

the
CONNECTION
BRAND



turn your clients into your
most dedicated sales people

JARED LATIGO

The Legal Stuff

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Introduction

You don't know me. I'm not famous but I've been incredibly gifted from birth. And I have something for you.

Actually, I don't have it. You do.

You have a super power hidden deep within you. It's been there for some time, since birth actually. And I'm here to help you use that gift.

The idea of super powers has long intrigued me since the days when I used to trade comic cards. I was never really into comic books, but the cards were awesome. Mainly, I was a Marvel fan because I loved X-Men. That was a very big thing when I was growing up in the '90s.

So my fascination with super powers began at that time but it never really went away. I have sort of hidden it because I didn't want to seem geeky, but the older I get, the more I really don't care and accept that I am quite geeky. It's sort of fun again.

I also believe we were all created with an incredible purpose for our lives. It's unique to each one of us and we have something that only we can give the world. That's pretty awesome to me and it makes you awesome as well.

So when I came up with the concept for connection branding, I dubbed the categories “super powers” because it only made sense. Super heroes have one main power and we should, too. Couple that with something like productivity and the focus on one power allows us to get more done.

My goal with this book is to give you hope for this new economy and help show you how connection is key to success. It’s no longer about just having the best product or yelling the loudest. It’s about people. It’s about powers. It’s about connection.

Lastly, I’ll invite you later on to do this, but be sure to email me with any thoughts or if you need help.

I’m available: Jared@JaredLatigo.com

I Hate Branding

I really do. That's why I'd rather connect.

It is a well known-fact that the public's perception contributes to a company's success. We have seen companies rise and fall due to leadership, market conditions, product failure and countless other things. Among those, one key that has always been a major factor in the success of a company has been it's branding.

A brand is a concept that initially came about to help differentiate one person's cattle from another's. It was considered the actual "logo" itself. But as we have moved through history into the industrial age and now the connection economy, we have seen the brand become far more than just the logo itself.

Branding is the overall image a company has in the marketplace. Or at least, that's the simple term for it.

But this is not a book about branding, despite the title and initial thoughts. This is actually a book about connections. It's about how we interact with each other and how companies interact with us. It's about a concept that, before the age of social media, had little meaning or purpose.

This is connection branding.

WHY

Start with why and you'll begin to build a connection like never before.

Ever since I read Simon Sinek's book, *Start With Why*, I've been keeping a keen eye out for the people and companies that do this well. The premise of the book, in case you haven't read it, is that "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." ¹

Not only is Sinek spot on, he's also the inspiration for this concept and book. Truly deep connection comes down to articulating your why in a unique way.

The major example that Sinek uses in the book is Apple. Love them or hate them, they have become the epitome of a company in terms of branding. I understand that they are a huge company and it's often hard to relate to, but the core is the same for all of us. Allow me to explain a bit.

Apple has built an entire culture around the cause of pushing the status quo. It's in everything they do from their industrial-looking store design to creating revolutionary new products to being able to pay for an item with your phone and walk out of the store without speaking a word. They have long been the company others have tried to model in terms of products and various other areas.

When a company starts with why, they immediately have an advantage that the rest of their competitors simply do not. The real trick is to remain clear in that why through the years and growth.

The reason I mention this is because Sinek's book has been an inspiration and catalyst for the creation of connection branding.

So why become a connection brand?

As the marketplace increases in noise, each person and company needs to learn to stand out more. To be unique.

Author and speaker Michael Hyatt has a concept he calls a platform. In fact, he wrote a great book about it called *Platform*. The idea is that we must have a group of people that are interested enough in what we have to say in order to get a message out into the world. He notes that the marketplace is insanely crowded with noise and we must build this platform in order to be heard.

But I have long felt there is even more to it than that. It's not just about building a platform or creating effective, targeted messaging, even though those things are very important. It's about building true connections that allow individuals to go deeper into the brand than ever before.

The reasons for forming true connections as a brand go far deeper than

we have ever had the chance to go. They surpass the premise of just gaining followers or fans. Building a true connection brand is about fusing connections with potential customers and fostering them into long-lost family members whom you actually want in your family. In turn, they will become the greatest asset a brand has. Connection branding takes word-of-mouth marketing to an entirely new level and, when done correctly, can all but eliminate the need for traditional marketing.

