

Creating Harmony in Transit Agency Branding

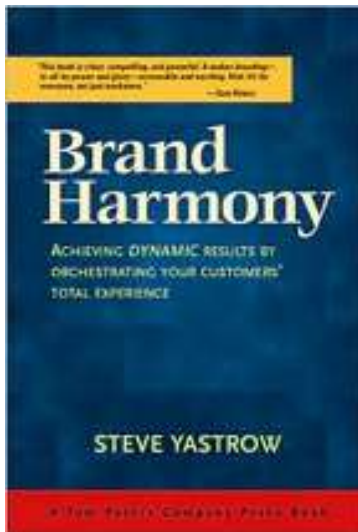


APTA MARKETING &
COMMUNICATIONS WORKSHOP
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

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“Brand Harmony”



What is it?

Concept developed by Steve Yastrow

- Keynote speaker at APTA Marketing & Communications Workshop in February 2007

Yastrow, S. (2003). *Brand harmony: Achieving dynamic results by orchestrating your customers' total experience*. New York, NY: SelectBooks.



“Your brand is a thought
in your customer’s mind.”



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“...branding is not something that companies do to their customers. Branding is actually something that customers do to companies ...”



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How Brand Impressions are Formed



The Customer



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“Every single interaction ...
has the potential to strengthen
or dilute the customer’s brand
impression.”



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Why Brand Impressions Matter

Every experience
your customer has
with your service.



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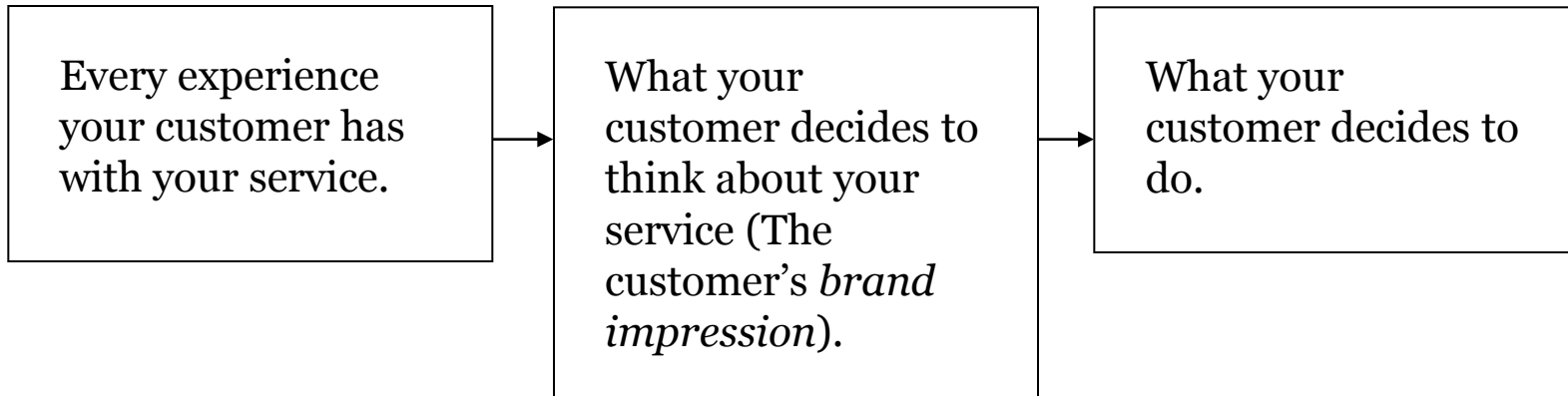
What your
customer decides to
think about your
service (The
customer's *brand
impression*)



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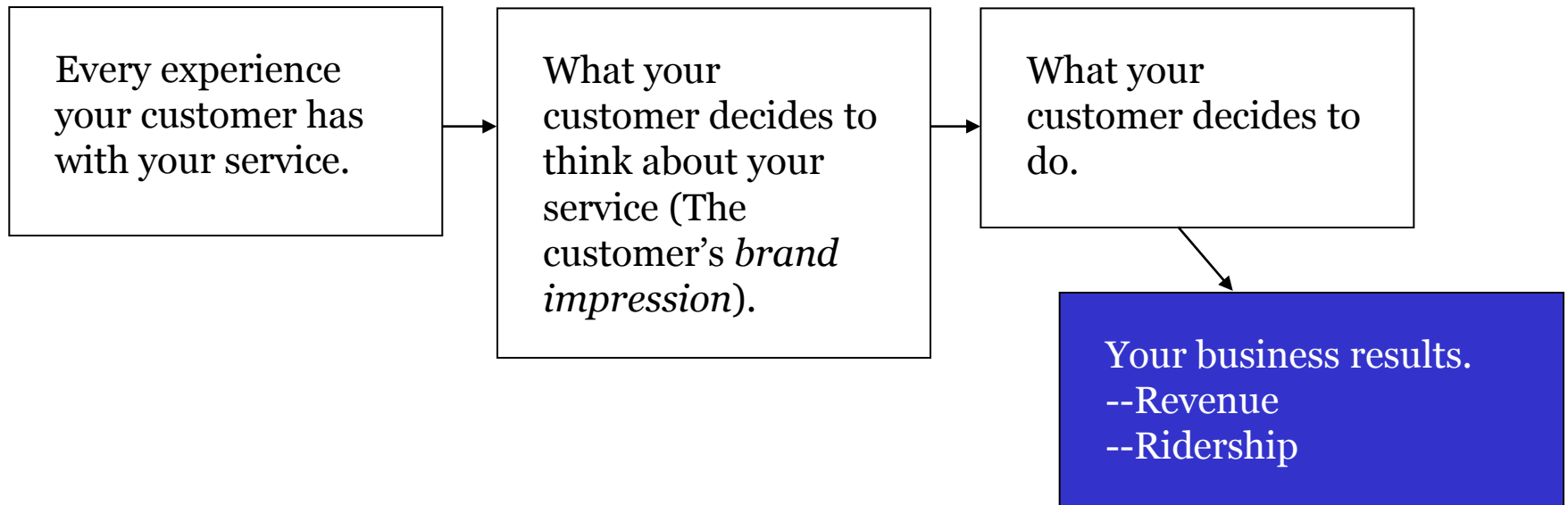
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Brute Force Branding:

