

EFFECTIVE BRANDING

# OVERTAKING THE LEGACY OF McDONALD'S = A = BURGER KING CASE STUDY



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Burger King could not even compete with McDonald's. You must wonder why the fast food chain analysis suddenly flipped in its favor. Effective branding is the reason behind Burger King's sudden progression in the market. This case study is to present a detailed analysis of this unexpected growth of Burger King in comparison to the downfall of McDonald's.



U.S. statistics suggest that Burger King's store sales shot up to approximately 7% in the second quarter of the year. However, McDonald's sales fell by 2% during the last quarter. These are outstanding statistics suggesting that McDonald's will kill to meet or surpass its rival's standard.

These numbers explain one thing with surety: whatever Burger King is doing for branding is actually working. Therefore, it is incumbent to get deep insights in to their branding strategies and learn how they maximized their sales. In order to do that, we must first evaluate where McDonald's went wrong with the branding tactics.

# FLAVORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Let's analyze McDonald's initiatives first and their progress. During last year, McDonald's (MCD) made great amendments to its menu by introducing new deals and items. You will see flavors from around the world satisfying the taste buds of all kind of people. Diversity and richness in the food menu was a good move to establish a brand image that appreciates and recognizes the importance of human tastes.

However, it is depressing to note that the audience feedback was totally opposite of the expectations.



"There is nothing on the menu that excites our customers," one franchisee wrote in a recent survey by Janney Capital.



Strange, isn't it? This made me conduct an evaluation of the underlying problem.



# SIMPLIFYING THE IDEA:

MCD menu has way too many varieties, but that does not help its sales. Why? Because it confuses customers and they are unable to identify what the brand is all about. It seems like MCD is desperate to get a response and they are changing their focus every now and then. I'm sure people appreciate the original idea of MCD, but now they are unable to figure out the REAL flavor of the franchise. While, on the other hand, Burger King is doing the same thing but in a different way.

Burger King's (BK) focus remains the same - keep on making experiments in the menu.

Make a note: Shifting your business focus and going with the market demand can often prove fatal for your business.

