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Brands that stand for something

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We have been a strategic partner with Bord Bia for the past 7 years

Strategic insight and Thought Leadership

The Future of Whiskey



The Future of
Frozen Food

Brand positioning



Hot Irishman
Brand Positioning



Consumer Lifestyle Trends





"People don't buy
what you do; they
buy *why* you do it.
And what you do
simply proves what
you *believe*" *Simon Sinek*

The three things we will cover this evening

What's driving the need for brands to stand for something?

What are the key principles brands need to bear in mind and who exemplifies these?

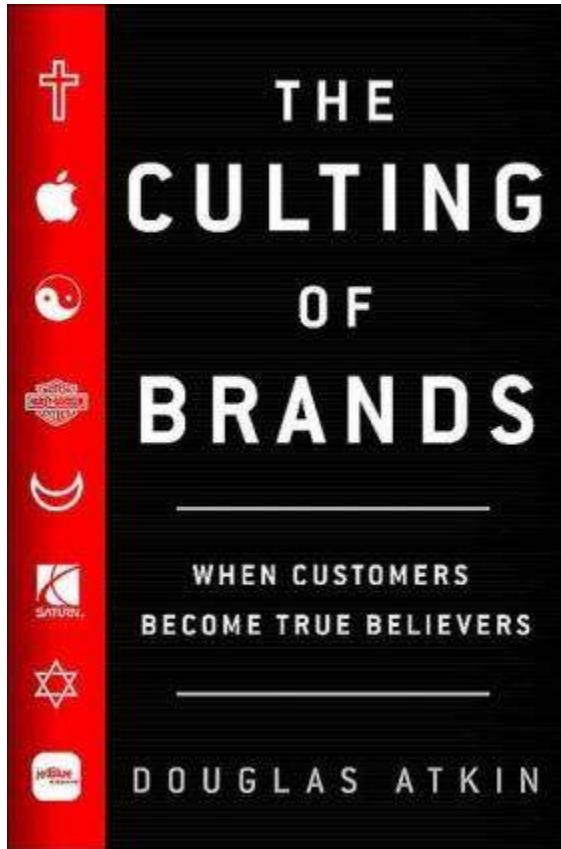
Key takeaways



A scenic landscape at sunset. The sky is filled with large, wispy clouds illuminated from behind by the setting sun, casting a warm golden glow. In the foreground, there are rolling hills covered in green grass. The sun is low on the horizon, with its rays streaming across the landscape. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and dramatic.

**What's driving the need for brands
to stand for something?**

Failing institutions are leaving a void in society that brands can fill: the need for community and meaning



“We’ve reached a unique intersection in society that favors marketers. On one side, established institutions are proving to be increasingly inadequate sources of meaning and community. On the other, there has been a growth of a very sophisticated kind of consumerism...”

“So, as long as traditional institutions fail, and marketers remain sophisticated, then brands can become credible sources of community and meaning.”

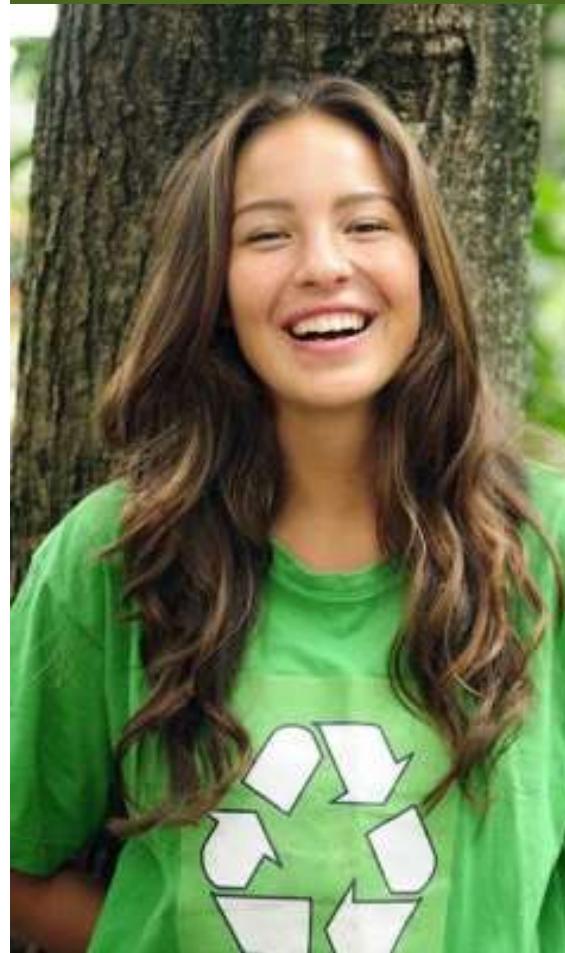
The Culting of Brands: when customers become true believers by Douglas Atkin.

