning to implement real protocol as part of their commitment to CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

So what has changed? Going green isn't just about saving the planet – it's about making (or at least saving) money. Increasingly, consumers are proving they'll pay up for green and now it's time for corporations to put their money where their mouth is. Walmart has set one of the most ambitious environmental agendas out there with plans to power every store with 100% renewable energy. Johnson & Johnson operates the largest fleet of hybrid vehicles in the world. Bank of America's internal recycling program saves the equivalent of 200,000 trees a year – proof that something as simple as recycling needs to be institutionalized across all companies. In addition to answering the clamor for a greener society by a more environmentally proactive generation of consumers, becoming greener makes good financial sense. With the support of many government strategies designed to aggressively fuel the green movement – from innovation of green technologies to issuing carbon credits to incentivizing the deployment of alternative energies – the big brands are beginning to make things happen. Companies are thinking bigger and bolder, and the pace of infrastructure-wide changes is picking up across all industries – energy, communications, finance, transportation, leisure, manufacturing, retail.

So, what does this mean for their brands? In the past, talking green has been a double-edged sword. Making any claim exposed you to further scrutiny, so for many the tendency was (and often still is) to keep one's head down, say very little and commit to nothing. Over the coming year, skirting the issue won't be as easy. Consumers will increasingly demand more information and clarity, both with their voices and their wallets. They are looking for commitment, action and accountability from the top down. They want transparency about the products they buy and the processes used to create them. Yet there is still widespread confusion about certification and labeling. Expect to see terms like 'naturally pure', 'renewable', 'sustainable' and 'biodegradable' become clearly defined with established guidelines much like Green Seal, Ecologo, Green-e, Energy Star or LEED. Hopefully we will see the end of meaningless green leaf logos and instead, a real commitment to standards. Because the next generation of consumers (and the governments they vote for) are becoming intolerant of the green garbage they've been forced to swallow by too many brands who really should know better.

# Evangelism Has a Price

IF EMPLOYEES REALLY MATTER, HOW MUCH ARE BRANDS PREPARED TO SHOW IT?

Saying great brands are built by great employees is nothing new. Almost everyone agrees (there are still a few Luddites) that brands are built from the inside-out. A knowledgeable and dedicated workforce that understands, internalizes and exudes the company's brand values is an asset most CEOs would kill for. Whether it's the quality of the products they make or the service they deliver – management knows that employees who live the brand are often what differentiates one company from another, and sets real industry leaders apart. So what does it take to get employees to recognize their role as Brand Ambassadors?

Both established brands like GE, IBM, Starbucks and Southwest as well as new brands like Google, Rackspace, TiVo and Zappos have preached the value of employee fanaticism and herald their brand evangelist workforces. Many recognize their brand culture is what attracts top quality employees. Yet in many cases, brand building within an organization is still a one-way street: employees are expected to fulfill and accrue brand value for their employer – just because. But this is beginning to change. Simply providing a great place to work and teaching employees to 'live the brand' isn't enough – companies are going to have to reward those employees that truly live up to the charge. Surprisingly, most companies have no actual metrics or compensation processes in place to track, incentivize or reward good brand behavior. Being a good Brand Ambassador isn't typically a line item on employee performance reviews, yet every company expects you to be one.

2010 will mark a turning point. Companies are beginning to proactively establish new initiatives to reward the Brand Evangelist – via public recognition, financial compensation and career advancement. Hundreds of individual Zapponians, famous for their weirdness (that's value #3) are celebrated in an annual 500-page Culture Book. And to ensure only the truly worthy are allowed to don a Zappos.com t-shirt, after a multi-week training course, Zappos actually offers trainees who *don't* feel they can live the brand values \$2,000 to just walk-away. Has your company adapted or are you still trading on goodwill? Because in today's social-media world, those evangelists can quickly become the loudest voices of the company, intimately influencing friends, family and customers. Employee value has never been more important.

# Whose Brand is it Anyway?



BRANDS CAN'T CONTROL THE MESSAGE IF THEY  
DON'T JOIN THE CONVERSATION

A new communications language is redefining the traditional practices of brand building and brand management. The explosion of social media has caused a significant shift – from a one-to-many branding strategy to a many-to-many branding experience – changing the branding rules for many businesses. Today, the control of a brand is no longer just in the hands of the company that owns it – but the employees who blog, the customers who tweet and the influencers who review it all. Carefully designed communications plans, tactical rollouts and controlled interactions are all going out the window. It is becoming increasingly difficult for brands to drive the conversation when they no longer control the debate. Consumers want to engage with brands on a whole new level and brands are going to need to respond accordingly, because influence and understanding have become far more important than size and spend!