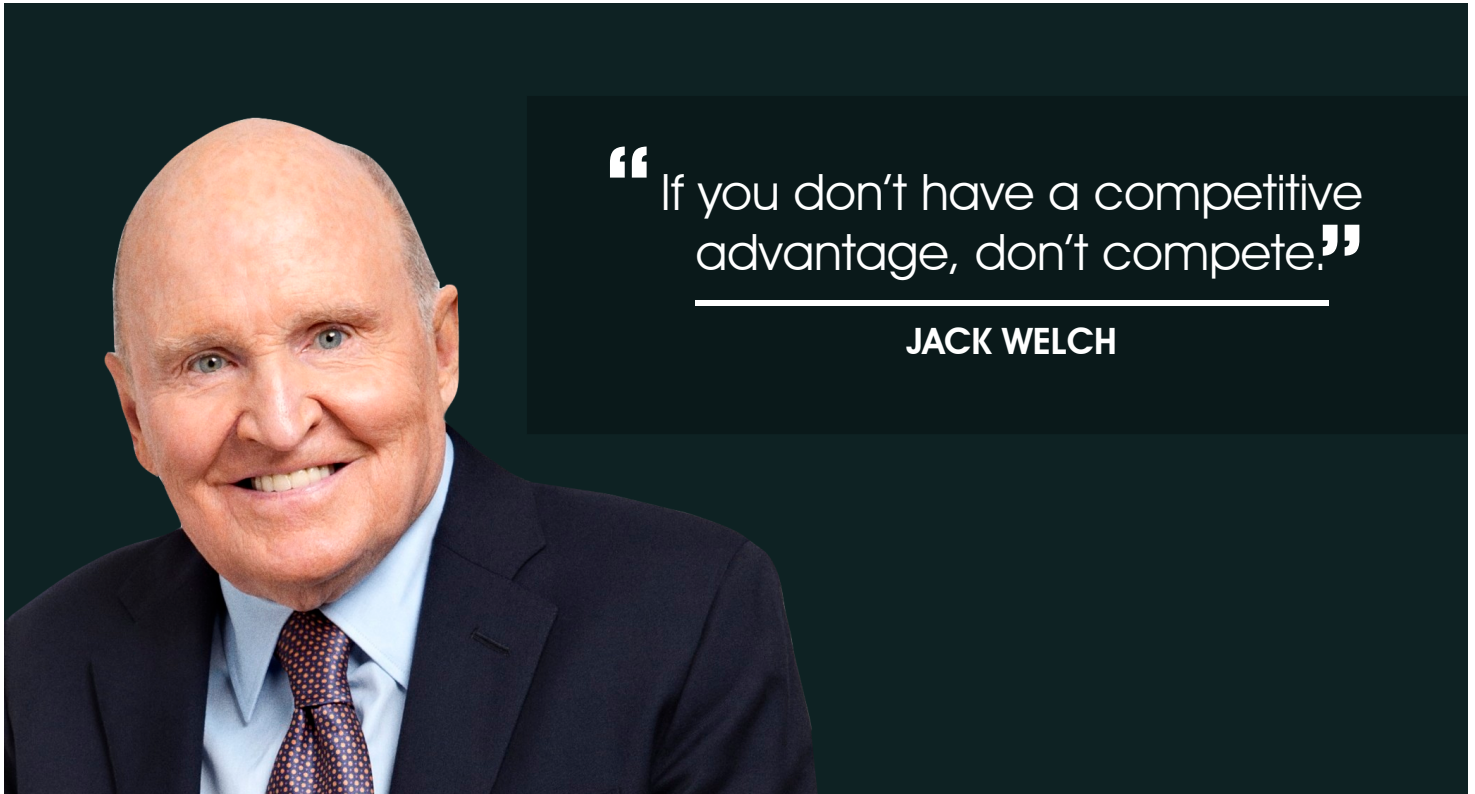
It is exactly like you are in a horse race, but a new fad of bikes enter the market. Now, you immediately hop to racing bikes - do you think you can retain your audience this way and expect business growth? The answer is a big, fat NO.

Instead, the key is to stay where you belong and not deviate from original brand idea. Take care of your brand image and maintain it by creating strategies around it.