The interesting thing is that we have these brands all around us. And new ones are beginning to emerge more as we figure out this connection economy and how business works again. Connection brands can be anything from your local pharmacy to your neighbor to your favorite place to shop online. All these businesses are doing something in particular that resonates with you on an incredibly deep level. They are truly connecting with you.

The word connect is defined as “to bring together or into contact so that a real or notional link is established.”² And that is exactly what connection brands are doing that so many others are not.

The real question then becomes, why would you *not* want to be a connection brand?

First, you need to know why I do this.

I care about your success. But I'm not speaking from a business perspective when I say this. I'm speaking from an eternal standpoint.

You see, I believe in God. I believe He created each one of us for a very specific reason and it's our duty to fulfill that in this life. It's really as simple as that.

I won't get all churchy on you here, but I want to get a bit spiritual. There is something to having a relationship with the creator of the universe and recognizing that higher power. There is something to be said about following the rules He's put in place for us. I certainly don't do it right all the time, none of us do. But striving for that is the core of my being.

My purpose is to help you live your dreams. We all have them and I don't believe they are there by accident. It's my core being that tells me those dreams are divine with a divine purpose. That's why I do this. My heart tells me I can't not do it.

We never know the impact we'll have on someone just by being in their life, however brief it may be. For instance, my wife and I went out to eat and the manager of the restaurant recognized us. He used to manage another place where we ate frequently over the past nine years or so. The conversations we had with him over that time were surface level

but had an impact we never expected.

When we visited this new restaurant, he was overjoyed to see us there. He was literally shaking my hand over and over and telling us how excited he was to see us. He told my parents, who were with us, what an awesome son they had and how much he loved seeing us come to eat where he worked. He then proceeded to tell our waiter how highly he thought of me and my wife and to treat us extra special.

It was a really interesting, and humbling, experience. The entire time we were there, I kept thinking how I never even knew this guy's name or had more than a two or three minute conversation with him. It was at that moment that I realized how impactful we had been in this guy's life without even knowing it. And it reminded me to always be someone pleasant to be around because I would certainly have hated for him to think we had been rude all those years. Thank you Philip, for that experience. (Yes, I now know his name.)

I tell you this because it's important for our relationship. You're about to read about how to build connections with people using your super power. It's important for you to know how much I care about your success. I want you to live your dreams, to positively impact others, to please your Creator.

That's why I do this. It's not really about branding at all. It's about giving you the tools to be able to succeed at fulfilling your purpose in this

world. That's the underlying big picture to all of this.

I hope you understand. I'm here to serve.

That said, be sure to contact me personally anytime. You can reach me at Jared@JaredLatigo.com.

HOW

What's your Super Power?

Connection brands are built through the use of up to three key areas, which I'll call Super Powers.

They are relationships, stance and psychology. Each of these areas have a specific purpose and encompasses many sub-categories within it that allow the brand to form a positive image and become a success in the marketplace. It's this focus on one particular power that allows the brand to build deep connections with consumers.

The key is here is the connection brand's laser focus on one of these Super Powers. This enables the brand to build connections with consumers through the selected channel and makes it remarkably simple to identify them as a true connection brand.

The interesting thing about connection brands is that they often don't even realize they are intentionally building these parts of their business up more than others. It is just something they have always wanted to focus on and it's become part of the personality and culture of the brand.

When we encounter a brand, we need to decide whether or not to foster that connection. A brand that clearly does not want to connect with us

doesn't deserve our time and attention. This is where we must understand that a connection must be two-way.

If we're on the receiving end of a connection brand, we will begin to make different choices. Our decisions will no longer be primarily made on things like price or availability, but rather, the fact that the particular brand we love is offering it. The fact that we open the email from the company no longer depends on a catchy title or its offering, but the simple fact of who it came from.

Many would describe this to some degree as brand loyalty. In a sense it is, but the connection goes deeper than that. It really allows us to dive into the brand and what it stands for to create a real connection of trust in knowing the value that will come from that product or message.

Seth Godin

I'm a fan of Seth. He's incredibly brilliant and driven and he changes things. I love to change things. And I love to be around people that want to see a different world than we have now. Seth does that on many levels from education to business to marketing.

As a brand, Seth has become so trusted that many of us will open anything he puts out, buy anything he sells and take action on anything he says to do. We trust that he won't tell us to jump off a cliff or do some-

thing irrational because he's built rationality and simplicity into all of his work.