Three key dynamics are driving the rise of “brands that stand for something”

Considered consumption



Desire to make a difference



Search for the genuine

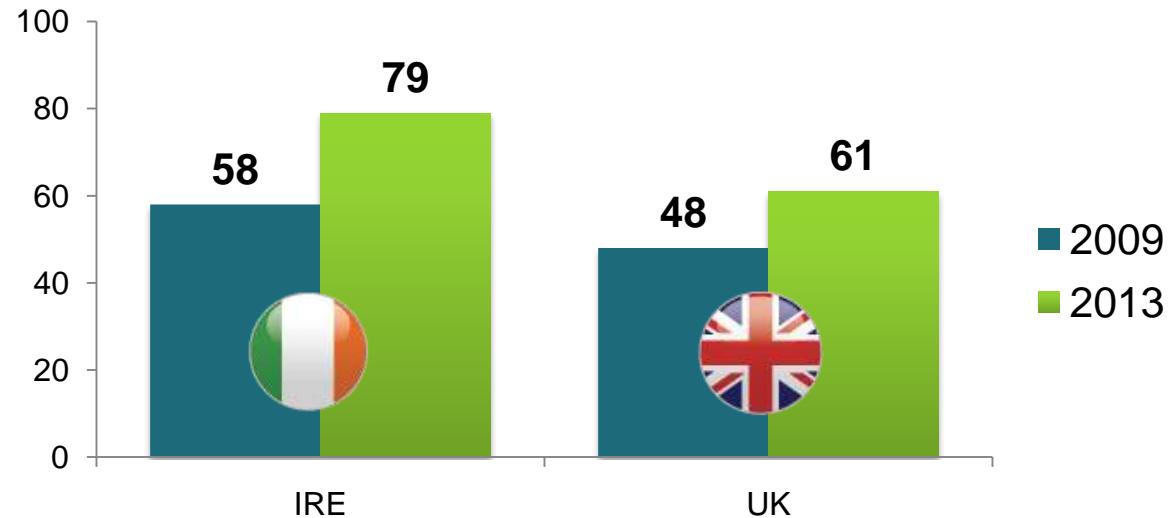


Consumers are more savvy and are taking time to make the right choice



Considered consumption

“I find myself thinking twice before making even the smallest day-to-day purchases”



68% globally

“ I am increasingly likely to spend time researching a product before making a purchase. **”**

The increasing skepticism means brands need to get it right and ensure they can withstand scrutiny

Considered consumption



“  **73%**  **71%** ”

I am increasingly skeptical of the claims made by brands on packaging and in Advertisements.

“  **79%**  **80%** ”

Most companies only make claims about their SR efforts to try to sell me more of their products.

Consumers want to make a difference and expect brands to help them do so

Desire to make a difference



67%



57%

“ I feel that I can make a difference to the world around me through the choices I make and the actions I take ”

80% globally

“ I expect the companies whose products I buy to take steps to avoid damaging the environment ”

There is huge appetite for brands with meaning, that make life better

Search for
the genuine



“

In UK, **68%** of the people agree that large companies should be actively involved in solving social / environmental problems.

