PIVOT POINT

# *Experience* Required

If it seems like there's nothing innovative about marketing today, maybe it's because the concept itself has outlived its usefulness.

What is marketing, after all? One might say it is products and the communications that support them. Not much that's innovative about that, despite the endless supply of new entries and media vehicles to carry their messages.

**The future of brands is in the experience.**

One thing that never changes about marketing is that it is generally done *to* consumers. That sounds harsh, I know, but I don't mean it to be. I'm not saying that marketing is inflicted on people. I'm simply making a supposition about prepositions.

Bear with me, please: If the goal is to serve consumer needs, shouldn't we put relatively more energy into doing things *for* them rather than *to* them? Honestly, how much of marketing today truly passes that test? If the answer is, "not enough," then doesn't "marketing innovation" start to sound like an oxymoron?

This is more than a question of semantics; it goes to the heart of how we view the future. The words we use, and the freight they carry, matter. Better words are hard to come by, but I do have a personal favorite. That word is *experience*.

I like it because an experience is created *for*, not done *to*, someone. This may not be an inherently new idea, but the simple shift in perspective it suggests could introduce a whole new world of innovation.

The *Hub* will explore that world via our first annual Brand Experience Symposium—live, on stage, in New York City, at the Helen Mills Theater on September 10-11, 2013. Save the dates; more to come.

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