If I were to open my email one morning and find an email from Seth Godin sitting in my inbox with the subject line "Please don't open this, it will crash your computer. I'm serious," I'd still open it.

It's from Seth. He's a genius. His brand is so deeply ingrained in me and many others that we can't help but listen to what he has to say regardless of whether there's potential for destruction or not. We would rather take the risk to open that email than wonder what was in it for all time.

The connection he has built with many of us has turned us into his very own dedicated salespeople. That was shown when his Kickstarter project for his new book, *The Icarus Deception*, was funded within hours. And it's shown anytime he releases something new. It will top the charts and have people sharing it for days or weeks on end.

That is exactly what connection brands do. They connect. They cause you to do irrational things, rationally. They change lives.

And just so you know, Seth's primary power is stance, but he actually uses all three very well.

WHAT

When you dig a bit deeper, you'll be surprised who is waiting to help.

As I mentioned earlier, there are three Super Powers we can potentially use to build our brands into true connection brands. They are:

- » Relationships
- » Stance
- » Psychology

We'll go into more depth with each of these in a bit, but I want you understand what this actually means.

I call these Super Powers for a couple of reasons. 1) I'm kinda geeky so it's fun in that way and 2) most super heroes have one main power they use. So it only makes sense that we focus on one power as well. I mean, super heroes have it all figured out, right?

Ok, end geek moment.

The reality is that when we focus on one key thing, we will be able to give it more attention and achieve more with it than if we spread our energies out across the board. This is a key to being more productive in

any part of life. So it only makes sense to pick the one that fits the personality of your brand the best and put all of your effort into that.

A Quick Case Study

Let's take for instance, Apple. They are bit of a special case because they actually use all three, but their core is stance.

Apple's underlying core of everything they do is to push the status quo. They have done that since day one with the creation of the Apple 1. It was the first computer that was fully assembled. Other computers of that time were sold as kits that had to be put together. ³ That is a perfect representation of their commitment to doing something different, thus the tagline they use, "Think Different."

Even today, you can see Apple doing things differently. They introduced the iPhone to a phone market that was said to be dead roughly six months earlier. It completely revolutionized an entire industry. They created the iPad, which bridged the gap between the laptop and the phone that we didn't even know we wanted.

Their focus early on for pushing the status quo has carried them into the success they have today. And now that the focus is so deeply ingrained in the company they have started to focus their efforts on other Super Powers.

While most other companies can get away with using one power, some, like Apple, push it to the next level and use multiple.

Their secondary power is relationships. We have seen the lines of people camping out for days waiting for the next product to show up. This is part of the culture they've built. People know they're going to do something awesome and are willing to put themselves through extreme conditions to be the first to get it. There are very few other companies that can launch a product as effectively as Apple, that's just the simple fact.

And lastly, they use psychology. It's true that their marketing efforts are incredible and that's because they understand how to push triggers in us that cause us to do irrational things, like waiting in line for a product for days on end that we don't even get for free but actually pay a premium price for. Crazy.

The perfect example of this is the introduction of the iPad. We didn't even know we wanted something between a laptop and a phone, but apparently we do. Or at least their marketing causes us to think we do. Even more than wanting it though, they have instilled in many people that they actually need it. That is brilliant marketing, no doubt about it.

Moving Forward

Strides, not steps.

Like I said, Apple is the epitome of a connection brand. Love them or hate them, we can take lessons from a brand that performed as well in the market as they have and apply it to ours. We can begin to make strides instead of small steps to have customers waiting in line for our services or products. We can learn from their success on how to focus on one power, then implement the others as time goes on.

In the following sections, we'll discuss each of the powers more in depth. We'll walk through some examples of companies that have used connection branding extremely well and some that have not. I hope you'll take this information to heart, highlight and take notes.

This will change your business. This will help you connect. This will turn your customers into your most dedicated salespeople.

None of This Will Work

Seriously, this is insanely important.

These Super Powers we have, they are wondrous things.

They will change our lives and others' lives, as well. But they won't work without a few other items in place.

This is the part where I assume you are a particular grade of person. You can't be a loser. And by that I mean you must have the passion, drive, determination and perseverance to press on. You must be a true leader and entrepreneur, not one of those that gives up when the going gets tough. Because it will.

You must, in a nutshell, be awesome.

My secret is that I know you are. You wouldn't be reading this if you weren't and you wouldn't have the backbone to have gotten anywhere in the first place. Don't let anyone tell you you're not awesome because they are lying.

