



NEWSLETTER



ADD YOUR VOICE



RECENT COMMENTS

- Answer 8 Questions Before Creating Next Year's Strategy on The worst error in business strategy according to Professor Michael Porter
 - Grumpy man explains 6 psychological quirks in our industry | Zuni on So you've hired a data scientist...
 - Latest News - Tania Seary on Marketing and procurement: finding harmony with an 'unreasonable friend'
 - Latest News - Tania Seary on Procurement: marketing's unreasonable friend
- How B2B marketers can make the most of social media | FRANK Media on Turning COI into ROI

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAY 5 Tue CeBIT - The Global Business Technology Event [Syd]

MAY 27 Wed Search Marketing Expo SMX [Syd]

BLOGS

A plea for bravery in packaging design

BY MARKETING ON 17 DECEMBER 2014

Recommend 2 Tweet 8 +1 0 Share 6 Flip

Taby Taylor-Ziane writes that marketers are underestimating people and the importance of making brave creative decisions at the right time.



When Seth Godin said 'being safe is risky' in his 2003 book *Purple Cow* he was highlighting the death of mass marketing, signifying the dawn of a new era and putting out a call for bravery in action. So how come 11 years later getting a 'brave' creative brief is still somewhat of a rarity?

Us folks in the design industry regularly find ourselves quibbling with clients about the slightest move of a letter, the merest hue of red. Details clients feel are going to be the difference between disaster and delight. But I think we're underestimating people (AKA consumers) and underestimating the importance of making a *brave* creative decision at the right time.

Now, don't get me wrong, mess with the brand heavyweights of the supermarket, the brands that we love so much that our childhood memories are based around them (yes, I'm talking about you, Vegemite) then we can get into really dangerous territory.

But, for the most part, when existing brands come to design agencies they have normally come fairly late in the game, they know things are about to fall off a cliff and they want packaging to fix it. In packaging's defence, I think great packaging can help (in combination with a great product) but only if we are allowed to do something that highlights significant change, something that is *brave*, something that says, 'Hey look at me, I'm different and you need give me another go'.

It's much like when you go through a break up, you want to look like a knock out to show that ex what they're missing and also to attract any new loves that might be out there. We need to seduce our lapsed lovers and attract some new ones and we're not going to do that with something half-arsed.

People aren't idiots. They understand the game and, if you make an effort, be brave, take a risk and do a great job, they'll appreciate it and reward you with that most elusive of all concepts, their loyalty.

Heinz was really brave when it created its Soup/Beans of the day range. Canned soup was in decline and they needed to do something brave and bold. Out went the can in came fresh foil packs, out went traditional Heinz look and feel in came 'café-chalkboard-authentic-fresh'. They took a bold leap and it paid off.

The lack of bravery is why big brands are suffering at the hand of entrepreneurial ones. Entrepreneurs are brave by definition, they take the risks because they have to, they don't really have a comfort zone to start with. But if big brands continue to play it safe, they will continue to erode.

Case in point in the muesli aisle, when entrepreneurs Kate Weiss came to us to redesign her already successful muesli brand, Table of Plenty, she was really brave to throw the whole old design out and go for something unique and single minded and its paid off by giving her a stronger brand she can leverage to get more products into the supermarket.

So this is a plea for all marketers: next time you're writing a design brief, *please be brave*. Trust us, we know what we're doing (we don't actually do anything else...).

Designers are a passionate bunch dedicated to create packaging that people love, need and that is of real value in their lives. You may think, 'Sure, but in some categories people don't need to love their packaging, it just has to do get the job done'. Well, tell that to the people at Method Cleaning - they were awe-inspiringly brave and revolutionised what cleaning products do and can look like. Just think, that could be you.

Taby Taylor-Ziane is strategic director at specialist packaging design firm Boxer & Co.

RELATED POSTS

- \$3M backing for Shoes of Prey mainstream push
- How to get the designer you want (and get the best out of them)
- Consumption taxes, 'fat tax' possible as self-regulation scrutinised
- You beauty, Woolworths is getting a makeover
- New look for well-known cider brand

This post tagged: [design](#), [packaging](#), [taby taylor zane](#)

Add a comment... Comment using...

Facebook social plugin



POLL

What proportion of your Christmas shopping are you doing online this year?

- None
- A little
- About half
- Most
- 100%

Vote View Results Polladdy.com