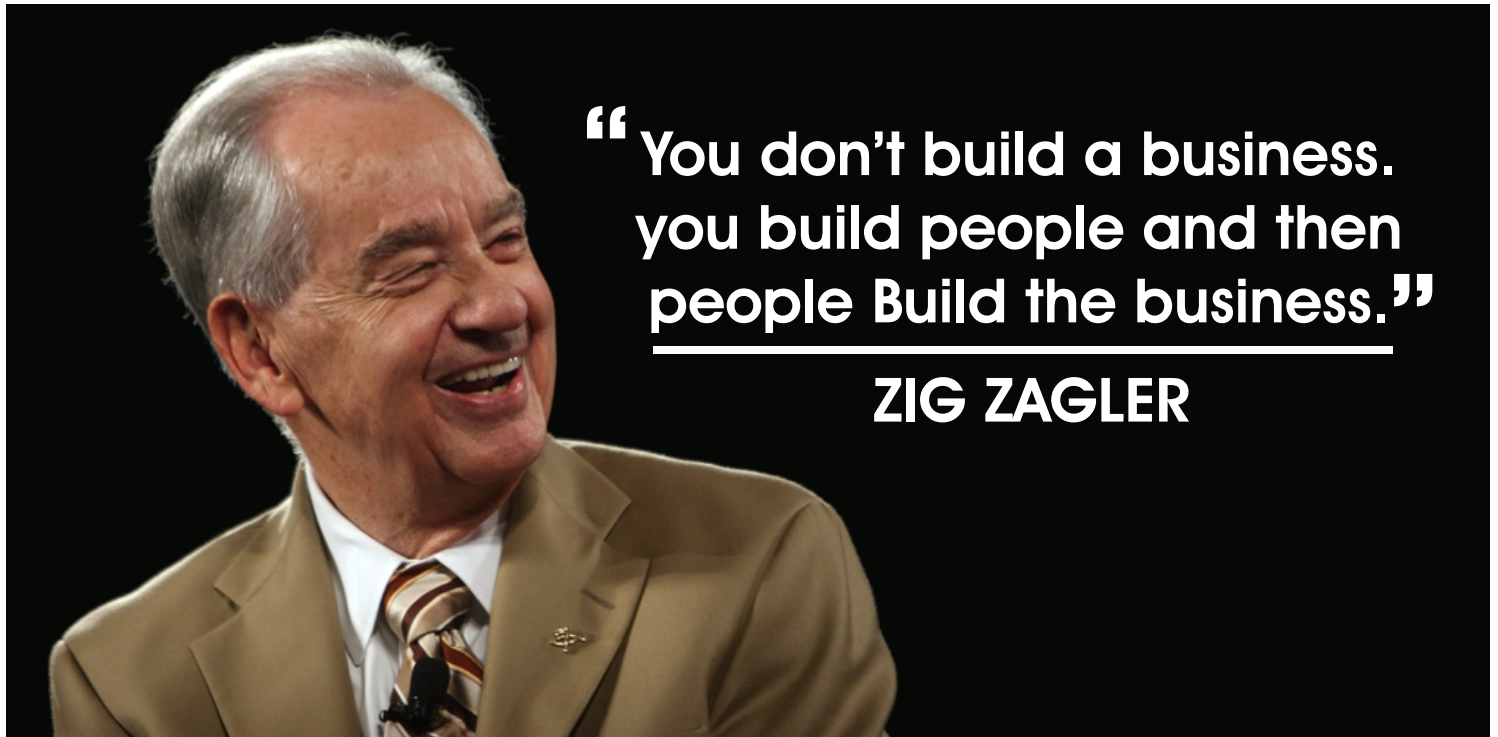
# PRODUCT VS. BRANDING:

MCD seems more product focused, while BK understands the impact of branding. I understand that this is a huge statement to make at this point in time. Ever more so since market competition is far more complicated than it was ever before.



Burger giants like Burger Shack, Hardees, and Wendy's are making every effort possible to steal the fast food customers from the market. In such circumstances, it becomes a difficult task for burger chains to meet the standards of competitive market. However, BK seems immune to the market scenario and it is not only keeping up with the case as it is, but enjoys a steady growth.

Understanding the importance of branding, the new CEO of McDonald's, Steve Easterbrook, accepted the demotion of MCD in last three quarters and proposed new strategies that he would like to implement. He said that they have already made their user experience intact by making changes in the customer's order services.



**“You don’t build a business.  
you build people and then  
people Build the business.”**

**ZIG ZAGLER**

Now, they aim to make their services online by introducing mobile apps for MCD. It will provide ease of access to customers in placing orders without any hassle.

Does this say anything? Well, finally the new CEO is catching up with the trend and working on branding tactics to assure maximum sales.

# ADDING PACKAGING FLAVORS TO BRAND STRATEGY:

Kristina Monillos, on July 27'15, wrote in Ad Week about the packaging revamp by Burger King.

She said that the change in packaging design has become a trend among popular fast food chains.

However, Burger King renewed its packaging with a purpose of global brand recognition. It is part of their brand strategy. They want to keep their packaging consistent around the world.

"For decades, Burger King Restaurants have been recognized globally as a leading, iconic brand," said the spokeswoman. "With more than 14,000 restaurants in over 100 countries, we have been working to increase brand consistency globally."

This explains the Burger King's focus on branding and visual marketing. They have a global brand strategy already set and now the fruits of hard and intelligent labor are ripe and ready for harvest. Moreover, their focus is on meeting the customer needs and valuing consumer feedback. However, McDonald's is struggling to rehash their branding strategies, but their plans are doomed because they fail to shift their focus from product expansion.



