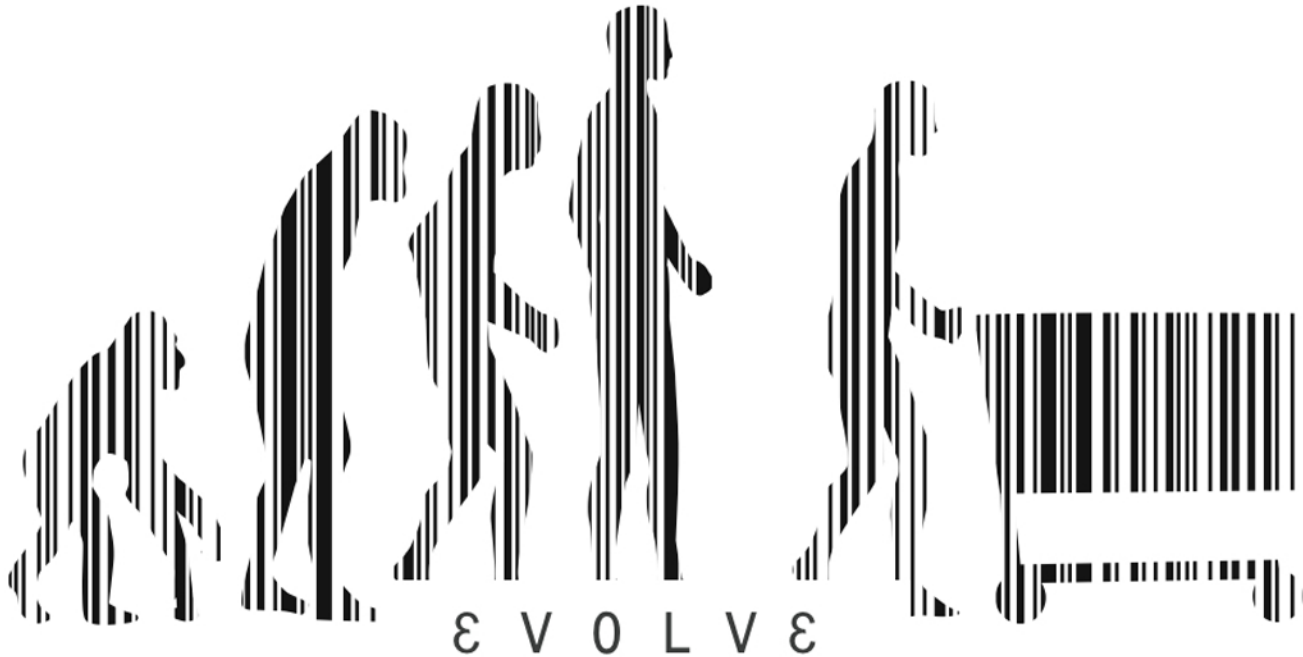


Brand rituals are what turn consumers into customers.



Strong retail businesses need loyal customers. Tapping into our expertise with some of the world's largest retailers like Tesco, Carrefour and Sprint, we know how to make your brand succeed. From retail to interactive to innovation and growth, we'll get you to the Future First.

# Split Screen

The strongest brands are those that remain true to that which made them strong to begin with. The weak are those that forget what made them relevant and lose their way. Seems to me there was a book about that recently.

And yet, we have Google, which makes all of its money selling advertising, but doesn't invest much in advertising for itself. There's Nike, whose use of recycled materials is often at cross-purposes with its reputation for "performance."

**A brand divided against itself cannot stand. Or can it?**

We now live in a world where Toys 'R' Us owns FAO Schwarz and the Penske Automotive Group, a retailer, owns Saturn, a car company. Then again, we live in a country where an African-American man with a Muslim name is President of the United States.

These curious bundles of contradictions aren't purely an American phenomenon, though. In Germany, BMW is encouraging its factory workers to buy the cars they make. Factory workers buying luxury cars! Imagine that. They couldn't be serious.

Or could they? Oh, probably not. But just think about that for a moment. Google's strength is its weakness. Nike's weakness is its strength. BMW may just be smoking something.

It is indeed a delicate balance between strengths and weakness where brand identity is concerned—witness the rise of store brands as innovative rivals to national brands.

Like much of the rest of marketing, things are not always as they seem, but a world of possibility resides within brand-identity contradictions.

What do you think?



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COVER STORY

### Big "G" Identity

The future of brand identity both depends on and departs from its past, says **General Mills** CMO **Mark Addicks**. An exclusive Q&A interview by **Tim Manners**.

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ROUNDTABLE

### Tug of War

The front line of building brand identity is now in the store. A discussion featuring **Simon Uwins** of **Fresh & Easy**, **Tom Britanik** of **Clorox**, **Rita Bargerhuff** of **7-Eleven**, **Chris Heye** of **Welch's** and **Masha Sajdeh** of **Arc Worldwide**.

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WHITE PAPER

### The Shoppers' Perspective

Value-seeking behaviors may transcend demographics. By **Mack Hoopes**.