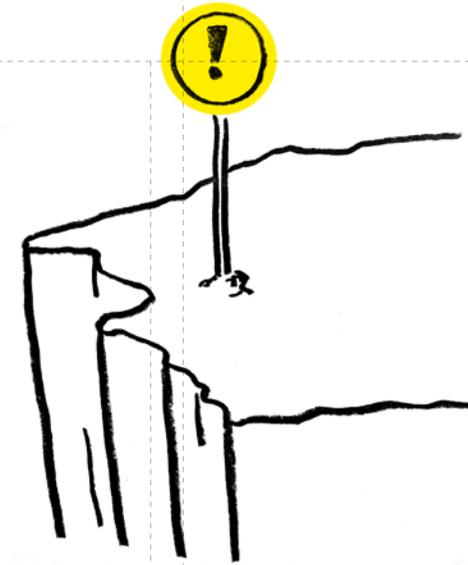


# What if...

## your brand could solve your business challenges?



Your business is moving forwards. Your growth strategy is sound and research shows the market potential is huge. So why aren't you seeing positive results? **Maybe it's time to take a look at your brand...**

One of our clients recently told us, "I need our brand to say what we're about when we're not in the room." That certainly nails what a brand should be delivering and, in this case, came from a banker not a marketer. The brand he was talking about has grown up over many years and today doesn't say anything about what they do, who they do it for or why they even exist.

Over the years it's easy to get so focused on how your business is progressing and adapting that your brand gets left behind. Even subtle changes in strategic focus for your business will amplify over time, creating an increasing misalignment with a 'brand' that has really become a tick-box exercise in ensuring the right logo and font are being used rather than a genuine, embedded set of values that bring to life what your business is about. It's ok. You're not alone here.

Both Nike and Radio One realised they were starting to lose their connection with younger markets, and set about repositioning themselves as youthful and relevant. Carlsberg on the other hand recognised their future market potential would benefit from losing the 'laddish' approach of their past and evolving their brand to be a bit more grown-up. And one of the big brand update stories we've seen recently is the refresh of the John Lewis Partnership, as they move their brand emphasis to their unique employee-owned business structure.

So let's get right back to basics; your brand is how you communicate. It's how your markets understand you, and it's how you demonstrate your relevance. If your brand is dated, your customers will assume your company is dated. If your products, services and campaigns are delivering one thing, but your brand

a **FutureLab** opinion piece



# your brand could solve your business challenges? (Cont'd)

# What if

is indicating that you're all about something else – the only outcome for your customers is confusion. And when a customer is confused about your offer, they go elsewhere. If your brand and business strategies aren't aligned, you aren't getting the return on investment on either one.

Whether your business strategy is market-led, shareholder-led, beneficiary-led or even employee-led, take a moment to think about your brand. And be honest. When was the last time you paid it some real attention? Is it delivering genuine value for you? And, perhaps most importantly, is it actually holding back your progress?

As is the case with everything; marketing, design and how we want to be communicated with is constantly evolving. Just as it's necessary to keep investing in your business, innovating and realigning your strategy with the changes in your industry and market to retain your value, it's also necessary to invest in your brand the same way and with the same regularity.

The client we mentioned at the start is about to unveil their brand refresh – we've worked in partnership to realign their brand so it really reflects the organisational direction and helps them reach new audiences. We're all expecting great things based on the early feedback too.

**For now, take a moment to review the alignment between your brand and your business, and ask yourself if bringing your brand up to speed might just be the answer to hitting those growth targets.**

And if you need a little help in understanding how to make your brand work harder for you, we'd be happy to help solve that particular problem with you.

a **FutureLab** opinion piece

**Contact**  
Robert Pepper,  
Strategy Partner:  
robert@pslondon.co.uk  
0207 375 6450

