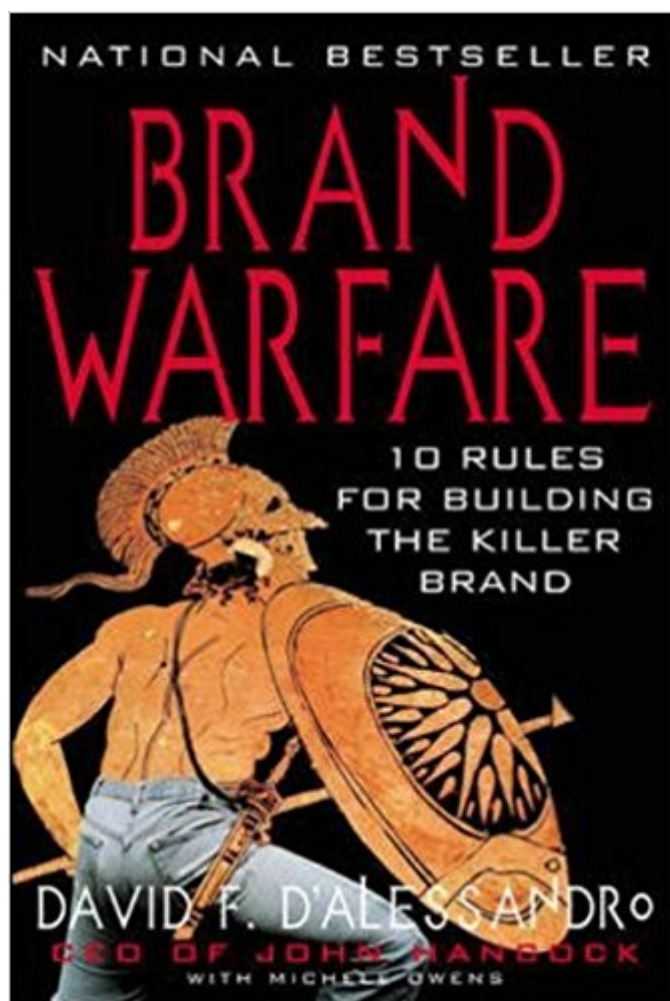


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# Brand Warfare: 10 Rules For Building The Killer Brand



## Synopsis

NOW IN PAPERBACK! The BusinessWeek, Wall Street Journal, and New York Times business bestseller "With its engaging voice and pull-no-punches tone, this book stands out from the marketing crowd." — Harvard Business Review "D'Alessandro's book is witty, irreverent, and intensely practical. It is more than a book about brands, and contains many sound lessons for strategy and the role of leaders." — Michael E. Porter, Harvard Business School "Practical, psychologically astute, and clearly written, this book has much to offer business folk of all stripes." — Publishers Weekly

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this short, concise work, D'Alessandro, CEO of the John Hancock insurance group, entertainingly hammers home the importance of creating and maintaining a brand. In his view, a brand is whatever image a customer conjures up upon hearing a company's name, so everything from the firm's labor practices to its product and advertising must be taken into account. To make his points, D'Alessandro draws heavily on his former career in advertising and public relations. On having Orville Redenbacher as a client: "We literally thought he was insane." But in the end, he says, "Orville taught me...the power of a good brand to trump all rhyme or reason in the marketplace." From a consumer's point of view, brands save time, project a certain image to the rest of the world and make one feel part of the group that uses the brand. He discusses the steps to building a brand, consistently emphasizing that, if it is to resonate, the brand must have one simple image.

D'Alessandro doesn't break much new ground here, but he succeeds at reminding everyone from the CEO to the people on the assembly line that their company's brand is its most crucial asset. Practical, psychologically astute and clearly written, this book has much to offer businessfolk of all stripes. (May 1) Forecast: A \$500,000 advertising and publicity campaign, national radio and television interviews, a six-city author tour and D'Alessandro's savvy advice and irreverent humor will get the 100,000-copy first printing moving in no time. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

While more than a quarter of its traditional competitors were going out of business, John Hancock, under the direction of marketing wizard David D'Alessandro, transformed itself from a sleepy old life insurer into a leading financial services giant. In *Brand Warfare* much-quoted maverick D'Alessandro provides the secrets to his winning brand strategy that anyone in business can use to become a brand icon and incredible bottom-line success. D'Alessandro introduces his "brand first" philosophy and explains why brand must always take top priority over every other business consideration. He describes how that philosophy helped inspire the innovations in distribution, advertising, technology, and product mix behind John Hancock's astonishing transformation. And he reveals how through a daring combination of marketing savvy and street smarts, managers and executives, marketing professionals and business owners can build their own "killer brand." This book provides powerful lessons on how to build and sustain a successful brand, and a great company, in any industry. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