You are awesome. And you have an incredible gift to share with the world. Now let me show you just how to go about doing that.

You gotta have...

Passion

You've got to be so dang passionate about what you're doing that it's oozing from your eyes. People won't be able to stand how much you love what you do and they'll feel the heat radiating off of you. They'll know what you're about, what you're against (in a respectful and humble way) and they'll do what they can to help.

Your passion for why you do what you do will help to create enthusiasts on both sides. Yep, I mean advocates and haters. Be prepared to deal with the haters and don't let them drag you down in the slightest. Use their hatred as a stepping stone to know you're doing something right.

There is no choice, you've got to have serious passion.

Awesome

Make it awesome. Your service, product or whatever needs to be absolutely incredible. That means it could be better than all the others out there. Or it could be insanely unique. Or insanely weird.

I'm not a fan of Lady Gaga, but she's insanely weird and she knows it. People love her for it. In fact, people love her or hate her. There is no in between. That is exactly what you're looking for.

When you create something awesome, you're actually looking for hat-

ers. That means you've done something incredible enough for them to pay attention.

If you're not awesome, you're not worth getting behind. It's as simple as that.

Perseverance

There's a reason it takes time to build a platform or a brand. People want to see you're in it for the long haul. They like to see that you've pressed on through the tough times and have discovered more about yourself.

Having this is a key to showing people that they can get behind you and you won't be wandering off. Without perseverance, the connection you build with people will remain surface level. Those are the people connection brands don't deal with.

Purpose

Like the others, people want something to get behind. But more than that, this one is for you. It is to make sure you're on the right path and know your why clearly.

Brands that don't have a clear sense of why will never become true connection brands. The reason? There's nothing of essence to plug into.

Faith

You've got to have faith that there are supernatural forces at work in this world. For me, that's God working in my life. I know without a doubt that I would not be where I am today without His divine guidance.

I have faith that I can only go so far without calling for help. That's the exact reason I put this at the core of everything I do. It shouldn't be the backup plan, it should be the only plan.

For those companies that have made strides without faith, I just wonder how far they could go if they added it. It's never too late.

Make sure you have these key elements in place before you begin to focus your efforts on your Super Power. It will make all the difference in the world as you work through this process and the great thing about it is these are all just a mindset at their core. Yes, they require action on that mindset, but awesome people take action everyday and we already determined that you're just that.

Now, let's dig into each of these and you'll begin to discover which Super Power you'd like to take on.

The Power of Relationships

Dig Deeper!

The connection economy of today is very different from the industrial one we're moving out of. I mentioned Seth Godin earlier and his incredible insight into the future. He has long ago said that we were moving into a new economy and many people never saw it. His exact words were, "This recession is a forever recession." ⁴

To me, that means something awesome.

It means we get to recreate things. We get to redevelop processes and find new ways for business and life to work. We have the opportunity to do something our world has never been able to do since the beginning of time.

Building relationships is a key to business today. And I'm not just saying that. We can pull evidence from companies across the globe that have failed due to lack of engagement with people, individuals who have been passed up for jobs because they didn't know the "right guy" and businesses that have flourished simply because they decided relationships were important. We'll discuss a few examples of these as we dive in a little deeper.

Connection is an essential part to building a real relationship with peo-

ple. I call this connection branding because the overarching term is that we are making a connection with people in one or more of three ways. Building a relationship is just one way to build a connection.

Good Ol' Tom

One brand that comes to mind is a company you may have heard of, TOMS Shoes. This is an organization that builds relationships with people through a desire to give shoes to the needy in other countries. In case you don't know, for every pair of TOMS you buy, a pair is donated to a child that doesn't have any. Many people have jumped on this and will pay anywhere from \$50 to \$150 or more for a pair. TOMS has built a connection with people that causes them to buy based on a relationship that is formed, not on price point.

In this particular case, it's not so much the company that is forming the relationship with the buyer, but rather that the buyer gets the chance to form a connection with a child in need. And we all know that when we see those children in need, we dig deep in our pockets to give what we can.

Relationships are the key here and cause people to pay a semi-irrational amount because it makes them feel better about providing for someone in need. I dare you to find a person that isn't passionate about their Tom's. They'll likely tell you how much they are worth the high price point. I'm not denying they are "worth it" or that the cause isn't worthy.

I'm simply stating that this is an organization that is thriving by focusing on building relationships.

