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## PRIVATE LABEL DRINKING WATER: PURE WATER AS A POWERFUL BRAND BUILDER

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All firms need to establish a strong brand in order to effectively compete with and be distinguished from other companies similar to theirs. A strong brand allows individual ideals that convey the durability and power of the company, its products and service offerings. In addition to showing how its offering is distinctive from other products, the brand clearly expresses features and benefits that appeal to the marketplace and individual customers. The companies that produce a clear statement about the strengths of their respective brands generally enjoy greater overall success in business.

A strong brand will achieve a number of results. The brand name will identify the products or services offered and will classify the quality of these offerings in the marketplace. Additionally, the core values of the product and firm should be evident and the mission and specialty of the company should be clearly defined. The net result of brand creation should be an expression of the personality and character of the firm and a representation of the quality of the product offering.

Product and Service Branding:

Branding, which is not only limited to products, allows for individual service firms to often act as aggressive branders. Successful service providers are those that identify a need in the marketplace and develop a message that appeals to the market; this message identifies how the firm is best able to add value to the marketplace.

Objectives of a product are exceedingly important in that the objective of the message is to target prospective customers on an emotional level and provide reassurance that the brand will be strong and credible and will deliver with success. After the message is successfully transmitted, the potential customer should be motivated to buy and, if the message is powerful enough, brand loyalty should be established.

Sell on Quality Not on Price:

Studies have shown that companies that compete solely on price are almost guaranteed to fail. No matter how much firms discount their prices in order to capture the sale, in a price cutting environment there will always be another player willing to reduce prices even lower to maintain the level of competition. The result of price cutting is that all firms in the market run the risk of selling below cost and, if cut rate continues, bankruptcy is a high possibility.

Companies that prosper in a market are those that can clearly distinguish their offering from those of the competition. Most effective are those that develop a clear message of the benefits of their product/service offering. Development of a clear message requires an analysis of the strengths of the firm and strategic thinking as to the portion of a market that the firm wants to capture. Following the creation of the branding message, decisions are required to promote the brand most effectively in the marketplace.

Broadcast the Message:

A brand message that is not properly delivered is a misuse of time and resources. Even the best and most efficient brand message fails if it is not marketed correctly to potential customers and businesses. Nevertheless, care must be exercised when promoting a brand because promotion is expensive and extremely unpredictable. There are many avenues to properly promote a brand, some being more effective than others.

The options for promotion range from print, radio and television advertising to private mailers and public relations. Each of these techniques varies in price and effectiveness and generally requires multiple exposures to be successful. Many companies dedicate substantial resources to brand promotion using traditional techniques and advertising. Public promotion budgets often represent a substantial portion of a company's operating budget. For smaller firms traditional promotion can be a tremendous burden often producing either limited or only long term results.

Private Label Drinking Water as a Powerful Brand Builder:

A new and effective method of brand promotion, private label drinking water, is becoming very popular, particularly for small to medium sized companies with limited advertising and public relations budgets. Private label pure drinking water has captured the imagination of those companies wishing to convey their message in clear and lasting terms. It is bottled water that includes a custom label designed to customer specifications that convey a clear message. Private label drinking water has many uses and applications, which are as follows:

- High quality pure drinking water with custom designed labels creates a long lasting message without the need for various costly exposures. Prospective customers and clients often keep individual bottles for future use where the image can be viewed repeatedly.
- Private label pure drinking water can be best described as portable advertising that is cost effective and conveys a sustainable message.
- Custom labels can be easily modified for specific occasions.
- Additional supplies of water can be ordered for meetings, events and public displays.
- Cost is low and water offerings can be coupled with sales opportunities at sporting and other public events.

Quality is Critical:

Any type of brand message requires a concerted quality effort. A low quality, substandard presentation coupled with a powerful message will fail if it is perceived to be a poor quality product. This is particularly true with private label water.

The first element of quality involves the water in the bottle. Low quality, impure water will often result in dissatisfaction and impairment of the message, therefore, the best way to ensure high quality water is to use ultra pure water that is distilled and oxygenated for highest quality and the best taste.

Next, it is imperative that the label design look professional, address all aspects of the desired message and be configured in an attractive, noticeable design.

Lastly the label must be printed using a high quality, high resolution printer on laminated water proof label stock. During the creation and printing process, quality control checks are required in order to ensure the presentation of the most effective branding message.

Creating a powerful brand is critical to the success of any firm in the marketplace. The creation process is only as effective as the expression of the brand message. Many firms can either succeed or fail as a result of the perception of their brand in the marketplace; therefore, the use of pure private label water is a desirable tool for brand success.