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Creating a Positive Story About Your Brand

By Paul Sage

What's a brand? A logo? A name? A television commercial? No. It's not any ONE of those things. It's ALL of those things. And much more. A lofty answer to the question, "What's a brand?" might sound like this: *A brand is the sum of all that is thought, seen, heard and felt about your company or product.* Huh? While that's a good answer for a marketing professor, what does it mean? I like a simpler definition:

A brand is a story.

That's it. A brand is a story. Or to be more specific, a brand is a story you tell **yourself**.

If you don't think you tell yourself stories, just ask yourself:

- Have I ever paid

more for Morton than store-brand salt?

- Have I ever paid more for Evian or Dasani than store-brand water?

If you answered "Yes," then you told yourself a story, and you believed it! You paid more than necessary for salt and water – the most basic and plentiful stuff on earth! Why? Because you told yourself those premium brand commodities were better. You told yourself a story.

And what about your club's brand? What words and images do you plant in your prospects' and members' minds so that they tell themselves a positive story about your club? Are you positioning your club's brand as worth paying more for, or are you just another store-brand box of salt, shouting a low monthly fee and hoping your competitor doesn't beat your price?

Strong, premium brands charge a higher price because consumers believe the brand is worth it. Everything communicates your brand – from the sign in front of your club to how your staff greets your members and prospects. Build a brand that gets your members to tell themselves "it's worth it."