While this is a short book and easy to read, it does not lack substance. Being in advertising and marketing, I know the value of a brand. But as D'Alessandro points out in his book, branding is the business of everyone in an organization. This book would be of value to a CEO of a large organization and all of its employees or the owner of a one-person shop and all advertising people. Branding, after all, is something everyone is responsible for. It is not the exclusive domain of the ad agency. The book shows how a large, well-known brand can lose market share overnight to an Internet start up. There is much in this book that will be of great value to you if you want to be a well-respected brand --- whether you are a big business or a one-person brand. Susanna K. Hutcheson  
Owner & Executive Copy Director  
Powerwriting.com LLC

The thing that sticks with me from reading the book is that branding isn't just the job of the marketing department or ad department or the ad agency. It comes from the top and touches

EVERYTHING that comes from the company to the customer. That may seem simple, but it reminded me of a story a fellow business traveler told me on a flight from Japan to NYC. This fellow traveler sold paper filters. He kept on getting beat out of a sale at the Panasonic plant in China. The reason? Not because of the quality of his product. He assured me he had the best quality, the best value. The reason is that the shipping boxes were beat-up, the tape askew. The competitors shipping box was immaculate with the tape placed to perfection. Panasonic surmised that if the packing box was sloppy, maybe the product was sloppy. When he told his boss back in the U.S. about this they laughed and said nothing could be done about it. "Union," he said. So, if the branding focus is quality, why not package industrial boxes with the same care as consumer boxes? That branding starts at the top and ends at the bottom. Submitted by Jon Spoelstra, author of *Marketing Outrageously*.

The main point D'Alessandro is trying to make is that the brand is the most important asset possessed by any business and all efforts should be channeled towards protecting it. Sounds reasonable but he fails to explain what is the ultimate purpose having a good brand name. The reader may get the wrong impression that brands exist for the sake of their own existence. Strong brand name is worth anything only as long as it maximizes the wealth of its owners. The owners are the shareholders. Sometimes they would be better off financially if the brand was not too strong. What is the point of owning Mercedes-Benz if the firm loses money when you can own Honda and have positive gains. I am making the assumption that Mercedes-Benz is the better brand of the two but this is only for the sake of the argument. The price tag of the item and its manufacturing quality does not necessary determine the strength of the brand. The author makes some good points though. His discussion on how management should allocate money to advertisement and other brand building techniques is wonderful. Despite its weaknesses, this book was worth reading.

David D'Alessandro has transformed John Hancock from a clubby, play-it-safe mutual company, to a leading, publically-traded financial services group where accountability, integrity and growth are embraced. Marketing has played a critical role in the company's transformation. Unlike other life insurance companies, Hancock is led by a CEO who understands branding and embraces big ideas. D'Alessandro's list of pioneering moves and accomplishments within the world of sports marketing and sponsorship is long and legendary. The first sponsor - and saviour - of the Boston Marathon, the first to completely rename a college football bowl game for the sponsor, the first in the insurance category to become a worldwide Olympic partner, and the first sponsor to stand up to the

IOC in the midst of its bribery scandal over bribes and say: "This will not stand. Change your ways or suffer the consequences." Anyone who wants to know brand building, communications, public relations, advertising and sports marketing from the inside out, should read *Brand Warfare*. Written by an acclaimed CEO and branding maverick, the book introduces D'Alessandro's "brand first" philosophy and explains why brand must always take top priority over every other business consideration. And, unlike books written by academicians and consultants, *Brand Warfare's* ideas are real world and street tested. D'Alessandro engineered Hancock's double-digit growth rate at a time when many of its competitors went under. Whether you're an experienced CEO or just starting your career, anyone in any industry will benefit from D'Alessandro's 10 principles and his "brand first" approach. *Brand Warfare* should become required reading for business professionals.

## Great and Fast

I enjoyed reading this book. It's very interesting, I read it before the Enron Crisis, and one of its chapters is almost prophetic because it addresses how to avoid losing your brand to scandal.

I enjoyed reading this book. It's very interesting, I read it before the Enron Crisis, and one of its chapters is almost prophetic because it addresses how to avoid losing your brand to scandal.

A great read that really displays in simple terminology the importance of branding within companies. I have worked for companies that really needed to take some cues from this book. D'Alessandro does a great job of providing examples for his branding tenets and why companies need to keep them in mind. These examples include when branding rules were followed and when they were not. Highly recommend this book to anyone, whether you are involved in marketing or you are a numbers guru that does not believe on marketing and wants a down and dirty on why it is important.

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