

Brand equity is a worthwhile investment in consumer trust

by Lorne Ray

The business dictionary defines brand equity as a brand's power or value derived from the good will and name recognition that it has earned over time, which translates into higher sales volume and higher profit margins against competing brands. I know that is a mouthful so in plain, simple English, it comes down to trust.

People buy from brands they trust. Think about the purchases you make for instance. If you need to make a purchase are you going to buy from a brand you have never heard of, or are you going to lean towards one you have seen over and over again? Chances are pretty good you will go with the brand that you recognize.

In a small market, brands have a huge competitive advantage if they take advantage of the primary media that at-

tracts the most mindshare of the consumers in the market area. Even if your business is on Main Street and everyone drives by and sees your sign on a daily basis, seeing your brand in the local media, like The Independent, is different. The reason for this is the implied third party validation of seeing your brand in print along with all of the other brands.

Our minds have been literally trained to trust a brand that we see in print, and the more we see it, the more trust or value we give it. As a prospective advertiser ask yourself whether this theory is correct when you consider making purchases. Better yet, take the last five major purchases you made and think about these purchases in terms of how brand equity played a part in your own decision.

In small markets, brands

(even new brands) should utilize the local newspaper to build brand equity for one simple reason; it is the best brand equity buy in the world. If you calculate the cost of advertising in The Independent over a three year period, relative to the value of the trust you build in your brand, the return on investment is astronomical. To get the same relative market share in terms of brand equity in major markets, brands have to spend literally millions of dollars.

In advertising terms, brand equity impacts the mindshare that you begin to develop in the market.

When a person is ready to make a purchase they think of you because your brand is always in front of them in the primary media they see on a regular basis.

Oftentimes we think of ad-

vertising in terms of running an ad with the purpose of getting an immediate return on investment. This is not how it always works since not everyone is always going to need your services in this week's paper. But...when they do...because you have been consistently there in front of them...you get the call because you were will-

ing to invest in the consumer's mind. You earned their trust.

As the economy begins to rebound, the best move you can take is to start earning mind share now and there is no better way to accomplish this than to start getting your brand in front of the local market immediately.

New minimum wage as of Jan. 1

by Chris Thomas, Oregon News Service

The minimum wage in Oregon went up 30 cents an hour starting January 1, to \$8.80. Oregon is one of only 10 states that ensures by law that its minimum wage keeps up with inflation, which was calculated this year at just over 3.5 percent.

Whenever there's a minimum wage hike, some employ-

ers claim the extra cost will mean they hire fewer workers, or contend it will put them out of business altogether. However, an economist who studies wage trends says that hasn't happened since the 1930s. John Schmitt, with the Center for Economic Policy Research, says "What the evidence seems to suggest is that, over long periods of time, the kinds

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Community Calendar

VERNONIA

Alcoholics Anonymous	Mondays	6:30 p.m., 410 North Street
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thursdays (Big Book Study)	7:00 p.m., 410 North Street
American Legion Post #119	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., 627 Adams Avenue
Booster Club	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., VHS Library
Boy Scout Troop 201	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., Scout Cabin
Boy Scout Troop 860	Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., LDS Church
Cemetery Beautification Comm.	2nd Thursday	6:30 p.m., Library
CERT	4th Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-3018
Chamber of Commerce	2nd Wednesday	For Info Call 503-429-6081
Community Coalition	2nd Monday	12:30 p.m. School District Ofc.
Cub Scout Pack 201	Scout Cabin	For Info Call 503-429-4250
Emerg. Preparedness Comm.	4th Wednesday	6:30 p.m., WOEC
Friends of the Library	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Library
Girl Scouts, Neighborhood 4-2		For Info Call 503-819-0143
Izaak Walton League	3rd Thursday	For location call 503-429-7193
Kiwanis Club	2nd & 4th Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Tuesdays	6:30 p.m., New Hong Kong
Municipal Airport Committee	1st Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Pioneer Museum		For Info Call 503-429-3713
Upr Nehalem Watershed Council	For date call 429-0869	7:00 p.m., Vernonia Grange
Public Works Committee	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Cares Directors		For Info call 503-429-1414
Vernonia City Council	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Community PTA	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., WGS Library
Vernonia Garden Club	2nd Tuesday	1:30 p.m., Vernonia Library
Vernonia Grange	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., Grange Hall
Vernonia Health Center	3rd Thursday	6:30 p.m., 510 Bridge St.
Vernonia Comm. Learning Center	1st Wednesday	5:00 p.m., VCLC
Vernonia Parks Committee	3rd Wednesday	6:30 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Planning Comm.	1st & 3rd Thursdays	6:00 p.m., City Hall
Vernonia Ridge Riders	Last Thursday	7:00 p.m., Senior Center
Vernonia RFPD Board	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia School Board	2nd Thursday	6:00 p.m., District Office
Vernonia Sr. Center Board	2nd Friday	10:00 a.m., Senior Center
Vernonia Transfer Station	2nd & 4th Saturdays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.	Behind VHS
Vern. Volunteer Ambulance Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
Vernonia Volunteer Firefighters	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Fire Station
WOEC Directors	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., WOEC

MIST-BIRKENFELD

M-BRFPD Board Business Mtg.	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-BRFPD Board Workshop	4th Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Ambulance Drill	1st & 2nd Thursdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Fire Drill	1st & 2nd Wednesdays	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Helping Circle	2nd Monday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B SAR Drill	3rd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
M-B Volunteer Assoc.	1st Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Main Fire Station
Natal Grange	2nd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Natal Grange Hall
T.O.P.S.	Mondays	9:00 a.m., Main Fire Station

BANKS

Alcoholics Anonymous	Friday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
Alcoholics Anonymous	Wednesday	7:30 p.m., Methodist Church
American Legion Post #90	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., Main Street Post
Banks City Council	2nd Tuesday	7:30 p.m., City Hall
Banks Fire District #13	2nd Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Station 13
Banks Library Commission	3rd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Banks Planning Commission	Last Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Hall
Banks School Board	2nd Monday	7:30 p.m., Jr. High Library
Banks Youth Group	Sunday, Wednesday	7:00 p.m., UMC Youth Bldg.
Chamber of Commerce	1st Thursday	12:30 p.m., Fire District Office
CPO 14	3rd Monday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Everybody's Hometown Band	Tuesdays	7:00 p.m., BHS Music Room
Friends of the Library	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., City Library
Lions Club	1st & 3rd Mondays	7:00 p.m., Brown Derby
Sunset Park Assoc.	3rd Wednesday	8:00 p.m., Gun Club
T.O.P.S.	Wednesday	7:00 p.m., Administration Bldg.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (All meet in St. Helens unless otherwise noted.)

Board of Commissioners	Wednesday	10:00 a.m., Courthouse
Citizens for Senior Justice	2nd Tuesday	7:00 p.m., Sunset Park Church
Columbia 9-1-1 Board	3rd Thursday	9:00 a.m., 9-1-1 meeting room
Columbia Comm Mental Health	1st Tuesday	5:30 p.m., 58646 McNulty Way
Columbia Soil & Water District	3rd Wednesday	7:30 p.m., NRCS, 2514 Sykes
County Fair Board	2nd Monday	6:00 p.m., Fairgrounds 4-H Bldg.
County Parks Commission	3rd Tuesday	Times vary, 1054 Oregon St.
Mental Health Advisory Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211
Comm. on Children & Families	3rd Thursday	5:30 p.m. OSU Ext., 505 N. Hwy. 30
Local Alcohol & Drug Plann. Comm.	Quarterly	For Info call 503-397-7211