When a brand like TOMS decides to focus solely on building relationships, incredible things happen. They have gotten press all over the world and have grown each year. Simon Sinek would likely point out that they have a clear sense of their WHY. They communicate that to people and they are being rewarded for doing so by having success in the business world.

Brands like TOMS don't show up everyday. Many tend to lose their focus as they grow. But the one thing that has held them together over the several years they've been around is their focus on building relationships with people through a worthy cause. In doing that, they can focus all their marketing and messaging around that core.

Connection brands know how to focus on a Super Power. It works.

When We Don't Build Them

To turn the tables a bit, let's talk about a company that once handled relationships very well. Let's talk about Walmart.

In case you didn't know, Sam Walton, the founder, was an awesome guy. I've read a little about his story in various leadership books and each one of them notes how he always made it a point to build relation-

ships with his customers and employees. And while Walton was alive, the company thrived.

The first official Walmart store opened in 1962 but was in business for some 20 years before that under a different name. By 1970, Walmart had 38 stores operating with 1,500 employees and sales of \$44.2 million. As of 1987, the chain had 1,198 stores and operated at \$15.9 billion in sales, employing over 200,000 people. And while the company sits at #3 in the Fortune 500 list for 2012, its culture died in 1992 with Sam Walton.⁵

It's true that Walton was a great businessman. It's true that he built an incredible empire that has served millions of people and still does. That stands and will for some time.

What is also true though, is that the relationships that were once formed through his personal visits to the stores are no longer nourished and therefore, the culture is in a downward spiral. They have neglected the very thing that Walton stood for and worked so hard to create throughout his life. They have neglected the power of relationships.

You may have seen the many lawsuits against Walmart. You have likely seen the press they've gotten for unfair labor and unfair wages. You may have even experienced the cashier that clearly hated being there or the unfriendly customer service representative that didn't seem to care a flip about your issue with their store. You have seen these things and

you know that relationships are not a focus of theirs, nor is any other Super Power.

Walmart is floundering. They are growing from the momentum that was built by Walton many years ago, but that will end. As we move further into this connection economy, companies will no longer be able to ignore the power that needs to be focused on. They will no longer be able to talk down to customers and employees and expect anything but destruction.

The connection economy has truly put power back in the hands of the average person. We now have a voice. We now have a way to react and be heard like never before. For the first time in history, the consumers get to drive where business will go instead of the other way around.

But back to Sam Walton for a moment. He wasn't perfect, as none of us are. But he understood the power of relationships. In fact, he always remembered to be "one of us." For instance, his daily driver was nothing more than a late model pickup truck. People would ask him why he didn't drive a more expensive car and he would reply saying "What am I supposed to haul my dogs around in, a Rolls-Royce?"⁶

He was a relationship man who never saw himself as anything better than his employees and customers. That is what caused Walmart to thrive. It wasn't the low prices, though they had their place. It was his dedication to serving and building relationships.

Time will tell what happens to Walmart. They haven't hit rock bottom yet or things would have changed. But the path they are on with no focus on a Super Power is slowly causing them harm. Turning a huge company around is no small feat. But regardless of company size, a focus on building relationships will help them grow over time.

The power of relationships is incredible. It cannot be overlooked when trying to build a connection with someone. There is no doubt that this particular Super Power is the easiest to attempt to apply but the most difficult to remain on track to actually carry out.

Brands that use the power of relationships in their lives will grow astronomically.

The Power of Stance

Bring on the lovers...and the haters.

When it comes to standing up for what we believe in, many of us are timid to do so. We hold back out of fear for being shot down or looking dumb. We pull the punches for fear of making people mad at what we say.

The trick to this one is to do so respectfully. We'll never build a good connection with someone if we aren't respectful about what we stand for or against.

The brands that take a stance on something are the very ones we tend to pay attention to the most. It's these companies or people that are changing the world around us and forcing us to think of things in a different light. Sometimes we agree, sometimes not, but the vast majority of the time we can look behind them and see a slew of people passionately following them. That doesn't happen by accident.

Brands that understand the power of stance are few and far between. And it's often a bit misunderstood or mistaken for being rude or disrespectful. I have the perfect case study for this and it involves a little company who "didn't invent the chicken, just the chicken sandwich."

