



The Human Brand

Chris Malone , Susan T. Fiske , Sean Runnette (Narrator)

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Customers everywhere describe their interactions with companies in a deeply personal way—we hate our banks, love our smartphones, and think the cable company is out to get us. What’s actually going on in our brains when we make these judgments? Customer loyalty expert Chris Malone and top social psychologist Susan Fiske discovered that our perceptions arise from spontaneous judgments on warmth and competence, the same two factors that also determine our impressions of people.

We see companies and brands—such as Hershey’s, Domino’s, Lululemon, Zappos, Amazon, Chobani, Sprint—the same way we automatically perceive, judge, and behave toward one another. As a result, to achieve sustained success in the future, companies must forge genuine relationships with customers that reflect warmth, competence, and worthy intentions. And as customers, we have a right to expect relational accountability from the companies and brands we support.

Drawing from original research, and evaluating over 45 companies over the course of 10 separate studies, *The Human Brand* is essential reading for understanding how and why we make the choices we do, as well as what it takes for companies and brands to earn and keep our loyalty in the digital age.

The Human Brand Details

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From Reader Review The Human Brand for online ebook

Nicole Ravlin says

This is one of the best business books I have read in some time. The case studies are current, and many have played out in the news - but looking at them through a lens of evaluating warmth and competency gives each a new spin. I HIGHLY recommend this.

Nazrul Buang says

Just finished reading "The Human Brand: How We Relate to People, Products, and Companies" (2013) by Chris Malone and Susan T. Fiske. Surprisingly good book that I stumbled upon while browsing Amazon.

The book underlines why we people inherently hate banks, gas companies and telecom companies and how warmth and competence (i.e. customer loyalty) are the two most important aspect of company perception, especially when companies screw up big time. In other words, "humanizing your brand". It also describes why especially big companies can't be customer-centric.

The book uses Domino's "Pizza Turnaround" ad as an example of how brand humanizing works: by show the people behind the company face the harshest critics.

Shane Purnell says

Well researched, good content liked the book.

Anisah Hambali says

Worth waiting, worth buying and worth reading.

pie says

sensible, but pretty repetitive. a quick read.

Christian Talbot says

This book has changed the entire way I think about marketing. Disclosure: the author is a current parent at my school, and has helped us with marketing research. But even were that not the case, I would endorse this book just as strongly. Chris offers a paradigm shift by foregrounding warmth and competence as the two key

dimensions of marketing from which all else flow. Incidentally, this is a great companion to Simon Sinek's *START WITH WHY*. Read Sinek first for the philosophical viewpoint, and then read Malone second to see how to enact this new approach to marketing.

Andy Rodriguez says

This book points out the simple tenets of treating people well and honestly asking for forgiveness when you make a mistake. It not only makes you feel good but also benefits your business. It's encouraging to see a shift in attitude towards the customer and everyone benefits because of it.

Tamler says

Good book on how to build a business.

Philip says

Very insightful book with case studies that I have not encountered in other publications.

The main premise is the definition of the brand as a person – an instantaneous evaluation in a two-dimensional scale of competence and warmth.

The evaluation can be applicable to people and also to brands. Loyalty test, where brands and well-known individuals evaluated on the scale of competence and warmth give an interesting result, though, not an unexpected one ;-)

As many modern publications, the book suggests that public short-term oriented corporations will find it more difficult to be perceived as warm and authentic. This environment will give an opportunity to smaller organizations to generate loyalty and passion from consumers.

Alex Rubenstein says

Warmth and Competence. Competence and Warmth. Warmth. Competence. A clear and ever-reinforced message of this book on how these primary human attributions to other people and to companies as well, we see, influences our loyalty, trust, and admiration. Chris Malone and Susan Fiske, a renowned social psychologist, finely balance case studies with sound and cutting-edge scientific research to detail the role these two factors have greatly enhanced our understanding and prediction of modern marketing.

Especially interesting topics were the discussions of Domino's and how worthy intentions can foster loyalty and skyrocket sales even if a product was at one time inferior (and yes, I hate food styling!), the story of Lululemon and the role of feeling included and remembered as a customer to foster loyalty as a proxy for discount (loyalty \neq repeat purchasing), and stories of apologizing at Lexus/Toyota vs. BP.

Why not 5 stars? Well, this book didn't change my life, so I guess I have strict standards. It's a very interesting piece on marketing, concise in its message, and can impart immediate knowledge to brand managers everywhere, but I don't know that this is a classic for the ages. Maybe I'm wrong, but it does bias towards more recent companies and startups (aptly so, by focusing on the Internet revolution and its impact on the marketplace), so maybe it will date itself.

Finally, while I don't know the state of research in this field, I wasn't completely sold that high competence necessarily conveys envy. Certainly this is true in an environment where I am ****competing**** against a competent company (say that 3x fast), but as a customer, high competence instills a feeling of efficiency, reliability and subsequent trust, but envy isn't a word that comes to mind. This is merely a label, though, and doesn't undermine the theory that competence is a base attribution and strongly affects my perceptions as a consumer.

I strongly recommend anyone curious about modern marketing and branding to pick up this quick and informative read.