”

“

70% think that companies & brands should play a role in improving our quality of life and well-being, but less than a quarter think brands work hard at this. ”

From what & how branding to “WHY branding”

From Value to *Values*

From Benefit to *Belief*

From Positioning to *Philosophy*

From Point of Difference to *Point of View*

From Purchase to *Participation*

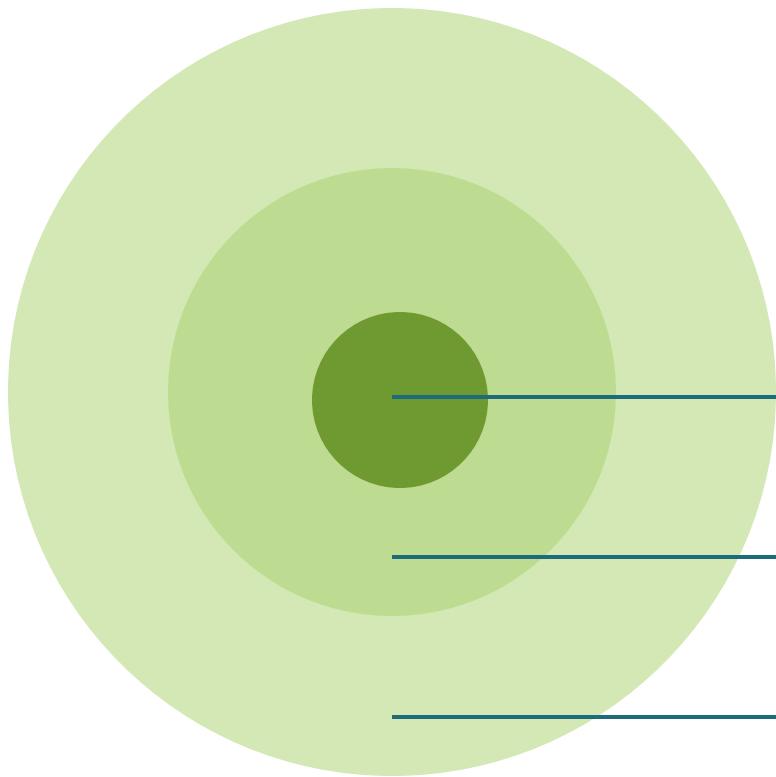
From Campaign to *Movement*

From Products to *Principles*



“*People don’t buy what you do, they buy WHY you do it*”

Brands that stand for something think, act and communicate from the inside-out, from the WHY to the what



1- WHY

...why we do it, our purpose, our belief, our cause, why you should care

2- HOW

...how we do it, how we are better, our USP

3- WHAT

...what we do

A photograph of a forest scene. Sunlight filters through the dense canopy of leaves, creating bright, glowing rays of light that illuminate the scene. The overall atmosphere is misty and ethereal.

Key principles of brands that stand for something

These common principles shared by ‘brands that stand for something’ can be used as a checklist



1- IDENTIFY
CULTURAL TENSIONS



2- TAKE A SIDE



3- MATCH THE DNA



4- LIVE IT. BREATHE IT.



5- SEND A CLEAR
MESSAGE



6- CREATE A
MOVEMENT



7- STAY TUNED IN

1. First, understand the cultural landscape, know the tensions, and choose the right issue



IDENTIFY
CULTURAL TENSIONS



- Have a deep understanding of **macro dynamics** and how they overlap and where they collide
- Identify the drivers that will lead to change of macro dynamics and understand **how they are likely to evolve**
- Understand the current and emerging consumer point of views, or even concerns and the **cultural tensions** that plague their landscape
- **Think bigger** than the category and the brand to have a better overview of the different possibilities

LEON, tapping into the desire for convenient and healthy fast food

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IDENTIFY CULTURAL TENSIONS

“What fuels us is the belief that food should taste good and do you good. And that everyone should be able to enjoy it. To do this, we’ve set about to change the face of fast food.”

