

Baked In

About the Authors



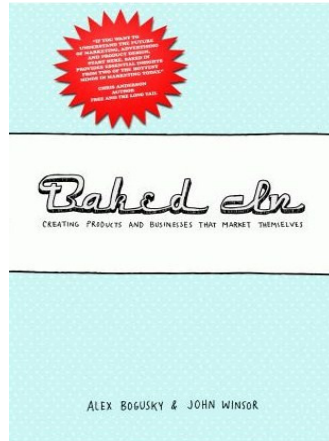
Alex joined Crispin and Porter Advertising in 1989 as an art director. He became the creative director five years later, a partner in 1997, and co-chairman in 2008. Under Alex's direction, CP+B has become one of the world's most awarded agencies.



John Winsor is a leading marketing and product innovation thinker especially known for his work in digital culture and strategy, including collaboration, co-creation, and crowdsourcing.

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Creating Products And Businesses That Market Themselves



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■ The Big Idea

Brands must build a new relationship with their customers and the culture they participate in. The old rule was: Create safe, ordinary products and combine them with mass marketing. The new rule is: Create truly innovative products and build the marketing right into them. Today, the product is at the center of the conversation. It's within the product itself that a brand has the most leverage with customers.

For many companies, it's high time to realize that collaboration is at the heart of this new paradigm. While collaboration with customers is key, the ability to collaborate internally is even more important.

So where should companies start? They must take their brands back to their foundations, and realize that the message isn't separate from the product, but that the product *is* the message.

Why You Need This Book

This book gives companies a step-by-step guide on how to adapt and succeed in this brave new world. It shows how marketing can and must reinvent itself in the 21st century, using the tools at hand both from digital technology and networked media.

BAKE IN THE MARKETING FROM THE START

Getting people together to co-create the narrative for a product and its marketing – in a collaborative way that creates a singular voice for a brand – can generate unstoppable momentum. And it is happening every day. But it's not always easy. To be successful in the new world, product design and innovation must move way up the corporate ladder to join marketing at the company's strategic center and at the core of product development.

Today, the product can and should be the center of the marketing conversation. The product will be your most powerful marketing tool.

28 RULES FOR BAKING IN

Culture trumps influencers

Make a list of the cultural trends that influence your consumer's behavior. Be a good observer. Remove yourself from your own cultural perspective. Look for the absurdities, the incongruities, the things that don't necessarily make sense. You will begin to laugh as you start to see the culture from the outside. In your business, what is the accepted cultural convention? If you get the right fix on this, you can flip it on its head and make it your own.

Broaden your definition of design

Begin by thinking of yourself as a designer. Start by making a list of all the things you've designed. Some software? A new sales program? A distribution plan? A meal plan for the kids? As you broaden your definition of design, you strengthen your inner consciousness of yourself as a designer. You are a designer. Design is just a good plan, after all.

Recognize the artificiality of the corporation

Humanize your business. Think about the ways you talk about issues in corporate America. What sorts of things do you speak of in less human, less fully honest terms?

Get out of whatever business you think you're in

Find out what business you're in. Start by writing down what business you *thought* you were in. Below it, write down all the services you provide people by being in the business you thought you were in (make sure to focus on the moments in your professional experience you've enjoyed the most). Finally, make a list of the emotional benefits you provide to your customers.

Understand both sides of your truth

Make a systematic plan to get to know your entire business category so well that you can identify the two sides of any truth. Start by making sure you're using your own product. Then begin to use your competitors' products. Don't accept help that would be above or beyond what your average customer would get. Make this effort a part of every week – and don't allow it to be pushed aside.

Get your hive on

Communication should be bee-like – by that we mean no long-winded multiparagraphed missives. Short and sweet questions and rapidly exchanged answers are the keys to hive intelligence. Also, be sure you go beyond just e-mail. Use instant messaging, and even social networks like Facebook and Twitter. The more communication, the better.

Knock down the walls

Here are some ideas: learn how to listen better, and show more interest in what your colleagues have to say. The next great idea might be there, in one of your staff members, waiting for you to hear it.

Become a silo jumper

When you're trying to figure out how to become a silo jumper, seek out the experts. They're the generalists. In any company, the generalists are usually easy to spot. They're the ones whose career path hasn't been linear. They've been in marketing, on the product side, in sales, and maybe even in finance.

Tap the untapped

One of the keys to tapping untapped resources is to realize that the community around your products is bigger than your company. There are many passionate people who would love to help you improve your products and spread your marketing. It's important to remember that this community thrives on open dialogue. Hence, the walls of your company have to become porous. Outsiders must be able to penetrate them.

