

Burt's Bees

“Burt's Bees built the business when they had a lot of white space to themselves... And now they are the giant,” says Karen Young of The Young Group. That “white” space is more accurately “green” space—and it dates back to 1984.

That's when Roxanne Quimby, a graphic artist, met Burt Shavitz, a “photographer-turned-beekeeper.” Roxanne “turned his beeswax into candles, hand salves, stove polish and lip balm, using old recipes gathered from farmers. She illustrated labels for the products using Mr. Shavitz's bearded face as a logo.”

The brand promise then, and now, is a simple one. It's that “products virtually free of chemicals are healthier for the skin.” Burt's Bees “makes simple products using plain ingredients like milk, honey, beeswax and almond oil, selling them in cheerful, tongue-in-cheek retro packages.”

Initially sold through “thousands of independent gift stores and pharmacies,” Burt's Bees began selling nationally at CVS and Walgreens” about two years ago, but has not lost its authenticity among its public.

“They seem like an antique, farm-style company,” says Jessica Wojcicki, adding: “But then you discover they have lip shines for young Gen Xers like me.” IRI's Leigh Ann Rowinski notes: “Everyone would like to capture that word-of-mouth viral marketing that spreads like wildfire, attracting a young consumer who appreciates authentic niche brands and stays away from mainstream advertising techniques.”

Bottom line is, Burt's Bees is “the best-selling mass-market, natural, personal-care brand... Retail sales increased to \$250 million in 2006, up from \$60 million in 2001.”

(SOURCE: Natasha Singer, *The New York Times*, 5/16/07)



Dunkin's Tribe

Dunkin' Donuts already knew that its fans “had a distinctly unpretentious attitude and disliked more stylized chains like Starbucks.” In fact, its customers had made it really clear really quickly that they didn't like Dunkin's newly stylized coffee cups with a sleeker-looking logo.

Nor did they care for earth-toned decor of some of Dunkin's newer stores. Suspicious, they were, of those fancy latte machines, too.

So, Dunkin' fielded some surveys with questions along the lines of “whether the person sometimes had to use his or her looks to get ahead.” To its delight, Dunkin' found that about “one-third of the country is made up of people” who don't identify with such behavior.

Even better, a lot of them didn't live anywhere near a Dunkin' Donuts, suggesting plenty of room for growth. And as for those coffee cups, let's just say Dunkin' is back to chunky styrofoam and its endearingly familiar pink-and-orange style.

(SOURCE: Janet Adamy, *The Wall Street Journal*, 5/3/07)

Harley's Nightster

“I wanted people to wonder if it was legal,” says Rich Christoph, explaining why he hung the license plate of the new Harley-Davidson Nightster to the left of its rear fender.

Everybody knows that the license plate is supposed to be at the center—but it turns out it is perfectly legal to set it off-center. It just looks wrong, and Harley hopes it's a look that will help reignite its outlaw image among younger bikers.

That's Harley's challenge—the average age of its customers is now 46. Its solution, hopefully, is the Nightster, a stripped down version of its entry-level Sportster, that Rich designed for people much like himself. In other words, he's 27, not 46.

Harley-Davidson, for the record, is 100, and the Sportster is 50. “I went back to the immediate post-World War II period when G.I.'s came back and rode used Army bikes,” says Rich. The color scheme is mostly flat black and medium gray, although there is a fancy orange pinstripe on the gas tank and the exhaust pipes are chrome.

But Rich thinks the real key is that he built the bike “to be highly customized.” Harley offers a huge catalog of accessories, which “may be the true masterpiece of Harley design today. The success of Harley has always been in the ability of riders to imprint the bikes with their own personalities.”

(SOURCE: Phil Patton, *The New York Times*, 3/18/07)

