

Information products  
for building stronger,  
healthier and more  
attractive brands

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## Briefs for Building Better Brands

### Recent Media Activity

Here's some recent press reviews  
and activities for BBBB



#### From Foreword Reviews — “☆☆☆☆☆☆”

*Briefs for Building Better Brands* offers a whole new perspective on marketing for those with the traditional profitability mindset. Allan Gorman shares his expertise in this short but mighty collection of eighteen marketing lessons. Common themes revolve around the notion that the marketer should tap into the emotions elicited by a product or service, convey a distinctive identity, and appeal to the self-interest of customers. The major premise of the book is that “Marketing ... is all about delivering satisfaction, making friends, and developing long-term relationships.” Gorman describes the ideal marketer’s goal: Becoming a member of a potential customer’s collection of favorite brands, the “Inner Circle of Choices Club.”

Gorman defines a brand as the story people tell about a product or service. A strong brand is one that is “delightful,” a brand that will make people share the good news about a product or service with others. Developing a delightful brand involves finding out what customers want, designing those products or services, and helping customers form an emotional attachment to the new product or service. The idea of guerilla marketing is incorporated throughout the book, since creating brand delight automatically results in a customer’s word-of-mouth recommendations to other potential customers.

*Briefs for Building Better Brands* provides specific devices and exercises to build a brand rather than merely a list of “Do’s” and “Don’ts.” It is deceptively easy to read. Though short, it is full of examples and excellent advice. For added value, the book also includes a summary of George Silverman’s twenty-eight secrets of word-of-mouth marketing, Allan Gorman’s Brand IQ Test, and a bibliography and list of web resources on achieving marketing leadership. Individuals interested in marketing would profit from the book on a first reading. However, this is a book that should be reread, digested, discussed in small groups, tried out, and revisited, and it could even be used as one of the required texts in business schools.

—Rebecca Sisk, *Foreword Reviews*

#### From Creative Times Magazine

##### Are They Buying What You’re Selling? If Not, this Book's for You

If we're fortunate and bright enough, we will get to a point in life where we have amassed enough know-how, either on life in general or some specific subject, to write a book. That's the case with Allan Gorman, Director of Brandspa LLC, who recently published a series of essays on his branding expertise *Briefs for Building Better Brands: Tips, Parables and Insights for Market Leaders*.

For those unfamiliar with the concept, “branding” is that which makes you grab the pretty-patterned Dixie cups over the plainer store brand, despite the extra cost. Or, that which makes you pay almost double

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for a box of Godiva chocolates even though you know there's another kind available in most drug stores whose assorted box of dark chocolates are out of this world. That's branding.

The strength in Gorman's teachings is the real-life examples he uses to make his points. There's the time the family dog became ill and was rushed to the new vet in town. While Ziggy survived the ordeal, the relationship with the new vet did not, since the office was more interested in profits than patients. Year's earlier, on a subway ride with his wife, Gorman discovered a jazz-playing panhandler who knew how to position himself apart from the competition by dressing up. Then there's the time he visits a gourmet food trade show and finds the folks at the Texas booth stingy with their cashew nuts, thus endangering the branding of an entire state.

Some of us have long been familiar with Gorman's writings through his monthly E-newsletter and branding columns. What makes *Briefs of Building Better Brands* a wonderful read is both what it is and what it isn't. It is not a textbook-like tome filled with the latest marketing jargon and statistics, supporting a mind-boggling dissertation. Gorman offers practical, down-to-earth, reader-friendly advice, so that those who need it most -- entrepreneurs and individuals marketers -- can apply what they've read. The chapters are short and easy to tackle. That's not to imply Gorman offers simplistic advice. He gets into market leadership and the importance of CVP (core value proposition) just like any ivy-league textbook.

His expertise is the result of running his own firm, especially during lean times. When the volume of business dropped off for advertising and creative marketing materials, Gorman realized that he needed to recreate himself and his business. That's when BrandSpa was born. No longer a firm churning out media plans, direct mail campaigns, etc., but providing research-based advice that he executes together with his clients to carve a marketplace niche.

The problem with books like *Briefs for Building Better Brands* is that they eventually end. That's when the real fun and work begin -- putting into practice the lessons on branding and marketing. So you can either hire a branding consultant like Gorman, or if you prefer to go it alone, there are several aids at the end of the book -- such as a listing of helpful Websites, a cut-down version of George Silverman's *28 secrets of word-of-mouth marketing*, and Gorman's own *Brand IQ Text*.