A perfect example is PepsiCo's packaging issue with Tropicana last year. No sooner had their new design been unveiled on the shelf than an enraged and loyal community of customers began to campaign for its removal. Despite significant investment in research, creative development and production, in a swift and popular move the company responded to consumer pressure and reinstated the original, preferred design. They proved that Tropicana is listening and cares about what its consumers have to say.

The impact of this new dialogue is even more prevalent and valuable in the challenging customer service arena. Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter are enabling real-time communications between brands and customers, forcing brands to think and act on their feet. Brands like Southwest and JetBlue (both with well over 1,000,000 followers on Twitter) who have always focused on customer service are taking it to the next level with real-time responses to customer problems as well as information about weather, promotions and company information. Other airline brands – American Airlines, Continental, Delta and United (all of who have less than 50,000 followers) – have been slower to adapt – but are beginning to catch on. Despite the medium's massive reach to a rapt audience, not all brands are rushing to engage with their customers through social media. As we write this, many of the world's leading brands, including nearly half the Fortune 100 companies do not have Facebook or Twitter accounts, and many of those that do exist are merely placeholders or thinly maintained. Perhaps the resources required to maintain these relationships are a deterrent, and the ROI not yet proven, but more than likely many are simply unwilling to accept their new role in the democratization of branding.

It's clear that social media is here to stay and its impact on the branding landscape is still evolving. The rules have changed – it's no longer about brand management, but brand engagement. In this new marketplace, brands will have to learn to let go and embrace some of the chaos and anarchy in exchange for deeper and richer relationships. They will need to reach out and connect with their customers in a new way – in their way. Because if they're going to talk about you, it's better to try and inform the dialogue than let them talk behind your back.

# The Cloud Grab

GET READY FOR THE NEXT WAVE OF BRAND JARGON – THE CLOUD



Language is constantly evolving. Hundreds of new words, terms, lingo and jargon are coined every year to define the latest changes in our society. And every year, one or two always rise above the others to become the buzzword of the moment, the must-have phrase that finds its way into every conversation. From surfing to spamming, cyberspace to crowdsourcing, freemium, recessionista, sustainability, clicks and mortar, Web 2.0, words help us cross the chasm and ‘paradigm-shift’ to the next big thing. For 2010, the term that will rise above the rest is ‘The Cloud’.

The Cloud is a metaphor for a technology infrastructure or server that lives independently of any one device; rather it connects all devices with content that can be accessed from anywhere, enabling software as a service. This may sound confusingly like the Internet, but The Cloud actually hovers above and uses the Internet to make connections and deliver its services. And yes, it will fundamentally change the way all businesses work and how consumers think about technology, media and information. Yet today we are still at the early stage of The Cloud’s definition and usage.

It’s not unlike when companies added .com to the end of their names to prove they were a Web-capable company (few survivors remain of that trend...). The problem with new catch phrases that represent exciting new ideas is that everyone wants to be associated with them – whether or not they actually deliver on the premise. Over the next few years, The Cloud will suffer this fate and the dilution that accompanies over-usage. We are already seeing Cloud services, appendages and analogies appear across all industries – not just amongst the technology players that deliver it. All the major technology leaders – Adobe, Amazon, Cisco, Google, Microsoft, Salesforce.com – offer Cloud solutions. As do the big consulting firms – IBM, Accenture – and the telcos – AT&T, Verizon, Blackberry. Everybody is in The Cloud business.

Over the coming months, little cloud logos and diagrams will continue to pop up all over the place. Soon the world will be filled with clouds, all offering to free you from restrictions, redefining how you work, rest and play. The genuine will be entwined with the aspiring and in some cases – the downright lying. We already live in a world that promises anything to anyone, anywhere, anytime. And now that will be elevated another notch thanks to The Cloud. After all, The Cloud will be cheaper, faster, smarter, richer, scalable and virtual – or will it all just turn into vapor.

