



Ideas That Fuel Growth **Driving Brand Value**

Early in my career I had the opportunity to work for one of the most iconic brands in home design – Kohler Co. Prior to working at Kohler, I never thought much about the difference between sink or faucet brands. After all, wasn't a sink a sink?

I quickly saw just how flawed my thinking was. Kohler differentiated its products with a focus on design, form and function. The industry had never before marketed plumbing fixtures as an object of craftsmanship and beauty. Kohler's approach elevated brand perceptions, equating its products to works of art and drove the company's exponential growth.

As strategic marketers, we view commodity as an opportunity to drive shifts in value perceptions.

To create an identity and promise that is uniquely yours, and importantly, compelling enough to drive sales, repeat purchase, and ultimately, brand affinity. While there are numerous ways to create value, for the purpose of this piece, value is defined from the perspective of the end-user or consumer, as impacted by marketing.

Redefine the value of your product's function. Change how people value the role of what your product does and why it is critical. For example, our client, Genesis, is a global manufacturer of cable used for wiring HVAC, electrical and security networks in commercial and home environments. Once perceived as a non-differentiating purchase, we've shifted the focus on why the right cable is essential when connecting today's

highest performing data networks, critical security and life safety systems in hospitals and schools, global intelligent building systems and more. Our strategies have focused on why cable is critical in powering and optimizing today's building systems, even in a wireless world.

Make your product differentiators mean more. Give your audience a reason to take notice, see relevance in your claim, and take action.

Companies continually make claims that their product is the best or the highest quality. Now, evolve that claim by communicating how 'high quality' directly benefits your audience. For Genesis, quality equates to building reputational trust, increasing dealer profitability, delivering a hassle-free experience and delivering confidence that the product works – every time, for every application. We've added new dimension to what quality cable means to communicate why and how Genesis Cable will impact their business.

No matter the industry, no matter the product, whether you're a challenger or established brand, every company has the opportunity to bring more meaning to the perceived value it delivers. Value in terms of criticality of function and impact, as well as how it is differentiated among its competitive set. When done right, and executed strategically via integrated marketing designed to reach and anticipate audience behaviors, your brand will rise above, your claim will be believed and you will establish market perceptions required to win long term.



Jill Schroeder *Executive Vice President*

Jill has 20-plus years of strategic marketing experience supporting national and global brands across B2B, B2C and technology markets, including such brands as Kohler, Kohl's, Johnson Controls, Honeywell, and numerous Silicon Valley tech start-ups.



Turning Business Complexity into Brand Simplicity