

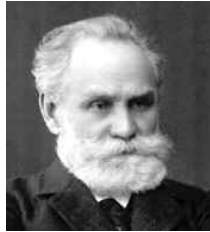
BRANDING!

...the growth of your company depends on it

What Is Branding?

Excerpt from *Secret Formulas of The Wizard of Ads*

"Branding" is the hot new buzzword favored by smooth-talking ad people who always seem to speak as though it were something new and mysterious. I have yet to find even one of these empty suits who has the slightest idea of how branding is accomplished in the mind.



Branding is far from new. Ivan Pavlov won a Nobel prize for his research into branding in 1904. Remember the story? Day after day, Pavlov would ring a bell as he rubbed meat paste onto the tongue of a dog. The dog soon began to associate the taste of the meat with the sound of the bell until salivation became the dog's conditioned response. In psychological terms, this is implanting an associative memory — in other words, "branding," in its full glory.

There are three keys to implanting an associative memory into the mind of your customer. The first key is consistency. Pavlov never offered food without ringing the bell, and he never rang the bell without offering food. The second key is frequency, meaning that Pavlov did it day after day after day.

The third key, anchoring, is the tricky one. When an associative memory is being implanted, the new and unknown element (the bell) has to be associated with a memory that's already anchored in the mind (the taste of meat). Frequency and consistency create branding only when your message is tied to an established emotional anchor. Pavlov's branding campaign was anchored to the dog's love for the taste of meat. If the dog did not love meat, the frequent and consistent ringing of the bell would have produced no response other than to irritate the dog.

If I say, "It's a Norman Rockwell kind of restaurant," you immediately think of the place as being cozy, happy, warm, innocent, and kid-friendly, right? Your assumptions about the restaurant are anchored to your feelings about the art of Norman Rockwell. If I frequently and consistently cause you to associate the restaurant with Norman Rockwell, I am implanting an associative memory into your mind — branding.

The buying public is your dog. If you desire a specific response from it, you must tie your identity to an emotional anchor that's already known to elicit the desired response. If you make such an association consistently and frequently, branding will occur. But, don't expect too much too soon. It takes a lot of repetition to train the dog to salivate at the sound of your name.

Do you have the patience, Pavlov?

Associative Memory: *A memory that has become linked to another memory*

Three keys to implanting an associative memory:

1. Consistency
2. Frequency
3. Anchoring

Anchoring: *When implanting an associative memory, the recall cue must be associated with a memory that is already anchored in the mind. Frequency and consistency create "branding" only when your message is tied to an established emotional anchor.*

Recall Cue: *A mental trigger that prompts a reader/listener/viewer to take a prescribed action at an appointed time. Often (incorrectly) called a reticular activator. The probability of recalling the associates of a cue diminishes with the number of associations. The fewer things a word can mean, the better it will function as a recall cue.*