



WHAT IS BRAND LOYALTY?

Creating a strong brand should be every marketer's primary objective. And the highest goal of *advertising* is to build a strong brand.

But our industry has taken these truths and twisted them into silly fantasies.

If you read the literature of our industry you find a widespread belief that consumers are in love with brands. That consumers want to have "brand experiences," and "brand relationships," and be "personally engaged" with brands, and read "branded storytelling," and "co-create" with brands.

Saatchi & Saatchi's version of brand love is called "*Love Marks*." Here's what they say: "*They reach your heart as well as your mind, creating an intimate, emotional connection that you just can't live without.*"

It's very touching. Unfortunately it's baloney.

According to a study by Havas Media, "*...in Europe and the US, people would not care if 92% of brands disappeared.*"

Of all the factors relating to consumer behavior, perhaps none is more mischaracterized than brand loyalty. Most of what we call "brand loyalty" is simply habit, convenience, mild satisfaction or easy availability.

Are some consumers strongly attached to a few brands? Sure we are. But remember, we each participate in hundreds of product categories and are *strongly* attached to maybe a handful of brands.

I promise you, if McDonald's disappeared tomorrow, Big Mac "loyalists" would cheerfully eat a Whopper without the need for counseling.

Nike loyalists would throw on a pair of Adidas without having to enter rehab.

Pepsi lovers would switch to Coke with very little psychological damage (by the way, 72% of Pepsi "loyalists" already drink Coke.)

People have a lot of things to care deeply about. It is very unwise to assume that they care deeply about our batteries, our wet wipes, and our frozen chicken strips.

A smart marketer does not delude herself into believing that there are legions of people who want to "engage" with her brand or "share" her brand stories. If there are some, great. But she's not going to bet the future on it.

For a smart marketer, every day is Groundhog Day. Every day you have to get up, drag your

ass to work, and tell the world – once again – why they should buy your stuff.

Our brands are very important to us marketers. And not very important to most consumers.

About My Talk

I spoke in London this week. Business Insider did a nice piece about it. You can read it [here](#).



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