The Brand Gap, Revised Edition (AIGA Design Press)

A WHITEBOARD OVERVIEW BY **MARTY NEUMEIER**

HOW TO BRIDGE
THE DISTANCE
BETWEEN
BUSINESS STRATEGY
AND DESIGN

THE **BRAND GAP**

EXPANDED EDITION WITH
220-WORD BRAND GLOSSARY

AIGA

New Riders
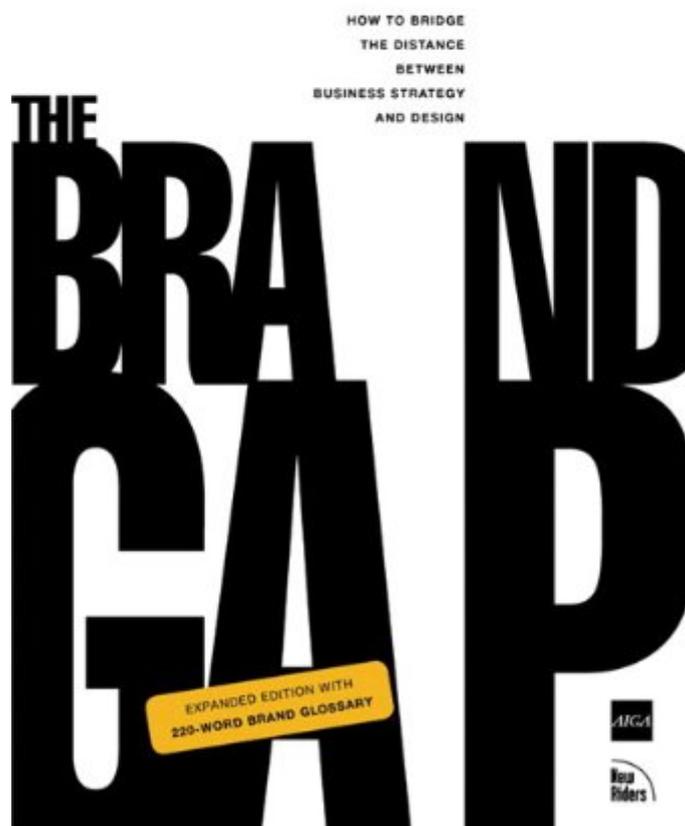
Synopsis

THE BRAND GAP is the first book to present a unified theory of brand-building. Â Whereas most books on branding are weighted toward either a strategic or creative approach, this book shows how both ways of thinking can unite to produce a â œcharismatic brandâ •â ”a brand that customers feel is essential to their lives. In an entertaining two-hour read youâ ™ll learn: â ¢ the new definition of brandâ ¢ the five essential disciplines of brand-buildingâ ¢ how branding is changing the dynamics of competitionâ ¢ the three most powerful questions to ask about any brandâ ¢ why collaboration is the key to brand-buildingâ ¢ how design determines a customerâ ™s experienceâ ¢ how to test brand concepts quickly and cheaplyâ ¢ the importance of managing brands from the insideâ ¢ 220-word brand glossary From the back cover:Not since McLuhanâ ™s THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE has a book compressed so many ideas into so few pages. Using the visual language of the boardroom, Neumeier presents the first unified theory of brandingâ ”a set of five disciplines to help companies bridge the gap between brand strategy and customer experience. Those with a grasp of branding will be inspired by the new perspectives they find here, and those who would like to understand it better will suddenly â œget it.â • This deceptively simple book offers everyone in the company access to â œthe most powerful business tool since the spreadsheet.â •

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an expanded edition of a book first published in 2003. In it, Neumeier develops in greater depth several basic ideas about how to bridge a gap between business strategy and design. My own experience suggests that on occasion, there may be a conflict or misalignment rather than a "gap." Or the business strategy is inappropriate. Or the design concepts are wrong-headed. Or the execution fails. Whatever, Neumeier correctly notes that "A lot of people talk about it. Yet very few people understand it. Even fewer know how to manage it. Still, everyone wants it. What is it? Branding. of course -- arguably the most powerful business tool since the spreadsheet." What Neumeier offers is a "30,000-foot view of brand: what it is (and isn't), why it works (and doesn't), and most importantly, how to bridge the gap between logic and magic to build a sustainable competitive advantage." Of course, that assumes that both logic and magic are present and combined...or at least within close proximity of each other.As others have already indicated, Neumeier provides a primer ("the least amount of information necessary") rather than a textbook. His coverage is not definitive, nor intended to be. He has a crisp writing style, complemented by "the shorthand of the conference room" (i.e. illustrations, diagrams, and summaries). Some describe his book an "easy read" but I do not. When reading short and snappy books such as this one, I have learned that certain insights resemble depth charges or time capsules: they have a delayed but eventually significant impact. For example, Neumeier explains why "Three Little Questions" can bring a high-level marketing meeting to a screeching halt:1. Who are you?2. What do you do?3. Why does it matter?

The book starts off with a bang and really grabbed my attention throughout the first half. After that the book fizzles out a bit and the information starts to lose some of its glimmer. The Brand Gap prides itself on being such a short title about a large subject. Well, I think the book could have been even shorter. It reads like a bloated blog post and interjects random visuals that are only sometimes helpful.The Brand Gap is also quaintly outdated. At one point the author talks about how most websites are poorly designed and shows an example of something ala 1998. Well...A LOT has changed since this book was published (2006) and there are numerous examples of gorgeous, and useful websites on the market today. Granted, there's lots of bad design out there, but things have,

and are, getting better.A particularly embarrassing example is the author's use of 's market share to elucidate his point about creating a focused brand. He gloats about losing 30% of it's market share after extending it's repertoire beyond books. Well guess what...the joke is on us now. magically broke the curse of expansion and their sales have risen 219% to $34.2 billion between 2006 and 2010. This NEEDS to be addressed in the book, otherwise the author's use 's statistics is simply misinformation. It takes away a lot of the books credibility.And speaking of credibility...For a book that stresses the importance of design and aesthetics, it needs to take a look in the mirror. The typesetting in the book is "horsey" and wouldn't even be acceptable in a first-semester graphic design course. Sure, I'm splitting hairs here, and most people wouldn't notice the typographic nuances, but a book that is half about design needs to take things like this seriously.

Branding and selling must live in peace. They seldom do - and that's not good for anyone.One reason there is confusion regarding brand/sales harmony is due to the over complicated nature of most books on branding. Branding has turned into a high concept domain of intellectuals and creative types that leaves the sales force feeling like strangers in a strange land.The good news is that Marty Neumeier has taken the time to write with clarity. He brings brand into clear focus with a direct and easy to read book entitled The Brand Gap.Here are seven branding truths from The Brand Gap that just may create sales-brand peace in our time!1. Neumeier posits a simple, to the point, definition of brand, "A brand is a person's gut feeling about a product, service, or company." Sales professionals understand gut feelings and ought never to forget this definition. Too often a sales process will treat the customer as a logical, rational being that will make the best choice based on the evidence. That kind of left-brained approach to selling ignores what people are really like. Yes, reason plays a part, but not nearly as dominate a part as sales people would like. It might be comforting to think that all you need is a well-reasoned argument for your product or service, but sales and brands are more complex than that. Too often brand managers have worked hard at creating that "gut feeling" only to have it undone by a "nothing but the facts" sales process.2. The Brand Gap says - "The foundation of brand is trust". This is THE common ground of branding and selling. Trust is always the first goal. No product, service or company will ever communicate value without first establishing trust.

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