

ICLA



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It smells like coffee. Everything is neutral in color – the tables, chairs, bookcases, even the walls. Everything except ... the holiday cups! They're neatly arranged from small to large, but they use their own language to identify size. It's tall, grande, and venti. They're notorious for misspelling your name on your cup as if it's some sort of marketing scheme to get consumers to post on social media how badly they butchered your name. They have a secret menu that offers something for everyone including the puppicino for your four-legged friends.

Branding extends far beyond your product. It's an experience. Consumers will have tangible and emotional responses before, during and after interacting with your brand. Brand experience ultimately affects consumer behavior and should be something to consider when building a marketing strategy.

In an extremely saturated market, consumers have more options to choose from with minimal costs associated with switching brands. The right brand experience can generate brand loyalty and it's much easier to keep a current customer than it is to attract new ones. Creating an ultimate brand experience that attracts and retains consumers cannot and should not be limited to one interaction. Customers are loyal when they have a sense of belonging.

So how does one begin to create a lasting branding experience? The first answer to this question seems relatively obvious. You have to know your consumer. The second is brand consistency. Circling back to the Starbucks example, consumers know exactly what to expect when they get their caramel frappuccino. It will be in a clear plastic cup with a dome top. It will have whipped cream poking through the straw hole with caramel drizzle. The barista will hand over a

green straw wrapped in paper. It's going to taste the same whether it's being ordered in Washington or in Maine.

Creating brand consistency starts with establishing brand identity. It's important to know what elements will be key to making your brand recognizable and memorable. Visual identity is much more than a logo. Colors can help communicate message and tone. Fonts can establish emotion while bringing character to words. Graphic elements help extend a brand's visual identity.

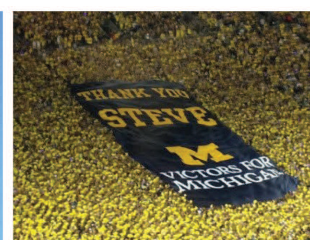
Be bold (or be neutral) – just be consistent!



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