"The rollout of our new global packaging is the latest evolution of this positioning, which celebrates our great-tasting food that is prepared-to-order and celebrates our desire to deliver an authentic and fun experience for all guests."

Spokeswoman



# LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Let's evaluate all the possible learning outcomes that became reasons for BK to hit the nail.

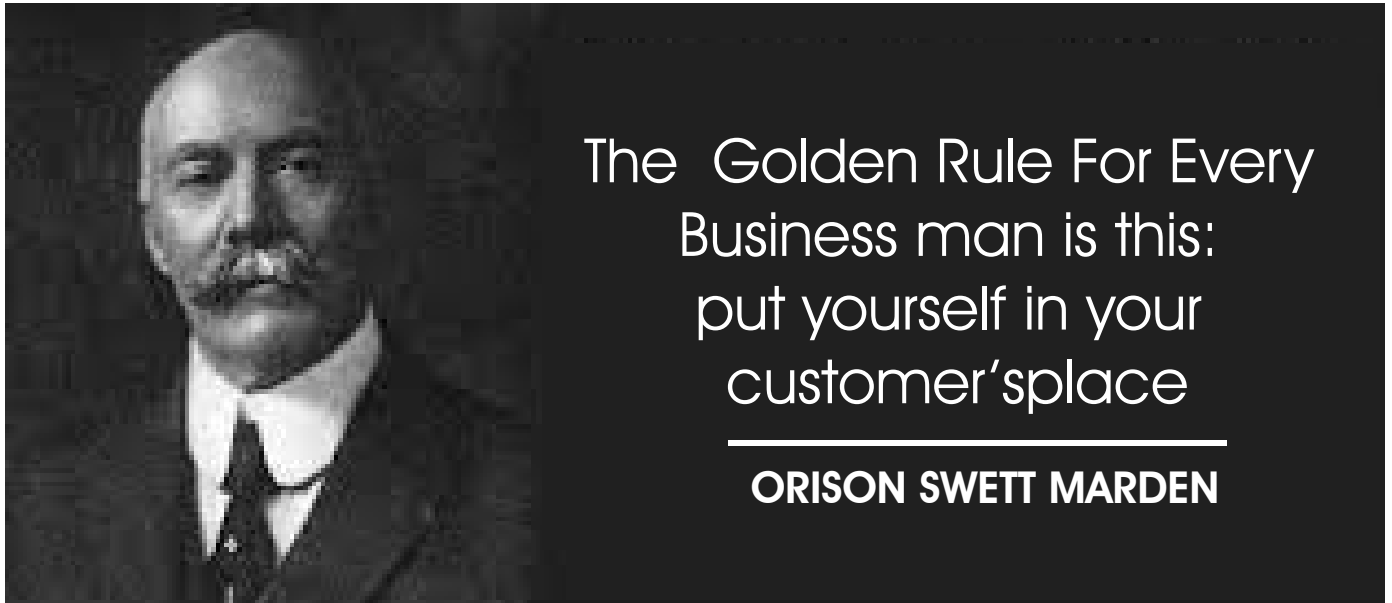
One thing is established, Burger King believes that complex ideas ruin the overall brand design. Hence, they keep it simple. Too many items on the menu made the buying decision confusing for MCD audience. Moreover, it also affects the quality of the brand. Provide less quantity and varieties, but maintain the quality.



Another learning point is to stop tweaking the strategies every now and then. There is a problem with "not sticking to the idea" that every time market stats fluctuate, you get scared and alter the strategy accordingly. Stay with the original idea and give it time. Your audience will respond to your efforts.

What do you prefer?

Too many ideas and limited response OR one big idea and outstanding market response? Choose for yourself because conviction is what makes your strategy powerful and responsive.



Your customers are your asset. Make them feel their value. Constant complains about McDonald's customer service can be a huge reason of its drawback.

