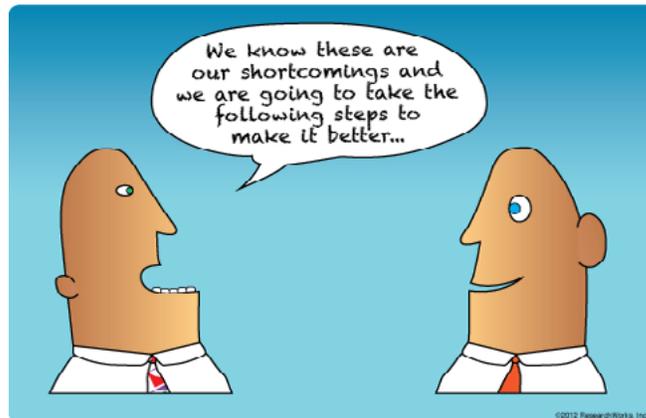


## Telling the truth... what a concept!

*During times of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act.*

— George Orwell

More and more companies are enjoying the benefits of honest marketing. This works because people connect more emotionally and intimately with organizations that are open and transparent about their shortcomings along with the true benefits of their products and services that businesses normally talk about. After all, we are all flawed in our own ways and appreciate seeing that element of humanity in the companies we deal with. Honesty and transparency are a mark of integrity.



A couple years ago Domino's created a game-changing "Pizza Turnaround" campaign. It acknowledged their pizza tasted like cardboard and made a promise to fix it. Which they did, demonstrated by heavy media coverage, increased customer loyalty, and greater sales.

You can do the same by explicitly acknowledging shortcomings (customers probably know about them anyway) and how you will make amends.

Which reminds me of something that really stayed with me from a Cognitive Psychology class I took at UCSD a million years ago with a favorite professor Don Norman, a leading technology thinker and author. Here it is:

Integrity is the attribute people value most, and is strongest on its own. For example, someone with integrity would be rated higher than someone with integrity and good looks. It's as though people average the attributes we perceive in others, rather than add them.

**Bottom line: How does your organization demonstrate and communicate the single most valued attribute — integrity?**

(Some more thoughts about this issue can be found at the May 2013 issue of the Your Marketing Minute, "If You Can't Fix It, Feature It" that can be found here)



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