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Part One in the Series

“Strategic Marketing Basics:  
Migrating Your Business From  
Success To Significance”

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## Branding

### The foundation of any successful Strategic Marketing Campaign

Brands are so central to the lives of most people that they’d rather stick with a product they know than switch to a possibly superior one that they don’t. “Brand Loyalty” is the brass ring of the merry-go-round for any person selling a product or service.

If your company doesn’t have a recognizable brand, you’re standing in an open audition with each and every one of your competitors. Here’s how to beat the odds and achieve the sales success you’ve always dreamed of.

Here are some tips for creating and maintaining a successful brand:

1: The person with the best story often gets the sale.

Your brand name should reflect the values, mission and vision of your company. You can use your Web Site’s “About Us” page to tell the story behind your brand name. People love a good story, but make sure the story’s good before telling it. Be honest, speak in plain and simple words, and remain focused.

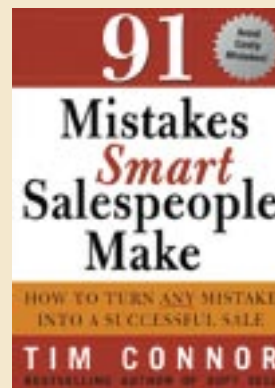
2: Sell the sizzle, but make sure you’ve got a steak.

There’s nothing wrong with showmanship when it comes to promoting your products and services. Then consistently keep every promise you make. If you have an excellent product or service, it’s time to make some noise. If you don’t, achieve excellence first and work on your brand later. Consumers recognize, demand and deserve excellence.

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3: Offer your customers at least ONE benefit that they cannot get from your competitors.

It can be something tangible (biggest cheeseburger in town, best mileage for a 6-cylinder on the highway) or intangible (the wonderful, euphoric feeling of wearing clothes washed in “Whammo!” Detergent), but you must always offer at least one benefit that your customers cannot get from your competitors.



From the Michele Productions  
Library For Success:

91 Mistakes *Smart Salespeople Make* by Tim Connor

*If you have a job, you are “in sales.” It doesn’t matter if you own the company or if you report for office duty each weekday morning. If you have a job, you are “in sales.”*

Author Tim Connor addresses the subject of branding in Mistake #56: “Not Having a Concise Defining Statement.” Also known as an “Elevator Commercial,” Connor positions your Defining Statement as having “*all of the necessary ingredients so that when a prospect walks away from an elevator commercial with you, he knows who you are, what you do, and how he will benefit by doing business with you.*”

Defining Statements are an excellent first step toward a broader, more intense branding campaign. If you’ve already created one, you should always be thinking of ways to improve it. If you haven’t, make it your top priority.

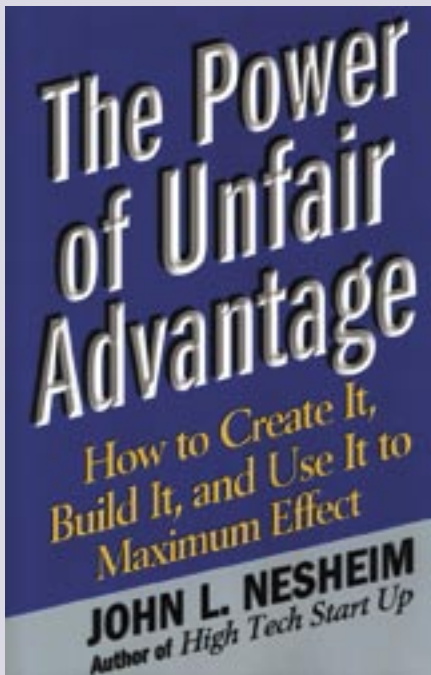
# The Michele Productions System for **Brands That Resonate™**

The secret to creating **Brands That Resonate™** is avoiding the temptation to “put you in a box” as quickly as possible. There are no shortcuts to making a significant and lasting impression in the marketplace.

Do you remember the Pontiac Fiero? It was a sleek-looking little sports car produced by General Motors from 1984 to 1988. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration received 148 complaints regarding engines catching fire. By 1987, Pontiac had been informed of over 260 engine compartment fires, some of which resulted in injuries to the drivers. There were also issues with the car’s cooling system that resulted in air bubbles if procedures for adding coolant to the radiator were not followed to the letter. Moral of the story? Looking good is important, but what really matters is what you’ve got under your hood. **The Michele Productions System for Brands That Resonate™** goes beneath the surface to discover each of the qualities that make *you* stand out in the crowd.

Place yourself in your customers’ shoes for a moment. What would they be likely to tell a friend about your product or service? Would they enthusiastically describe it in tactile, sensory terms (“*looks great, feels great, tastes great, sounds great, smells great*”)? Would they recommend you, or tell their friends about a superior product or service? Have they ever told you about experiences...good or bad...with your competitors? Did you thank them, and did you pay close attention? Did you then develop a branding strategy based on this feedback?

Through client interviews and careful analysis of existing promotional materials, **The Michele Productions System for Brands That Resonate™** allows you to dynamically position yourself in the market place and achieve success on your terms. This System requires a passion to venture beyond the obvious, to acknowledge *all* of the benefits customers receive from your products and services, and to help you find a distinctive voice when telling the world about who you are.



From the Michele Productions Library For Success:

*The Power of Unfair Advantage* by John L. Nesheim

If you’re truly committed to forging your own unique identity in today’s aggressively competitive business world, John L. Nesheim’s book will help you jump-start your strategic marketing efforts.

In Chapter 9, Nesheim explains the strategy of “Flanking.” In short, you must position your business into an “uncontested area.” If a competitor has reached this area first and you have nothing unique to offer, you must:

- 1). Offer something better
- 2). Offer something faster
- 3). Offer something cheaper

As Nesheim points out, your chances of succeeding with those strategies are slim to non-existent. Always be the leader. Never attempt to follow.