

FRESH IDEAS FOR INDUSTRY LEADERS

# food & drink

FOODDRINK-MAGAZINE.COM  
FALL 2016

INTERNATIONAL

HUNTINGTON BEACH  
corner bakery  
CAFE

# Making it Happen

CORNER BAKERY CAFE IS ALWAYS WORKING ON ITS NEXT GREAT IDEA WHILE ENSURING IT HAS THE ABILITY TO GET ITS INNOVATIVE MENU IDEAS TO THE CONSUMER. [Page 28](#)

SALADS PANTRY DINNER HOT & tasty COFFEE Fruits & Grains sandwiches SANDWICHES

## BEERHEAD BAR AND EATERY

Beerhead Bar and Eatery rides the craft brew wave with a large selection on draft and in bottles.

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## ILLES SEASONINGS AND FLAVORS

Illes formulates unique custom blends through worldwide research, tasting and testing.

[page 64](#)



## SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET

Sprouts is growing from coast to coast at a rate of more than 30 new locations annually.

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**PLUS,** THE WAY A BRAND HANDLES A CRISIS CAN MAKE OR BREAK ITS FUTURE.



# Creating Personality

Is corporate brand created on the store floor?  
By Lesley Everett

PERCEPTION

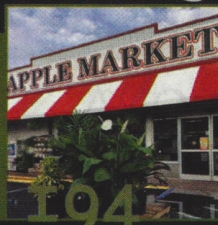
BRAND

AWARENESS

VALUE



182



194

168 Sprouts Farmers Markets > 176 Tamura's Market >  
182 Neiman's Family Market > 186 Fligner's Supermarket >  
188 Biggby Coffee > 192 Northern Fish Products > 194 Apple Market



**W**hen we mention the words “corporate branding,” we automatically tend to think of logos, colors, taglines and perhaps values, mission statement and corporate vision. We then assume that brochures, advertising, sponsorship and social media are the methods by which that brand is most strongly portrayed.

Retail business leaders are now starting to come around to the fact that the corporate brand really is about people – that their people are quite simply the brand. Going even deeper, it is true to say that your company brand today is what your customers say about your brand to their contacts. Of course, that goes global instantly today with social media and customer review sites used in force.

I do find, however, that retail marketing and brand directors and brand strategies are generally not closely enough aligned to staff training programs in order to achieve the level of brand personality that is needed. Most companies will provide some internal programs that focus on the company brand values and will ensure that the leadership teams, team leaders, store directors, managers and supervisors are clear about those values, hoping that they will reinforce them within their teams. This most often does not happen the way that was intended and planned.

Of course, the messaging will also get diluted by the time it reaches the people in the stores or on the shop floor. However, these shop floor employees are arguably the most important community in your business for creating a real brand personality that is regularly and consistently experienced by your customers. That is what sticks and gets talked about.

### Experiential Differences

I will always remember an experience in a major supermarket one day when I was Christmas grocery shopping. I

was inspecting the clementines and satsumas and trying to decide which to buy. At that moment, the young man stocking the shelves in the fruit aisle came over to me and said, “Hello Madam. Can I ask if you know the difference between a clementine and a satsuma?” I said no, and he proceeded to explain to me the difference and then tell me when he had learned this on his training course a few weeks ago.

As a result of this wonderful interaction with this young man, I smiled for the rest of my shop and left the store with a thoroughly pleasant view of the store’s brand. I wonder just how many people I have told that story to, along of course with the name of the store? That’s what I mean by creating personality in the brand.

This may seem a simple experience to create, but it is not a common occurrence. I find most companies provide some level of training on “living the values,” but it rarely goes deep and personal enough to create the personality of the brand that you need to stay authentic, relevant and attractive for customers to stay loyal.

Achieving this is not easy, of course – everybody needs some guidance and tools to be able to clarify their true authentic core and brand. Using a methodology helps not only corporate leaders, but also front-of-house and ‘shop floor’ employees discover their personal brand. It can help them become confident enough to project this in their everyday work and while interacting with customers, just like the young man at the fruit aisle.

By providing this kind of personal brand development to employees, they will engage with the company brand more effectively and for the long-term. If it’s delivered in a way that gets to the heart of the individual, it will make a difference to them and help them personally. Because of this, we start seeing behaviors change. Studies show that employee engagement can be improved by 5 percent in a year by using these techniques.

Let me ask you: How much of an investment are you making in these true brand influencers in your business? Are you focusing much more on your leaders and managers at corporate level, and how they communicate and behave in their roles?

While leadership development and visibility is vital, you need to be finding innovative ways in which to educate the frontline of your business in their authentic interpretation of the company’s brand messages. We are entering a new business era where the human element and the authenticity that people bring to your brand is your greatest opportunity for differentiation.

The personality of your brand can’t be copied. It is your unique brand fingerprint, and it creates a brand message that represents who you are and what you stand for as a company more powerfully than your PR and advertising campaigns can ever do. **FD**



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