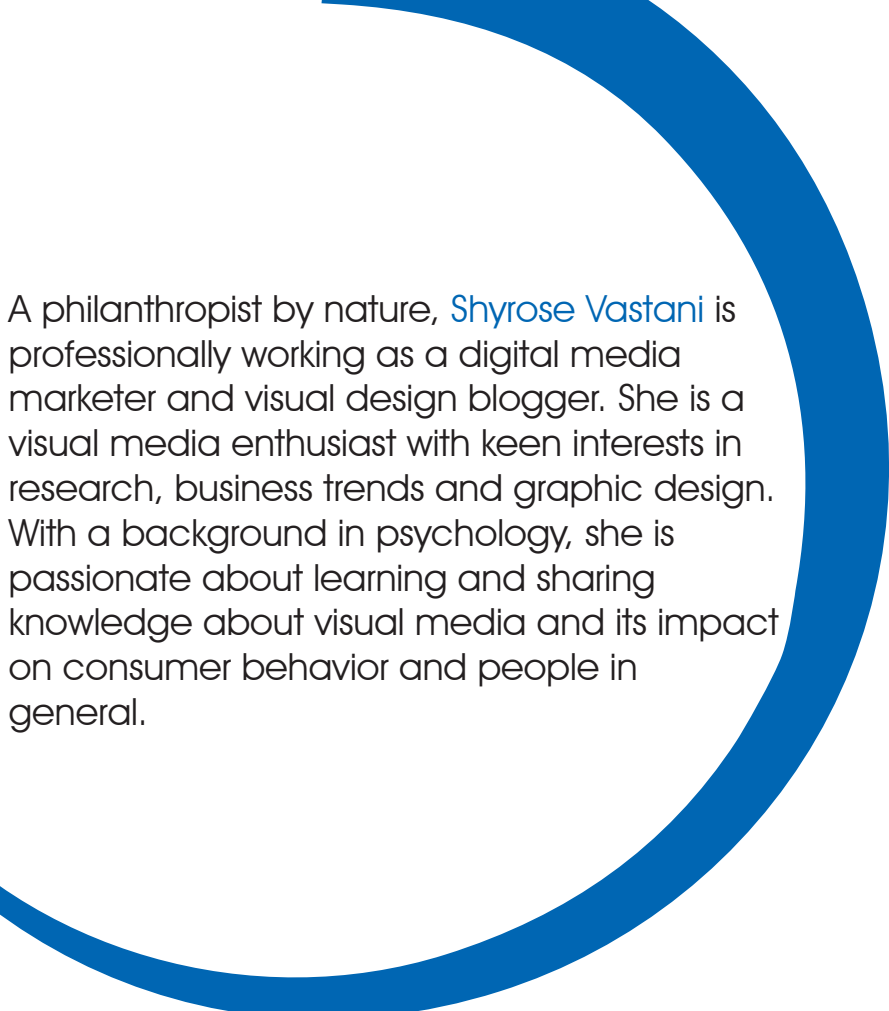
People make your business run. Ignoring them will be like providing reassurance that the brand is more concerned about its profit. Be sure that your employees and consumers own the brand. Trust will make them push in extra efforts.



## RESULTS:

During the year 2010, MCD was doing far much better than Burger King and people negatively portrayed Burger King as a loser trying to compete in the Clown's market. It was said that there is no competition between the two. However, in the last five years Burger King came up as an extra ordinarily growing brand beating popular fast food chains.

Burger King was overly criticized for its branding and, yet, not reacted in any way. Instead, today we see a great response by the brand. They not only made a positive move by focusing on the menu and customer satisfaction. But they also made their branding powerful enough to tract the attention their way. The results we all know are amazing and must be appreciated.



A philanthropist by nature, [Shyrose Vastani](#) is professionally working as a digital media marketer and visual design blogger. She is a visual media enthusiast with keen interests in research, business trends and graphic design. With a background in psychology, she is passionate about learning and sharing knowledge about visual media and its impact on consumer behavior and people in general.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## ABOUT THE COMPANY



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