Gorman includes information on how to purchase his CDs "Ten Marketing Secrets for Building a Sexier Brand" and "Gorman-One on One Number One." I find the notion of "BrandSpa" and Gorman's self-given title of "personal trainer" a bit much. But who am I to criticize? My book's not even in the hopper yet.

—Michael Schumacher, *Creative Times*

### **From Independent Publisher Online — “A Highlighted Title”**

This refreshing, visionary book suggests that to achieve true success, profit-oriented business managers need to change their base objectives. Instead of focusing only on making a profit, businesses should focus on creating customers, and then delivering true satisfaction to those customers and turning them into long-term, loyal friends. Yes, says author Gorman, it's all about branding, but branding is much more than slick logos, packaging and promotions. Real branding is the story your business creates in the consumer's mind; if that story is one of a delightful experience, the word will spread and the brand will grow. He outlines the steps to building a successful brand: creating an identity; offering a benefit; appealing to emotions; helping customer recall; penetrating the "noise" barrier; and following through with what you promise. Gorman then illustrates his points with a highly-readable mix of essays and real-world examples, including the final chapter show-stopper in which Brenda has to decide between Bob and Bill. "Building Better Brands isn't just for the Nikes and Nickelodeons of the world; it's for anyone who wants to succeed.

—Jim Barnes, *Independent Publisher Online*

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## From Marcomwise.com — “an absolute delight to read”

If you are interested in getting background and material to justify your brand building program or budget or are looking for more mental reinforcement for your elevated title of Corporate Brand Czar, Allan Gorman's *Briefs for Building Better Brands isn't for you*. More importantly, make very certain that no one gives your boss a copy!

We half expected this to be another book espousing the new wave of branding. But Gorman, a man who has helped more than his fair share of brands over the past 30-plus years, isn't that deluded or self-serving.

*Briefs* is a superbly succinct encapsulation of marketing relations between companies, products and consumers. The book is an absolute delight to read because it is clear, concise and lays out a plan of actions which can be followed in a landscape that is increasingly tough for brands.

Branding is a tough job for any organization at best. Since 1991, brands on grocery store shelves have tripled. Last year more than 140,000 trademarks were issued which are 100,000 more than in 1983. Today's consumer sees 60% more ad messages today than when the first President Bush left office.

There is an enormous challenge for each of us in this industry today. Most brand campaigns are carried out for all the wrong reasons and with unrealistic/unachievable goals. Gorman in his easy reading form does his best to scare the reader straight or help him/her set achievable objectives and avoid common marketing foibles.

While firms spend vast amounts of time, energy and money introducing new brands and defending old ones, consumers are becoming less loyal. In the "good old days," it was felt that once you had a customer you had his or her loyalty for life. But today even seemingly strong names have much power at the cash register.

Some communications people proudly note that because of branding efforts few brands still command a premium. What they fail to add is that the premium has shrunk...dramatically. They like to carry around pro-branding books like Rita Clifton's (chair of Interbrand) new book *Brands and Branding* which says "Well-managed brands have extraordinary economic value and are most effective and efficient creators of sustainable wealth."

Gorman on the other hand is more realistic - and in our opinion more credible -- in his approach. He points out that companies have to break with the marketing guru past of clever ad headlines, cool jingles, art director designs that are to die for and eye-popping websites. To help you win in today's marketplace, he emphasizes that the value of branding is shrinking and therefore firms have to approach their brand activity with greater attention, control and accountability. Hidden between the book's covers are some excellent strategies and practical tools you can use for your organization. He delivers a lot of thought-provoking ideas that you can actually use.

When you finish reading *Briefs* you may come to the realization that we have overestimated the power of branding and underestimated the consumers' savvy about the products he or she purchases. Gorman explains that over time most brands become commodities. General Motors, Ford, TiVo, Nokia and thousands of other brands enjoyed their day in the spotlight but the protection they enjoyed by their brand image has disappeared.

Or as Kevin Roberts, CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi, has said, "Brands have run out of juice. They're dead. Now the consumer is boss. There's nowhere for brands to hide."

Well fortunately for the organizations and individuals who read, thoroughly understand and work hard at what Gorman recommends you won't have to hide but you may have a chance to survive.

