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*How Digital Brands Can
Become More Tangible*

How Digital Brands Can Become More Tangible? Branding Matters

Brands have spent years (and marketing millions) telling us why they are indispensable. But the last few decades have seen massive change and disruption for established brands. New brands have emerged using a totally new platform of communication – let's call it 'technology'.

Seemingly out of nowhere, brands like Google, Twitter, Gmail, Spotify, Skype and Facebook (to name a few) have become overnight superstars. These new brands spoke clearly, with a strong vision on what they were here to do. They were confident, purposeful, and they were intent on leaving their mark on the world.

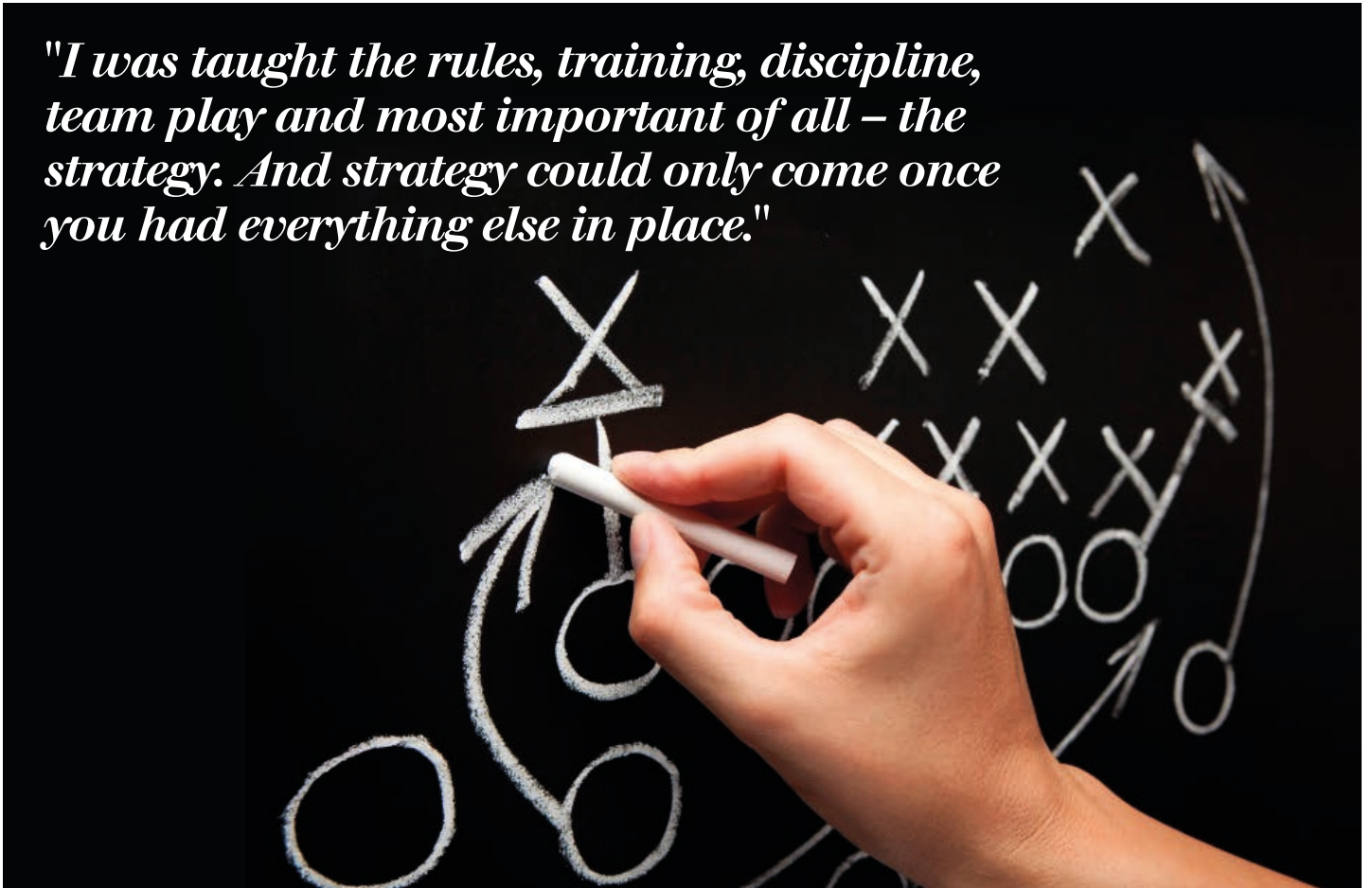
The older, well-known brands began to panic and started splashing around in the consumer worlds, talking all languages to all men – because that was all they knew; not necessarily because we consumers were asking them to shout louder with all these new frequencies available.

So what was the consumer reaction to all of this? We decided to be loyal to those who were simple to understand. No one wants to be a team player on the side of a team that doesn't know what it's trying to achieve. No one wants to listen to a confusing and incoherent string of messages fired at them. And nobody is inspired by a brand that lacks clear purpose and vision.

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Those of you who know me will know that I often use sports as an analogy when talking about branding. I was lucky enough to have been trained at Millfield as a young energised teenager. I was taught the rules, training, discipline, team play and most important of all – the strategy. And strategy could only come once you had everything else in place.

Knowing your team's strengths and weakness, fitness, knowing the rules, and understanding your competition – these were the basics for entering the game – but to be best, we learned and role-played through every strategy we could as part of our training. (Stay with me here, we're coming back to branding in just a sec...)

Before the match we would decide what strategy to use depending on the opposition, weather conditions, surface type, and the general mood of the team. The secret to our success was that we knew we had an arsenal of available strategies already prepared and rehearsed in advance. We would invariably win because we were prepared and could go through the options effortlessly.

How funny that now – our partners supporting my clients, building brands, and helping companies understand their 'pitch' and assign 'goals' is my everyday training field. I see the opportunity for each of my clients with clarity.

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The situation for many older well-established brands is that they are not comfortable engaging with consumers face to face, and are wondering how to do this. And equally the new brands I mentioned earlier – Google, Facebook, Spotify having engaged 'face to face' – are now faced with how to become more tangible to consumers.

Only a few months ago, Google opened its first branded retail environment in London. Their 'shop in a shop' is a great example of how a digital brand approaches the challenge of becoming more tangible. They interpreted the key elements of their brand – playfulness and innovation – to deliver an experience that is adventurous, fun, and very much 'Google'.

So how can brands develop strategies to help them succeed – whether they are already established and looking for effective ways to communicate face to face, or whether they are digital brands looking to move towards brick and mortar? Where can they look for inspiration when preparing their strategy to transition successfully between the two interconnected worlds of digital and physical?

I believe we can learn valuable lessons if we look to the world of games to flush out some insights to determine our strategies and understand which ones will work best depending on which target (consumers or customers) we are setting our sights on, and which product or service we are offering.



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Honey is a brand and communications agency.

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We create engagement for all, whether you are consumers, customers and or employees.

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Published on 9th October 2015