Sacrifice and simplify

Think about the products your company is producing. Most of us are in the habit of thinking about new features we could or should add to those products. We spend a lot of time thinking about how products can satisfy the various needs of customers. Instead, think about what you could *take away* from your product.

Don't put the word innovation on business cards

Start an innovation movement. Make it contagious. Challenge people and award creativity. Ultimately, figure out a way make everyone in your organization accountable when it comes to innovation.

Mine your history

Think about the best product your company ever produced. Tell that story. Or the best marketing your company has done. What made it great? Share these stories, and explore what you can learn from them.

Feeling conflicted? Good.

Think about the categories you work in and the conflicts that exist among them. If you're in the traditional energy business, it's pretty obvious that you have a conflict with the environmental movement. Unleashing the power of conflict can not only differentiate your products but also help them find the space to grow.

The all-mighty co-creator

The key is the ability to engage, to be involved in the dialogue. Once you've built the dialogue, you've created the conduit through which ideas can really start to flow. People want to participate. But remember, the only way to keep ideas flowing is to keep the dialogue going.

Feel it in your bones

Encourage others to use their design intuition. It's contagious and inspiring. Ask them to dig deeper into how they feel about a design or marketing insight. Where would they take it? For many, intuition can be a particularly hard thing to express, and it's the sort of quality many people don't feel confident expressing. Help

make sure people's intuitive thinking is supported and not quashed by overanalysis. Be positive. Welcome heresy.

Steal to innovate

It's our belief that good ideas are easy to come by. Where the hard work happens is in the process of making these ideas relevant. Steal good ideas. Make them relevant to your products. You'll be able to stay ahead of the competition.

Take a fearless approach

Becoming more fearless is a learned skill that only comes through failing. The old innovation expression, "fail fast," is more important than ever these days as our world speeds up.

Be a heretic

Being a heretic takes guts. It means not just going a different way from your competitors, but going a different way from the established norms within a whole culture. Learn the new technology. Start applying it in small doses. If it works, flip the paradigm, lead the disruption, and be a heretic.

Think big. Then realize that's not big enough

First, you have to think big. Really big. Then you have to sit back and think about all the ways your thinking isn't big enough. Shoot holes in it. Look at it from a need-based point of view. This is why collaboration is so powerful. Every collaborator comes with a new vantage point and, maybe, a better vantage point. Are you collaborating enough with other designs? With your customers? Even with your competitors?

Think small. Then realize that's not small enough.

Think small when it comes to your products. Also think about what's happening in other fields that might influence your customer's behavior. When the iPod came out, it certainly changed how people used their car stereos. The winners have been those companies that adapted fast with a small change – an iPod plug-in, for example – with big consequences. The question is, can you find inspiration where and when no one else is looking?

Stories worth spreading

Before you can align your story with marketing and product design, you have to know it intimately. It all starts internally. Studies have shown that employees are most engaged when they understand where they're going. From the understanding comes a deeper commitment. If so, you're ready to start telling powerful stories with your products and marketing, and then you have the ability to change culture.

Differences have to look different

Instead of just advertising the benefits, think about making the differences visible in your product design. If you do it right, not only will your products be more distinct but your competitors will also have a harder time copying them. In fact, you might want your competitors to start copying them.

A rose by any other name would not sell as sweetly

Think about your products. Is there a way to bake in names that mean something to the culture in which your products live?

The power of perfectly wrong

What happens if you did things wrong? Are any of your competitors doing it wrong too? If not, think about how you would do things if you wanted to do them perfectly wrong. Or you could do something even more radical.

Make your product talk

By becoming more like a media company and putting communications at the center of your company, magic starts to happen. Think about how you might bake more media into your products.

The power of an absolute

Is there anything about your product that is absolute? Do you have any products that are the fastest? The slowest? The biggest? The smallest? The loudest? The quietest? Stop and think about your products using "er"; what can you do to stake out an "est"?

Make what's inside visible on the outside

Making the invisible visible is a powerful way to bake marketing into your products. Think about what's inside your products that makes them work and connects them to your customers. How can you make the power of your products visible? The key is making sure a big idea is baked into the product itself and not just the packaging. Packaging can get thrown away. Your product usually won't.

Design to your weakness, or hug the big hairy monster

The key is to start a movement with momentum. Customers love it when they see consistent behavior in the right direction, and they want to support companies that face up to their big hairy monsters.

THE WAY FORWARD

As consciousness increases, we don't need brands. We need something more real. While creating a system is a worthy goal, change starts with small steps. By mixing marketing and product design, you're taking a powerful first step. We hope we've helped you realize that creativity is the ultimate business weapon by taking a systematic approach to combining the two.

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