The Chick-fil-A Stance

Back in mid 2012, the famous chicken sandwich company, Chick-fil-A, mentioned in an interview that they do not support same-sex marriage. Dan Cathy, the Chief Operating Officer, said, “I think we are inviting God’s judgment on our nation when we shake our fist at Him and say, ‘We know better than you as to what constitutes a marriage’. I pray God’s mercy on our generation that has such a prideful, arrogant attitude to think that we have the audacity to define what marriage is about.” ⁷

This brought about a load of controversy and led to other interviews where he had to back up his statement and choose to stand his ground on what he believed to be true. During one of those following interviews, he said, “We know that it might not be popular with everyone, but thank the Lord, we live in a country where we can share our values and operate on biblical principles.” ⁸

They took a stance. They made a declaration to say what they believe and that people who don’t believe that way can have their own stance. Some hated ... some loved.

Before we go any further with this, understand that this isn’t an issue about which side you are on. That doesn’t matter one tiny bit. What matters is the lesson from this and what came out of it. We’ll go into detail on that here shortly.

In the days and weeks that followed, there was an official Chick-fil-A appreciation day setup by Governor Mike Huckabee where thousands flocked to restaurants to show support for the company's stance. As a reaction to that, protestors setup a same-sex kiss day where many showed up across the nation at restaurants to boycott them.

It truly is a fiasco that has gone down in the history books. And regardless of your views of the situation, we can all agree that they took a stance. They voiced what they believe in and the exact same thing happened to them that will happen to every other brand that does it. Some people supported, some people hated and many others couldn't give a flip either way; they just wanted a delicious sandwich.

The lesson that can be learned from this situation is one that we can take to the bank. Chick-fil-A's stance on biblical principles caused many people to deepen their connection with them. It caused those people to care about what the company stands for more than what it offers. They are lifelong customers and dedicated salespeople for the brand.

On the flip side, it brought on some haters. Some people will never set foot in a Chick-fil-A restaurant again. They'll boycott until the end of their days and do everything they can to keep the company from growing and expanding into their cities. They are lifelong haters of the brand and will tell everyone they know how badly they suck as a company.

Why? Because of their stance. Because they decided to do the one thing

that many other brands do not do and something many of us in our personal lives don't do well.

Chick-fil-A grew a backbone. They voiced their stance on a particular subject and made it known to the world. The interesting thing is, they believed this all along.

They aren't open on Sunday because they believe in spending time with their families and respecting God's call for a sabbath day of rest. So really, if you dug down at all before this situation, you would have known they didn't agree with same-sex marriage. And there's a slew of other things they don't agree with that haven't been brought to light but are well written within the bounds of the Bible they stand on.

Taking a stance doesn't mean you're being disrespectful to people. It simply means you believe differently. It means you aren't willing to give into the pressures of this world and sway from what you truly believe in. It is actually extremely respectful to yourself and all those following you to take a stance. To not waiver. To not crack under the pressure of haters.

Brands that take a stance form connections with people that will likely never be broken. That is the power of stance.

No Stance, No Progress

It doesn't matter if you're a personal brand or a major company: Without taking a stand on something, you're standing for nothing. People can't get behind you if they don't know what to get behind.

I remember when I was in elementary school seeing a sign in almost every classroom that said, "Stand up for what is right, even if you're standing alone." The funny thing about that sign is that it didn't seem like the schools really believed it or taught it. It should have been more like, "Just go with what everyone else is doing, even if it's not what you believe in."

Honestly, that's what most brands do these days. They just go with the latest "cool thing" to do or use the "hottest new technology" to help increase awareness. That's a total disconnect from those companies that are actually progressing long term.

Short Circuit

As an example, let's take the once incredible empire of Circuit City. It was an awesome company heading into the '80s and '90s but many obstacles stood in its way to success. I would never attempt to pinpoint the exact reason they failed and closed up, though many would say leadership, but a definite detriment was their lack of stance.

During the 90's, Circuit City focused on customer service excellence going so far as to factory train almost every employee that came into its stores. This led to the slogan, "Welcome to Circuit City, Where Service Is State of the Art." It truly was.

But over the course of the next several years, that was lost. The one awesome quality they had going for them was the customer service, and people loved it. It was what made them worth shopping and worth going out of their way to get to their stores, many of which had bad locations.

That was their stance. They understood the customer needed to be taken care of and wanted to be "in the know" about all this technology stuff. They were the company to go to for that, not their main competition, Best Buy.

