

People connect with stories faster than any other medium. Are you giving consumers a reason to listen to your story? Does your story align in some way with what the consumer wants in their world? A story that connects and rings true with the consumer can lead them to an experience with your brand, and can be a factor in re-engagement.

### For brands with existing stories

If your brand has already crafted a story, the following checklist will help keep executions on-track:

- Executions need to be clear and consistent; all elements of the execution need to fit the message. These include:
  - product (ingredients, pack, segmentation),
  - verbal (tone, voice, language),
  - visual (substrate, styles, scale),
  - processes and
  - partnerships.
- How do you want the consumer to feel? The goal is for her to be glad that she 'found' your brand because it *belongs* in her life. Recommended: an annual review of your brand's story relative to *today's* consumers.
- What are you doing on-pack to tell the story? The pack is oftentimes the consumer's first (and may be the most frequent) encounter with your brand, so it is a natural venue for storytelling. The back panel is the default position for the brand story, as there is more real estate. On the front panel, there is also opportunity: in the SKU name, image style, layout, angle/crop of photography, etc. Don't fear breaking out from category norms when supporting your brand's unique story.
- Take the time to do it right. There is no connection with the consumer, or advantage to the brand, with inauthentic attempts at executing the brand story.

### Need to craft your brand's story?

A story is an opportunity to reveal your brand's "authentic self" in such a way that the consumer feels they *know* your brand, beyond the product and benefits.

The following writing exercises will put you on the path to crafting a unique and desired brand story:

- What does your brand stand for?  
This can include beliefs, values, points-of-view.
- What are your brand's attributes, personality and attitude?
- Of the above, which defines your brand and sets it apart from competition?
- What about your brand resolves an emotional dilemma for the consumer?  
What satisfies the consumer's underlying / subconscious emotional need or desire?
- How do you want the consumer to talk about your brand to her friends?

Once you have written the answers to these questions:

- Review brand stories of the other brands in your category.
- Review brand stories of the brands that your target consumers respond favorably to.
- Start crafting a differentiated story that only your brand can own, that involves the consumer's heart and mind.



### Conclusion

There are many "must-haves" for a brand; a differentiated brand story is easy for the consumer to remember, and is one aspect of word-of-mouth branding that you can positively influence.

*For help with your brand's story, or a complimentary review of your current brand story by a Brandesign branding specialist, see contact information below.*

www.brandesign.com 609.490.9700 info@brandesign.com  
brand strategy • visual positioning • package design  
"using design thinking to advance your brand."