In addition to being able to share his 30-plus years of experience for such a small investment, he also includes 28 secrets of George Silverman's word-of-mouth marketing, a brand IQ test and a wealth of book and websites where you can find out even more.

*Briefs* is not a book to read if you want to make your job easier. Gorman - assuming you read and understand what he says - will make your job tougher. He will also make it more interesting and more fun. That's because he actually gives you the tools, guidelines and ideas you can actually use on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

The first thing you'll need to do as you read Gorman's *Briefs* is redefining the concept of branding for yourself. Then redefine branding within your organization. Then apply the information and ideas the author puts forward in terms of your company and your products.

That may sound like a lot of "extra" work but if you don't do it your boss may pick up his or her own copy of the book and where will that leave your next set of branding program recommendations?

—Andy Marken, *Marcomwise.com*

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## From *Create Magazine* Book Provides Powerful Insights Into Branding Any Product Or Service Into A Market Leader

How does a company really make their product or service stand out and become branded as the market leader? Why does one company become the first one to come to mind to a consumer above all others?

The fact is, nifty logos and cool websites and "cutting-edge" advertising don't really work anymore when it comes to improving the bottom line. Many companies spend millions to establish their identity, often to no avail.

Enter: marketing guru Allan Gorman and his 'Brand Delight' marketing approach. He's laid out a transformation of traditional marketing practices in his book, *Briefs for Building Better Brands: Tips, Parables and Insights for Market Leaders*. Praised as "brilliant," "stimulating," and "witty" by renowned marketing leaders, Gorman's book—a collection of his popular columns—is perhaps the first thoroughly original marketing primer to come around in years.

Rather than a complex theorem and marketing technique treatise, *Briefs for Building Better Brands* is more of a return to basic principles many companies have forgotten or never understood, premised on 'Brand Delight' and creating delightful experiences for customers.

"Many companies still have the mindset that a brand is something you make through promotion and packaging," says Gorman. "But while these elements are important, an actual brand is created by the public's attitudes and experiences."

Consider Gorman's philosophy a twist on the 'Golden Rule.'

"The primary key is to put yourself into the customer's shoes and find out what does, or can 'delight' or thrill them," adds Gorman. "A company needs to do unto customers *better* than they would do unto themselves. Identify what really can make them happy with your product or service, translate their wishes into the right story, and then deliver an experience that's delightful. If you make your customer happy, they'll share the news with others and spark word-of-mouth awareness, which in turn leads to powerful branding."

Some of the 'Brand Delight' points in Gorman's book include:

- Why changing your business focus from making a profit to creating long-term customers is essential to success.
- Penetrating the 'noise barrier': Discover how to breakthrough resistance to sales approaches by providing meaningful and useful information.
- How over-delivering on expectations creates delight in customers.
- Misconceptions of 'branding': why it really is all about the story your customers will tell to others about a product or service.
- Why a bit of bragging, action and over-delivery are so important to branding.
- Aligning packaging, advertising and publicity for maximum effectiveness.
- Why the mindset of a company's employees is so crucial to ultimate success.

"Branding is a multi-layered process, but really not a complicated one," notes Gorman. "It's starts with turning your thinking around and focusing on creating delight among specific customers."

*Briefs for Building Better Brands* is written in Gorman's trademark style; straightforward, non-preachy, and without technical jargon or tedious theories. True to his Brand Delight philosophy, it relays information in a way people like to receive it -- to create a reading experience they'll find delight in. "I want to appeal to the emotions of my readers—just as effective marketing should—with a book that offers a better way of marketing and provides easy to implement strategies," adds Gorman.

—*Create Magazine*

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### **From Bowker Bookwire — “good companion for management students”**

What makes certain brands work (or tick) with the public? What is the reason for the failure of certain brands to gain acceptance by the public? Is it because some brands are better than others? If that is the reason, then one can only hope to improve the quality of the product, and wait for better results. But what if two companies come with equally good products, and even then one company does it better than the other? Is it because of aggressive advertising? And/or endorsing of the product by stars? Or does the solution to the question lie somewhere else?

Marketing Guru Allan Gorman believes that good advertising was enough to achieve success earlier; however, things have changed at present. In his book, *Briefs for Building Better Brands*, he makes it clear that the public has become too intelligent to believe in every advertisement that they come across. The crucial point is 'every'. He points out that it is not enough to give good press releases and advertisements and hope for the brand to do well, but the company should actually try to gain the trust of the consumer. By gaining trust, the brand gets sold by word-of-mouth publicity. He terms this kind of marketing as 'guerrilla marketing'. The work deals with how to get this trust.

