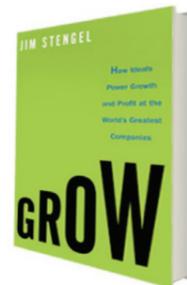


BUSINESS STRATEGY *Former P&G*

marketing supremo has teamed up with Millward Brown to deliver a compelling new approach to helping brands grow their business



Growing for gold

Staff Reporter

IN 2006, while he was global marketing officer of Procter & Gamble, Jim Stengel decided to investigate how some businesses were achieving even faster growth than P&G. He commissioned a study with an internal team and Millward Brown Optimor as the external partner. What they found a year later was unexpected: the 25 businesses identified as having grown fastest over a five-year period shared a common characteristic: they “were organized around ideals of improving people’s lives, and activated these ideals throughout their business ecosystems.”

Stengel says: “I was so taken with the findings I decided I wanted to make it my mission in life to follow this up and to promote this message about how business needed to change.”

On leaving P&G, Stengel came back to Millward Brown Optimor and its vice president Benoit Garbe to commission a new study, this time looking in much greater depth at what was driving the fastest-growing brands, and over a longer 10-year period. The result is a book, *Grow: How Ideals Power Growth and Profit at the World’s Greatest Companies*, citing the Stengel Top 50 ranking of rapidly-growing brands; and an in-depth study which compellingly reinforces the earlier finding that harnessing powerful ideals is the key factor that drives brand value growth.

The notion of a brand ideal is absolutely central to Stengel’s view of success in business. He says the book is about leadership and strategy rather than just marketing, because the ideal is a set of values that the whole business needs to become organized around. In the case of Discovery Communications – owner of Discovery Channel – that ideal is “satisfying curiosity”, and Stengel explains: “When I spent time at Discovery everywhere I went they talked about curiosity. It was even written in their HR policy.”

The companies and brands that made it into the Stengel Top 50 were selected from the 50,000 worldwide brands on Millward Brown’s database, the result of a painstaking process that identified brands which had achieved “extraordinary growth” over the 2000s relative to competitors. They cover 28 categories and come from emerging markets as well as the US and Europe.

A second phase of the project involved getting Millward Brown’s neuroscience team to investigate the associations that consumers made between some of the Stengel Top 50 brands and their ideals through testing

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unconscious reactions. It strongly validated the impact of the brand ideal.

Eileen Campbell, Millward Brown’s global CEO, says: “This has been a fascinating journey for us. On the one hand it has prompted us to focus more attention on what drives us as a company, our own business ideal, at a time when we are moving beyond being data providers and a classic research agency to having a meaningful impact on clients’ business and their brands. And for our clients this is going to lead to ongoing consulting and new solutions, as we help them to understand their own brand ideal and to change their businesses.”

And Heather Stern, Millward Brown’s VP marketing, North America, adds: “Marketers are craving new thinking on how they can link what they do to the bottom line financials, so this really is the sweet spot of consulting right now. We are able to help clients uncover their ideal, activate it, and ultimately measure the impact that ideal has on driving the business forward.”

Stengel concludes: “We’re also looking at how we can develop this, for example how we can link the ideal to other measures such as purchase intent. We think we can take it to a whole new level.”

To find out more about the study and the Stengel Top 50 visit www.millwardbrown.com/grow