

The brand creates an experience that keeps people hooked. (Fair warning: if you don't want to know what's inside your next monthly shipment from Loot Crate, you'd better watch out for spoiler alerts!)

Where's Waldo? (And What Is He Doing??)

Banned material isn't always wrapped in plain brown paper wrappers. It also comes in covers with titles that read *The Catcher in the Rye*, *The American Heritage Dictionary*, or *Where's Waldo?* In 1882, the great American poem *Leaves of Grass* was banned for its obscene content. Sales increased so dramatically from the publicity that its author, the poet Walt Whitman, bought a house from the royalties.*

Ask Questions before Giving Answers

Instead of giving generic information, Mystique brands begin by asking questions. Here's how one company used questions to drive sales:

Victoria's Secret makes lingerie seem sexy and simple. In reality, that's not always the case. Which bra actually fits? Every woman is shaped differently (and few are shaped like a lingerie model). For many women, bra fitting is a major pain point in the process of buying a new bra, because getting measured can be complicated and even embarrassing. To avoid the process of finding a bra that fits, women often just keep wearing ones that don't fit at all. How could a company make the experience more private, and more simple?

*It's difficult to identify exactly how the *Where's Waldo?* series of children's books earned the distinction of being among the American Library Association's one hundred most challenged books between 1990 and 2000. Rumor has it that as young readers search to find other naughty bits. Get out your magnifying glasses, kids.

True & Co. took the bra-fitting experience online by asking questions. Lots of questions. The company identified six thousand different body types and designed a questionnaire that pinpointed the ideal fit. The brand listened, and women responded, generating \$22 million in sales. By asking questions, and offering privacy, this startup got people involved (and buying).

A good set of ears, a tape measure, and the cups no longer runneth over.

The Forty-Eight-Hour Wait

Years ago, when I first released the Fascination Advantage assessment for individuals, it took a while for my team and me to figure out how to automate profiles. Until we did, each profile was painstakingly hand-finished by our heroic designer. Each profile took hours of labor. As a result, customers had to wait two days from the time they took the assessment to the time they received their results. Frankly, I was a bit worried that this delay would make people impatient, or even dissatisfied. Yet that wasn't the case. During that forty-eight hours, curiosity grew, and by the time people received their results, they couldn't wait to read them.

Too often, marketers rush in and smother consumers. Instead of a high-pressure pitch, what if you used a low-pressure (or anti-pressure) approach? Consider backing off a little. Pull customers in, rather than pushing them to buy. Build an anticipation gap.

Build Mythology

"Mythology" is the collection of stories, traditions, and beliefs belonging to a particular group or event. It can be strategically fostered, or it may just naturally build over time. What's the story behind your brand? Instead of spelling everything out in your marketing, what if you let people draw their own conclusions, and draw on your stories? Mythology is bewitching.