# Automated Creative

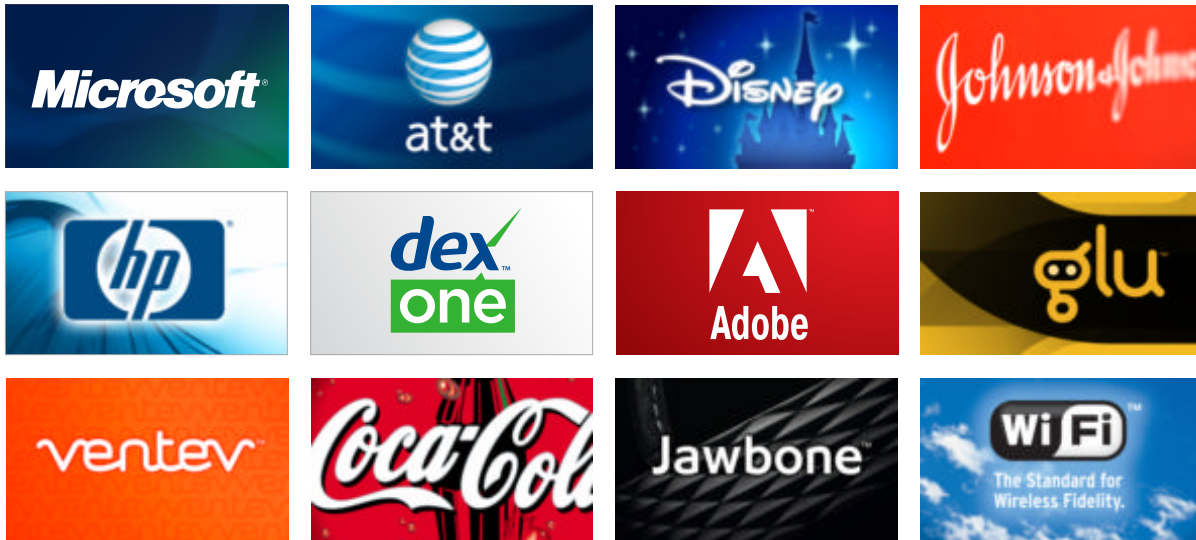
## WHY PAY FOR CREATIVITY WHEN YOU CAN HAVE AN ALGORITHM?

In the same way that technology has evolved every other category, the creative industry is now coming under fire. The black box of creativity is being hacked by the black box of technology. We are hurtling beyond the days of computers simply augmenting man's ability to create – they're now replacing it. Creativity, once thought to be the bastion of our greatest achievements and the ultimate differentiator between man and machine, is clearly caught in the digital cross hairs. It's still early days for 'creation' software solutions, but we know the pace of technological change is not to be underestimated. What we dismiss today as crude, naive and irrelevant may soon be a force to reckon with as 'Eureka Algorithms' become more natural and sophisticated. From music composition to writing, art to ideation – automated software solutions are being tapped to not only facilitate the creative development process, but to actually generate quick, easy, inexpensive solutions.

Brand creation is not immune from this process. Patents like the Automated Advertising Production Portal or websites like Text2logo and Sloganizer are popping up with more frequency. The ability of the Internet to disintermediate every other profession seems to be bearing down on an unprepared creative community. Easily templated solutions for web pages, banner ads, blogs and collateral are some of the earliest manifestations of this trend, leveraging automated software and huge interactive databases of words, numbers, colors, shapes and images to create real-time solutions. Off-the-shelf software like Wordmaker and sites like Dot-o-mater, Makewords or Netsubstance can create brand or product names at the drop of a hat. And although these services may not consider legal, cultural or linguistic sensitivities, they are for many an acceptable starting point. Logos are no exception, with free, fully automated designs available at HP's LogoMaker, Spiffytext, The Logo Creator or AAA-Logo. It's hard to beat free when you're a small business looking for a quick solution.

So how will the creative industry respond to the artist formerly known as the machine? They will have to create value where algorithms cannot go. Creative agencies and consultancies will focus more on innovation and strategy to keep them a step ahead of the software solutions nipping at their heels. They will need to elevate and integrate every aspect of the brand building process into a valuable business solution with proven success and results. Uniquely original, cutting-edge design, naming and copywriting will still cut through the clutter and help leading brands create a distinctive voice. But for some companies, price will win over value and automated solutions may just fit their 'it's good enough' mind-set. Creativity will never die, but it is becoming more commoditized.

**salt**<sup>®</sup> *The essential ingredient for Branding Leaders*<sup>®</sup>



SALT Branding is an integrated brand consultancy that helps leading Fortune 500 and start-up companies achieve their business objectives. SALT is a senior team of creative strategists and strategic creatives that combine left-brain logic with right-brain creativity to create, manage and grow leading brands that drive business results.

To find out how SALT can help your business, please contact:

**RICK HERRICK**

telephone: 415.616.1504

email: [rick@saltbranding.com](mailto:rick@saltbranding.com)

web: [www.saltbranding.com](http://www.saltbranding.com)