leonrestaurants.co.uk



2. Take a side and look for opportunities to challenge the status quo



TAKE A SIDE



- **Select a tension** worth fighting for that is larger than, but in line with, your category/brand
- Have a strong point of view, and **take a side** on the debate
- **Challenge the status quo**, inspirational leaders always do
- Ensure that the landscape for the selected issue is **not already crowded** by other brands
- At the end, remember that the issue selected has to be **relevant to consumers' lives**

Whole Foods Market sets the bar for other retailers by championing clarity around GMO

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TAKE A SIDE

"We are putting a stake in the ground on GMO labeling to support the consumer's right to know"

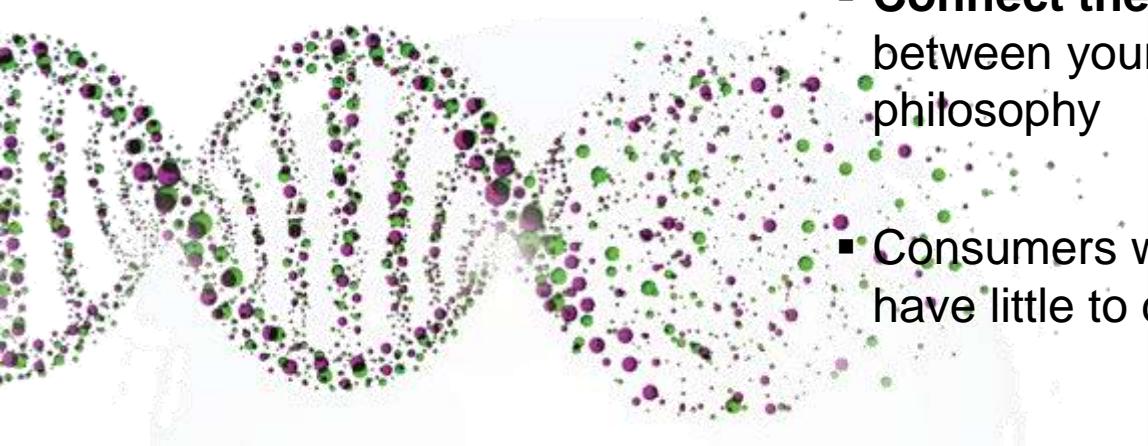
Walter Robb, co-CEO of Whole Foods Market



3. Find it in you, it must be in your DNA



MATCH THE DNA



- **“Own-ability” is key**
- Whatever your brand stands for, the POV, it needs to be intrinsic to your **DNA, to your brand heritage and story**
- Consumers need to feel that your stand is **genuinely** part of who you are
- **Connect the dots for your consumers** between your brand, your category and your philosophy
- Consumers will **see through any efforts** that have little to do with your brand

The Teeling Whiskey Co. has distinctly Irish core values and essence

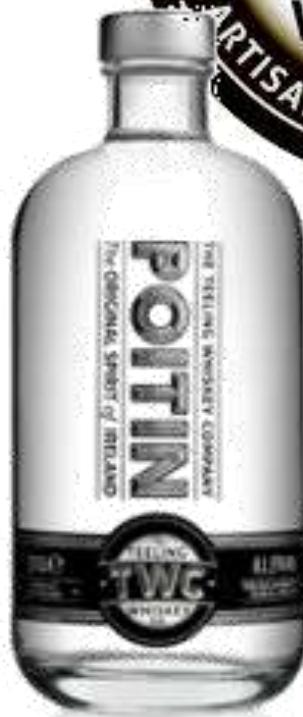
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MATCH THE DNA

"We are an independent Irish Whiskey Company dedicated to bringing choice and breadth back to the Irish Whiskey category... Our goal is to revive the Independent Spirit of Ireland".

www.teelingwhiskey.com



4. Live it. Breathe it. Embed it into the organization.



LIVE IT, BREATHE IT



- Once you decide to fight for a cause, you have to **embrace it completely**
- Actions have to be **real and must be able to be proven**
- **No “green washing”**: consumers are well-informed, they will be skeptical and will ask for proof
- **Live the stance and develop a culture** around it (from the strategy to the HR policy)
- It needs to be something that **lives and breathes throughout the organization**

