

# Smash Your Navigation

Back in 1915 Earl R. Dean, who was working at the Root Glass Company, was given a brief to design a bottle, which firstly could be recognized in the dark. And then, even if broken, a person could tell at first glance what it was. Taking his inspiration from the pod of the cocoa bean, Dean produced a bottle with ridged contours.

He succeeded beyond his wildest dreams. This led to the Coca-Cola Company's contourization strategy, which used the shape to emphasize the very brand. The bottle he designed was the classic Coke bottle, which has become one of the most famous glass icons ever. The bottle is still in service, still recognizable, and been passing the smash test for every generation over the last 80 years.

The Coke bottle story reveals a fascinating aspect from a brand-building perspective, because in theory all brands should be able to pass this sort of test. So if you removed the logo from your brand, would it still be recognizable? Would the copy stand up to it? Would the colours, graphics and

images standing alone pass the text?

Can your navigation survive being smashed? It is an interesting exercise, which removes a logo-fixated mindset and brings you closer to a philosophy valuing all elements that create the brand that it is. Ask any Nokia user and they'll agree that one of the primary reason why they love their Nokia is not because of all its features, better reach or battery time – its something as simple – yet important as the navigation. Once you've used the Nokia cell phone a couple of times you're hooked on the Nokia way of navigating. In fact most Nokia users loyalty with the brand is not with the brand but with the navigation making you wonder how important less traditional branding components like the navigation in fact is to generate a loyal audience. We are all victims of habits – once you've gotten used to a certain way of shopping, driving, surfing ... you name it that becomes one of the strongest loyalty generating factors. If you happen to be among those which at some point changed from Apple to PC – you would notice your

frustrations learning a whole new way of navigating, just pick up any laptop and most represent a priority navigation technique like the trackball. Once you've gotten used to it you can never use anything else – as the trackball is a trademarked navigation technique – it could in many ways be seen as a branded loyalty as well.

But all this counts for websites too – can I in fact smash your website and still be able to recognize your site just by the way it is structured – the way the navigation works consistently not only across your many pages but also across channels like from web to wireless to PDA? Have you in fact developed a branded navigation – navigation?

Amazon.com has – with their trademarked 1-Click ordering – concept which several times has been copied – and sued because this in fact is the Amazon way of navigating. The big question what is your 1-Click ordering, trackball



or Nokia way of navigation? What are the navigational components on your site – and across all your interactive channels which is consistently used time- after-time which the user has come to know you for, and love you for – which is just as associated with you as your logo? Anything at all? If not – it might be time to reconsider your navigation strategy – and see this a just as important brand ingredients as your colours, fonts and logo.

## Further Information

For more information about Martin Lindstrom, [click here](#).

To start receiving Martin Lindstrom's complimentary online BRAND magazine, [click here](#).

For more information about Martin Lindstrom's Books and DVD's, [click here](#).