“If I have a really big stick, and I hit you over the head with it enough times, you will eventually agree with me.”



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Blending—Not Brute Force

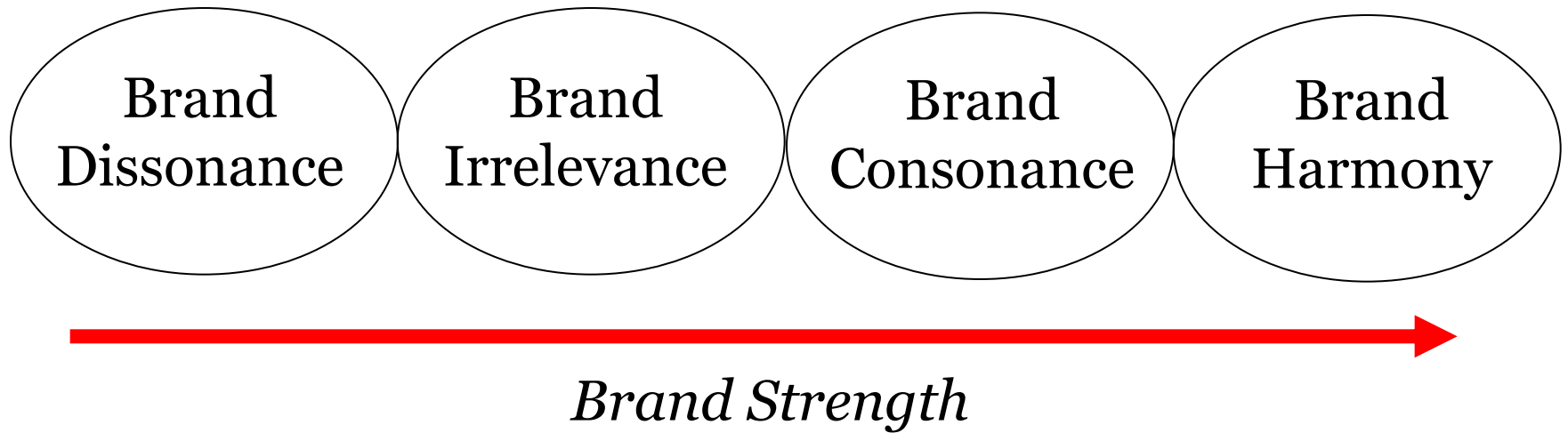
The power of any one message matters only to the extent that it blends well with every other experience the customer has.



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Strength of Brand Impressions



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Implementation Tactics

What do customers think of you?

- Conduct interviews with existing customers and non customers
- Discover the dissonance



Implementation Tactics

What do customers think of you now?

- Customers are deeply connected with our culture
- Service delays, missed transfers, rudeness, unmet needs create dissonance
- Non customers are not sure CityBus is relevant



Implementation Tactics

Panning for gold.

“What’s really going on ... and why?”

Identify the most critical issues driving your strategy.



Implementation Tactics

Panning for gold.

- Customers demand quality service
- They are cost-conscious and technology-minded
- They are concerned about the environment



Implementation Tactics

Who are they and what do we want them to do?

Identify the customers who can best help you reach your goals, and identify what it is you want them to do.



Implementation Tactics

Who are they and what do we want them to do?

Purdue students/staff—leave cars at home and ride to school or work

Low income riders—live better by reducing expense

Environmentally-minded—understand transit's benefits



Implementation Tactics

Find the 'brand essence.'

Zero in on the core values of your brand, defining the brand essence that will serve as the DNA of everything you do.

What is your *desired brand perception*?



Implementation Tactics

Find the 'brand essence.'

Wherever life takes you, riding CityBus is a fun and pleasant way to save money and the environment.



Implementation Tactics

The orchestrated marketing plan.

Identify the most important customer touch-points and define the message for each of them.



Implementation Tactics

The orchestrated marketing plan.

Printed information:

Easy to understand, fun to read. Emphasizes cost savings and environment. Recycled paper.

Vehicles and facilities:

Clean, pleasant. Colorful inside. Hybrid buses. Wind energy.

Web site/social media:

Easy to understand, fun to read. Emphasizes cost savings and environment.

Customer service:

Friendly, positive, happy. Helpful. Emphasizes cost-savings and environment.

Bus operator:

Friendly, positive, happy. Makes experience pleasant. Looks professional and trustworthy.



The Customer



“For better or for worse, people are the most effective communicators of brand messages ... customers are more attuned to interactions with people ... than they are with ads, brochures, and web pages.”



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Thank You.

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