Gorman draws on his personal experience as a speaker on corporate issues, and shows how guerrilla marketing is more efficient than conventional marketing. The book also mentions George Silverman's twenty-eight secrets of word-of-mouth marketing and includes a list of web resources on achieving marketing leadership. The Brand IQ Test is written in an easy style, with witty anecdotes and astute analyses. The book makes for a good companion for management students.

—*Bookwire Reviews*

### **From Kirkus Discoveries — “forget the fancy dancing... and the airy cleverness”**

Gorman, who runs a boutique creative-brand agency, offers a refreshing return to business basics, when competition was a novel concept and businesses actually put the customer first.

Not that Gorman is trotting out old business saws in a fuddy-duddy way; his style is energetic, and his delivery is keen and clean. He is not about to forsake branding, but he will tell you to forget the fancy dancing, the retro music and the airy cleverness. His emphasis is on delivering satisfaction to the customers—consistently—with the ultimate goal of making them friends for the long term. Granted, it's not a revolutionary concept, but in the Age of Hype, it's certainly salubrious. Profits cannot be a guiding principle; business owners must understand the values, tastes and preferences of their audience, and then create a brand that becomes “the story that people will tell when asked to recommend your product or service to someone else” and one that exceeds expectations. In other words, create an identity and be all you say you are.

Tag lines, logos, websites—these are all brand articulations, and though Gorman acknowledges their importance, they are not value articulations and they can't carry the product if the consumer's experience isn't pleasurable and enthusiastic. Gorman even goes a step further: The product must be a *delight*. (He includes many amusing anecdotes, but the best involves him tipping a saxophone-playing spaceman in the subway.)

Gorman also offers intelligent advice about making oneself attractive to prospects, about clarity of message, about elegance and about the importance of word-of-mouth for verifying quality (with a nod to George Silverman)—though it would have been helpful to get a few examples of controlling and sequencing word-of-mouth marketing.

For Gorman, creating customers is an act of cultivating delight—a motto that most businesses would do well to follow.

—*Kirkus Discoveries*

## **From USA Book Reviews — “just what the marketplace needs”**

We’re living in a tough time for brand owners. Traditional media advertising—that was once key to distinguishing products from competitors -- just doesn’t work that well anymore. Allan Gorman's call for the redefining of traditional marketing into what he calls the creation of brand delight is right on time—and just what the marketplace needs.

Gorman’s delightful essays (he calls them Tips, Parables and Insights) teach us powerful lessons about creating real market leadership and distinction for ourselves, our services and our products—presented in an entertaining and easy-to-agree-with fashion, without the typical fancy jargon, self-congratulatory case studies or tedious theory found in other marketing books.

—USA Book Review

## **From motivationstrategies.com**

### **New Book Says Brands Are the Answer to Commoditization.**

Building a clear and powerful brand is the only way to stand out in a commoditized world, according to *Briefs for Building Better Brands: Tips, Parables and Insights for Market Leaders*, a new book by Allan Gorman, industry consultant, speaker and president of Montclair, N.J.-based Brandspa LLC. The key to brand building, he says, is to re-orient the purpose of a business towards customer creation rather than sales generation. “Create a story people can remember. Be first at something or be unique, Gorman says, adding, “It needs to connect [with customers] on an emotional basis.”

— Motivation Strategies Online Magazine

## **Recent Media and Public Appearances**

*Brian Jud's Book Talk*, Nutmeg TV — Oct, 2004

*Meet the Author* with Antoinette Kuritz, Talk America Radio — Nov, 2004

*Big Talk on Small Business*, Louisville—February, 2005

*Breakfast for Business*, KFNN, Pheonix—March, 2005

*Sunday Business Pages*, KDKA-TV, Pittsburgh—April, 2005

*ADCNJ Creativity Conference*, Union, NJ—May, 2004

*PRSA Bootcamp*, New Brunswick, NJ—May, 2004

*Meet the Author at Watchung Booksellers*, Montclair, NJ — Sep, 2004

*Soundboard Seminars*, Boonton, NJ — Oct, 2004

*Soundboard Seminars*, New York City — Nov, 2004

*BMANJ Panel Discussion on Brainstorming*, Parsippany, NJ—Feb, 2005

*Breakfast with the Experts at NYU*, New York City — March, 2005