

What is your orange ticket? The answer lies in your brand's main Advantage. Once you identify your brand's key mode of communication, you can heighten these points of difference, and turn them into something unforgettable.

Fascination Turns Green into Orange

At the end of our journey together, you'll understand why people buy luxury goods without an appreciable difference in quality, rave about favorite companies without being paid endorsers, or research products without any intention to actually buy them. In your "Action Plan for Teams," your team will have a road map to apply these principles. Together, you'll take something that's relatively meaningless (e.g., a swoosh symbol) and give it meaning (e.g., the Nike logo).

I'll point out examples from marketing, culture, fashion, music, food, hobbies, holidays, and even boring stuff like dust bunnies. Any product, and any company, can perform marketing witchcraft to captivate customers.

Buying vs. Paying

In one of my favorite nuggets of marketing research, I asked women how much they'd be willing to pay for a pair of sunglasses—one pair with a Chanel logo, and one with no logo. The two pairs of sunglasses themselves had the same functionality, yet each had a very different perceived value. In fact, the logo was worth more than the sunglasses themselves. The learning: When women buy Chanel sunglasses, they're *buying* sunglasses, but *paying* for the brand. In this experiment, Chanel was not *better*, but it was *different*.

Often, when people *buy* a product, they are actually *paying* for an intangible benefit. When buying Chanel sunglasses, women are paying for the logo. When college graduates (and their parents) *buy* an Ivy League education, they're often paying for the brand name of the college.

When people buy your product, what are they paying for? The

experience? The cachet? The assurance of quality? Just as a pair of sunglasses with a Chanel logo can be worth exponentially more than the same pair without a logo, how can you elevate your point of difference above similar products?

This is the heart of differentiation. It's tough to be better. But far easier to be different.

When a Choice Is Not Really a Choice

We all have certain behaviors that don't exactly make sense, even to ourselves. We make certain choices and take certain actions without understanding exactly why. In a state of fascination, you are more likely to buy certain brands, remember certain speeches, or hire certain people. In those moments, your brain bypasses the usual decision-making processes.

Within these seemingly irrational behaviors, clear patterns emerge. For instance, when you communicate passionately, people tend to see you as approachable and human. When you communicate powerfully, they perceive you as confident. When you spark curiosity, they want to learn more.

The next time you find yourself engrossed in a game of golf, or craving a specific food, or focusing like mad to meet a deadline at work, ask yourself: What's actually going on here? Earlier, we talked about the seven Advantages and how they persuade and influence behavior. Underneath the surface, which of the seven Advantages is causing this rapt state? Once you understand how fascination works, you might realize that your behavior is being driven by something far different from what you think. It might be the Advantages at work. The Advantages may seem surprising at first, but they're the brain's hardwired response to messages.

On a First Date? Measure His Elbows

The idea that symmetry equals beauty has been rattling around pop culture for a few years, based on research from the