The problem was that they neglected the one thing that really set them apart from the other stores. They decided it was no longer important to stand on the fact that customer service was a key to their business and, as a result, they failed. They lost their stance, their customer support and, eventually closed up entirely.

Circuit City's lack of quality in the one department they had conquered ended up being a contributor the death of the entire company.

That said, there are still many ways to success. If we can focus for more than 5 minutes on the task at hand, we can get much accomplished.

I Am A...

The brands that make progress and are thriving in today's market are the ones that are taking a stance on something. They have decided that it's not enough just to play it safe and worry about what everyone says. They are connecting with people on a much deeper level and working to keep those connections for the long haul.

Seth Godin comes into play again here. He wrote a book called *Tribes* that helps us to understand the power of a small but dedicated following of people. Many people use this term freely now in the marketing world and understand that it's necessary to building successful businesses today.

At its core, a tribe is just a connection with people. They are following the leader for a reason and are connected to them because they want to be.

My mentor, Jeff Goins, has done this perfectly. He has taken a stance saying, "I am a writer," and has caused many of us to believe the same. But really, he's just telling us to be honest with ourselves. I could also say, "I am an artist," with the same amount of passion.

Jeff's stance has enabled him to gather a following of people that call themselves what they truly are and act like it. When they do, amazing things happen.

I, for one, never said I was a writer. It was always in my head that I wanted to write a book someday, but I never acted on it. It wasn't until I found Jeff's tribe that I came to recognize that it was a necessary part of my growth for me to consider myself what I hoped to become someday.

When someone takes a stance on something like Jeff has, it begins to change him or her inside. He says he had to learn to call himself a writer before anyone else would believe it. That label was required so he could change his habits and begin to make progress in the direction he desperately wanted to go.

That is the power of stance. It enables us to feel empowered and gives something for others to get behind.

Psychology

I admit, it's borderline creepy how this works so incredibly well.

Psychology connection brands are the most technical of the three. They often include a lot of research into their marketing and you can typically figure them out because they are causing you to make major changes in your mindset to achieve certain results.

That doesn't make them better than the others, it simply makes them more research driven. Are they harder to maintain or require more work? I'm not sure. But they certainly understand us better than we understand ourselves to some degree.

What a psychology connection brand actually does is use research or mindset shifts to cause the consumer to make decisions. In short, they hit triggers we often don't even know are being hit. Every single word used in their messaging has a specific purpose to get a different reaction.

For instance, the word "think" versus "feel." If I wrote this book using the phrase "I think" that connection brands are awesome because of x, y, z, it would be much different than if I used "I feel." Why is that? Because feelings are something we side with better than thoughts. We tend to give more clout to the way someone feels than the way they

think. At least that's the surface level of it.

When brands use psychology in their marketing, they are trying to achieve a very specific purpose. They're often the ones that have a higher subscriber rate for their email list or have more engagement when it comes to responses in comments. That's a good example of online usage but the same concepts can be applied to offline such as traditional marketing materials like ads, billboards, etc.

Psychology based brands drive us to make decisions based on research more than anything else. For example, a stance brand gives us something to get behind because we agree, or disagree, with what they are advocating. Whereas a psychology-based brand would cause us to get behind it more so because they persuaded us with their research.

Trigger Happy

The best example I can think of for this is Derek Halpern's SocialTriggers.com. Derek uses psychology to help show bloggers and small businesses how they can increase things like traffic, subscribers, exposure, sales and more. He does this by backing up his ideas with research.

In a nutshell, Social Triggers helps us to find out what makes people "tick" online so we can increase our sales. He does this through research on what exactly we can do to get better connected with people. That will then allow us to get more traffic, subscribers and have more people

share our content online.

It's actually quite amazing the research he presents and the way he does it. His personality is one you either love or hate, but that doesn't make his work any less awesome.

As a psychology connection brand, Derek uses certain words and phrases to get us hooked or sell us on something. He pays very careful attention to what is being presented and how he goes about it. That's something many other brands don't do well.

The thing about triggers is that we often don't know they are being hit. Something we read could pique our interest and we don't even recognize the time it took to craft the message. It's really quite remarkable.

Social Triggers has masterfully managed to create a psychology connection brand through research and hard work. Take note of the incredible information they share and don't neglect it regardless of where your full focus is on becoming a connection brand.

Also recognize that just because this particular brand comes right out and says they use psychology, it doesn't mean you have to do that. You can use psychology as a Super Power without teaching it at the same time.

