Purpose-Driven Branding

What Crises Teach Us about the Power of Finding Your Authentic Voice

July 21, 2020

Executive Summary:



A crisis is sometimes the best way to accelerate necessary conversations and associated change, and to test the staying power of a brand. Already, 2020 has been ripe with opportunities for firms to test the resilience of their brand purpose, principles and personality.

Greenwich Associates data shows that brand strength increasingly drives manager selection decisions, and developing the perception of a trustworthy brand is positively correlated with both overall relationship quality and key elements of the client experience. Forward-thinking leaders in the asset management industry are challenging their organizations to take a close look at their brand strategy and client engagement model to ensure that the story delivered to the market is a sincere reflection of its values, and that the firm is able to turn intentions into actions.

Firms entering a crisis or a period of stress without a well-defined and clearly articulated reason for being will be left without a critically important North Star to guide their communications, actions and engagement with clients. During trying times, clients want to see how the firms entrusted with their assets react and respond. The results of this test determine the degree of trust that clients will have in their asset managers going forward.

In the world of institutional asset management, it takes time to build both personal relationships and trust. One of the most tangible ways that firms have worked to accelerate this process is through the development and distribution of high-quality, unique and value-added thought leadership. This outlet helps asset managers to reinforce investment beliefs, culture and purpose to the market—a few of the key components of a brand.

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