



From the Business Section

By Dan Beaulieu

The Invisible Touch

The four Keys to Modern Marketing

By Harry Beckwith

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Did you know if you raise the price of something, you raise the interest in that product? Don't you instantly want to know about and better yet try a five-dollar milkshake? At least once? What if you hear about a twelve-dollar dish of ice cream? Wouldn't that pique your interest? This concept represents one of the four marketing concepts that Harry Beckwith discusses in this neat little marketing handbook. This is the kind of book that is fun to read even if you're not a marketer. How about research? Do you believe the results of very specific and detailed marketing research? Harry Beckwith doesn't at all. He feels that most research is self prophesizing. Beckwith claims that if you are looking for certain results from research, you will get them. He feels that when people are being surveyed, they will tell you what they think you want to hear. He also feels that research can kill a great many good idea, because the man on the street does not know what a truly great idea is until he needs whatever that idea is. " Research supports mediocre ideas and kills great ones." And " The more innovative your idea, the smaller number of people who will understand it—and people have great trouble imagining that they will buy something they cannot understand."

What I love about Beckwith is that he is the first person to admit in print that most great marketing ideas come from the gut. You just know that they will work and you don't need any research to prove it. I can just feel the traditional marketers cringing as I write this. But think about it. Ford claims that the new Windstar was redesigned by its customers. And it more or less was, they asked their customers specific questions about what they would like to see in a mini van and they got the answers they wanted and they designed the van accordingly. Unfortunately the customers thought that they could only deal with the questions asked and nobody asked them if they wanted a driver's side sliding door. Actual numbers and Chrysler proved that customers desperately wanted the fourth door; unfortunately Ford did not ask that question. The customers only dealt with the questions they were asked. How much do you think that oversight costs Ford?

How about the Folgers in the great restaurant tests? If you are in a great restaurant you are going to think that everything is better, therefore you are preconditioned to think that the coffee is better, even if it is Folgers, you have already been lulled into not questioning the superiority of any product served in that great restaurant.

This book is full of stuff to think about, stuff to get your mind racing about the way you sell your own products and services. This book is also a great read, giving you the insight on how the most popular and successful products in this country are marketed. Reading this book will give you such specific insights that it will be very difficult to view any advertising the same ever again. Pick this one up if you want to have fun while you learn.

Meanwhile I'll see you in the business section.

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