Innocent smoothies and juices have a built-in philosophy of being “honestly good”



LIVE IT, BREATHE IT

“Here at Innocent, we want to leave things a little bit better than we find them. We strive to do business in a more enlightened way, where we take responsibility for the impact of our business on society and the environment.”

innocentdrinks.ie



5. Send a simple clear message to articulate the stance



SEND A CLEAR
MESSAGE



- Consumers have enough complexity in their lives to have to **spend time decoding what you stand for.**
- The stance, the **WHY** needs to be **simply and clearly articulated**. It needs to be tangible, **single minded** and easy to understand
- Give consumers an **easy sound-bite** that they can, in turn, use when evangelizing about you
- Target the right people to talk to by **selecting the right communication channels** to use

Toms shoes action is clearly articulated “one for one” – one pair sold, one pair donated

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SEND A CLEAR
MESSAGE

“Wanting to help [children in Argentina with no shoes], [the founder] created TOMS Shoes, a company that would match every pair of shoes purchased with a pair of new shoes given to a child in need.”

TOMS.com



6. Create a movement, encourage consumers to join the collective



CREATE A
MOVEMENT



- If your stance is powerful enough consumers will want to **buy *into* your brand and join you in your quest**
- Ultimately, the brand can create a movement that can help consumers feel that, collectively, **you are all making a difference**
- **Provide the guidance**, tools and avenues necessary for people to be able to participate, join in
- Encourage, **make consumers feel smart** and even reward them for doing so.
- Allow consumers to co-create, **speak in their own voice**, and through their own channels.

Glenisk: Striving for an organic Ireland

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CREATE A
MOVEMENT

*“We’re on an organic mission
and we’d love some company...”*

*“Yesterday, we were seen as an
alternative business but today it
seems that more and more
people are choosing organic
food.”*

www.glenisk.com



7. Hold on to your stand for the long run and stay in touch with the evolution of the world



STAY TUNED IN

- Once you are embarked on your project, you need to **hold on to it and think for the long term**:
- **Ensure you have the internal support and resources** to make it longstanding
- **Live and evolve the promise through out the lifecycle of the brand**



- Because the world is evolving, the issues are changing, you have to **be flexible and able to adapt** your strategy according to new concerns.
- **Stay relevant** for consumers by tackling current and evolving issues.

McDonalds has continued to stay relevant by reflecting changing consumer values across the organisation



STAY TUNED IN

“ Only whole cuts of 100% beef go into our famous burgers and it’s all supplied to us by over 16,000 British and Irish beef farmers.”

McDonalds.co.uk

The collage includes:

- A screenshot of the McDonald's website with a red sidebar menu and a banner for "TAKE YOUR TASTE BUDS ON HOLIDAY".
- A screenshot of a blog post titled "What goes into our burgers?" featuring a photo of three cows.
- A screenshot of a page titled "Striving for a sustainable future" with sections on Litter, Waste, Packaging, and Energy.
- Small images and text snippets from the "Striving for a sustainable future" page, such as "McDonald's restaurants operate very much as part of their local community and wider environment, with pride in the appearance of the local environment", "Used cooking oil represents 70% of a restaurant's solid waste, and is recycled into biodiesel, which our delivery fleet runs on.", "Hello to the farmers of tomorrow...", and "We recycle 100% cooking oil into our biodiesel".

Key takeaways



What issues do consumers face today, how will that evolve?



What could be our competitive advantage to get involved in this debate?



What do we need to build in our DNA to create a genuine vision?



What can we do to “walk the talk”?



Can we narrow our mission to one clear message?



Are the issue and our stance powerful enough for consumers to want to join?



How can we evolve but maintain our core principles?



"People don't buy
what you do; they
buy *why* you do it.
And what you do
simply proves what
you *believe*" *Simon Sinek*



Thank you