The Example of Mindset

Aside from hitting triggers through research, some brands have chosen to go more of the mindset route to pull us into a connection with them.

A brand that uses mindset well is Dan Miller's 48 Days. He has decided that we all deserve to live the life God has placed before us and will help us do that through incredible resources and personal coaching. You might say that he's taken a stance on doing work that you love, but that's really the secondary power.

48 Days uses psychology because we must first have a mindset shift if we're going to listen to anything the brand has to say. There's no understanding the books, podcast or anything else if we don't have the mindset that we can work doing what we love and make money at it.

If they were using stance, it would just start out saying the workplace has changed and you need to figure out how to change with it. But, that wouldn't provide any actionable information up front. The brand has instead elected to go the route of helping people understand themselves on a deeper level before they introduce the need to recognize a new economy and workplace.

I got a great sense of this when I interviewed Dan Miller for my podcast. He talked about his past and upbringing which really surprised me. This mindset wasn't something he was taught but rather something he

picked up as he got older. He was taught that he had to get a job, probably hate it and put his time in until he was able to retire.

But Dan wasn't interested in that. He decided to make a mindset shift and tell people that it didn't have to be that way. It was then that he began helping others make that decision to live a better life, one that had purpose.

The materials that 48Days.com puts out are stellar. They help us not only with our mindset but also with practical information and how-tos that will get results.

So while some brands like Social Triggers connect with us using research-driven marketing techniques, others in the psychology category cause us to shift our mindset and dig deep into ourselves before we begin to make drastic changes.

Psychology connection brands are few and far between. That doesn't make them any less important or influential. In fact, that may mean there is more room for new brands to start taking this approach.

I Told You This Won't Work

But really, it will.

Now that you have a much better understanding of the three Super Powers, you understand more about what I meant when I said this won't work without other keys in place.

And it also won't work unless you understand that these are just tools to help you get connecting with people. We can use any of these to begin to build connections, but it will take prolonged effort and dedication to continue to keep those connections.

I want to make something clear. Just because you decide you're going work on relationships, or another Super Power, doesn't mean people will automatically care about what you have to say. It doesn't mean they will buy your stuff or that you'll get thousands more followers on Twitter.

Don't get disheartened though. I only say that to give you a realistic expectation of what it will really take to build a connection brand. The one thing I haven't really mentioned you will need, is ...

are you ready for it ...

time.

Sorry. That's just how this works. Most of us aren't exempt from that. Don't fret though. Take this one connection at a time. Building true connections with people takes time in any part of life. The connections we foster through hard work and focus will last well into the future and turn our clients into our most dedicated salespeople.

I trust that you understand the power of connection and why you need to be a connection brand. This may be our first meeting, but know that it's in my heart to foster relationships with anyone who is willing to work toward their dreams. Remember that you're not in business to make money; you're in business to serve. And that is best done by forming connections.

Now, Your Homework

You've got some work to do.

First off, figure out which of these would best suit your personality. It needs to fit you. If you like people, go with relationships. If you like research, maybe psychology is better for you. Dwell on this a bit and look back through the history of your brand to see what stands out as why you started in the first place. I mentioned Simon Sinek's book, *Start With Why* for a good reason. If we start with why, everything will make more sense.

Secondly, I don't know your approach or what would work best for you

without working with you personally. And that's exactly what I want to invite you to do here.

I mentioned at the beginning of this book that you can email me personally and I'll respond. That still stands. So do it. Email me at Jared@JaredLatigo.com and let me know what you think. I'd be happy to work with you and determine if we can figure things out via email.

On the other hand, if we need to schedule some one on one time, I offer personal coaching sessions. It would be my pleasure to help you work through the details of this.

So here's your invitation. Email me and let's chat.

You can also find out more information and resources at JaredLatigo.com

About the Author

Jared Latigo

Yo. I'm Jared, the author of the book you just read. Honestly, I love to push new ideas about things like the changing economy, education, family and the workplace. But, my deepest desire to please my God in all I do and say. I hope you got that from early on in the book.

If you enjoyed this, you will probably like [my podcast](#) too. With guest like Chris Brogan, Dan Miller, Jeff Goins, Andy Traub and many others, I trust it will serve you well in your branding efforts!

By the way, you may have seen me on...

[MichaelHyatt.com](#)

[48Days.com](#)

[LifeHack.org](#)

[Probblogger.net](#)

and [various other places](#) around the web.

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