

# The Law Of Love

By **Kevin Roberts**

“Love is the law, the law is love.”  
(lyrics: Paul Kelly)

Five years ago, when I first said the word “Love” to serious business people, they blushed and headed for the hills. The L-word had no place in their boardrooms and offices. Today, the response is very different. People are eager to bring more emotion, more spirit, more inspiration and, yes, more love into the way they do business. But they still find it tough to put Love in action.

That’s where the idea of Lovemarks comes in – an idea that helps put Love back into business.

I started to talk Love because of one big question that would not go away: what comes after brands?

Brands have had a dream-run pumping the global economy. They have defined and grown marketing by boosting its complexity and scale. They have spread out around the globe. The journey from products to trademarks and trademarks to brands has been one of the great stories of the twentieth century. But that journey is coming to an end.

Brands have become victims of the ‘Attention Economy’, where everything competes for attention and nothing gets it: too much information, repeated too often and broadcast too loud.

The relentless process of commodification is turning what we truly value about products and services into the commonplace. It is a process that erodes distinctions, rapidly cycles through innovations and pushes for higher standards of performance and quality because that is what everybody else is doing.

When Starbucks sold more than 25 percent of the US\$1.3 million total sales of ‘Genius Loves

**BY FOCUSING ON MYSTERY, SENSUALITY AND INTIMACY, BUSINESS-USUAL CAN BE TRANSFORMED WITH NEW EMOTIONS AND NEW IDEAS**

Company' with Ray Charles, it started a landslide of copycats. *Vive la difference* for Starbucks as a non-traditional music retailer? Only for as long as it took Kmart to push its own runaway hit, the R&B gem 'Usher Rarities'. And others are in hot pursuit.

The inevitable result? Pressure on margins and on price at the very time consumers are proving more demanding, less loyal, profoundly cynical and tough to convince of anything. Young moviegoers text thumbs-down before the final credits roll. The result – empty seats.

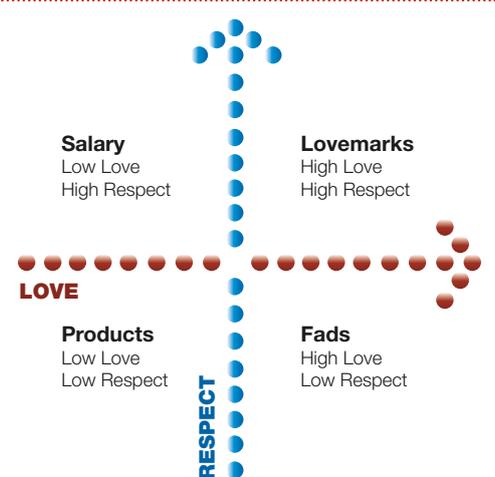
Most people know there's a problem, but not what to do about it. My advice is to get your nose out of reports and statistics and start creating emotional connections. And the four letter word for emotional connections? L-O-V-E.

Here are seven insights that show the role Love was born to play.

### LOVE CREATES LOVEMARKS

Some brands are so far ahead of the pack that they have gone beyond just being 'Super Brands' or 'Brands Plus.' They have escaped the commodity trap and evolved into something different altogether – Lovemarks.

Lovemarks are a game-breaking opportunity to



**Fig 1. Love / Respect Axis**

Source: Saatchi & Saatchi

The advertising team was there to pipe on some emotional icing – and that was that.

But over the past two decades, science has moved deeper in the human mind. It turned out that the brain is more complex, more densely connected and more mysterious than any of us dreamt.

Study after study has proved that if the emotion

## WE CAN ALL FEEL IT. EMOTION IS BACK IN VOGUE

reinvent branding. By infusing them with Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy, they place brands where they should be: at the emotional heart.

Lovemarks inspire consumers with loyalty beyond reason.

At Saatchi & Saatchi, we have been evolving Lovemarks for the past four years. We have changed our focus: "to create and perpetuate Lovemarks through the power of our ideas".

Lovemarks are personal. They can be local or global or anywhere in-between. Whatever the scale, they stand out from the crowd. Lovemarks are the charismatic brands that people love and fiercely protect.

If you made a list of *your* Lovemarks it would be different from my list, because that is the nature of Love. We don't all love the same person either! My Lovemarks: I love the iPod, Cheerios, my Mont Blanc pen and Blackburne tennis racquets, Putumayo World Music, Head & Shoulders shampoo and the Prius.

### LOVE BRINGS BACK EMOTION

We can all feel it. Emotion is back in vogue. In the grand old brand days, emotion was a clip-on. Brands flourished in the rational world of benefits.

centres of our brain are damaged in some way, we don't just lose the ability to laugh or cry, we lose the ability to make decisions. Now there is a big loud alarm bell for every business right there.

The neurologist Donald Calne puts it brilliantly: "the essential difference between emotion and reason is that emotion leads to action while reason leads to conclusions." More emotion equals more action. That's what the 'motion' part of emotion is all about.

Emotion and reason are intertwined, but when they conflict – emotion wins every time. Without the fleeting and intense stimulus of emotion, rational thought winds down and disintegrates.

Great products, great ideas, great anything can only come from people with passion and emotion. They need to have what I call the 'I's' and the 'E's'.

- I for Ideas, Imagination, Intuition, and Insight
- E for Enchantment, Emotion, Empathy and Excitement

Turning up the temperature in your business means more energy and inspiration, and nothing turns up the temperature like Love.

Emotion is an unlimited resource. It controls our rationality and guides our decision-making. It's



## MEASURING THE IMMEASURABLE?

Conventional wisdom tells us that emotion cannot be measured. That's why most quantitative research limits itself to rational qualities such as performance, price and so on. But coming to grips with the rational is no longer enough. All market research can do that. To create meaningful differentiation for a product or service, we have to draw on the emotional drives of consumers as well.

Saatchi & Saatchi commissioned QiQ International to develop sophisticated diagnostics based on Lovemarks thinking. This methodology integrates quantitative and qualitative information and insights about the twin drivers of Lovemarks: Respect and Love.

Initial studies were conducted in the United States on breakfast cereals and cars. They validated the fundamental Lovemarks contention that products and services that can connect with consumers in an emotionally positive way deliver higher profit than products and services that do not.

To be both respected *and* loved generates substantial advantages in terms of product preference, purchase and usage. Consumers are likely to use their Lovemarks more often and to keep on buying them.

In Cereals, when compared to products that were trusted but not loved, Lovemarks were consumed five times more frequently, and the intention to purchase them in the future was two-thirds higher. In Cars, Lovemarks generate nearly double the future purchasing intent compared to other brands which were trusted, but not loved.

The studies also provided unique insights into how companies can develop and maintain Lovemark status for their brands. Following this initial study, the methodology has been applied to areas as diverse as pharmaceuticals, beverages and media.

A major study was undertaken with The New Yorker magazine to discover whether The New Yorker was a Lovemark and to identify the value of being a media Lovemark. The study found that, in the minds and hearts of The New Yorker subscribers, The New Yorker was clearly a Lovemark.

But the study did more. It measured the intensity of the relationship subscribers have to The New Yorker and discovered it to be more intense than the relationship other readers have with their magazines. As they could measure the intensity of the 'emotional halo', they were able to demonstrate that The New Yorker has unique value for advertisers and quantitative evidence for a premium price for advertising.

David Carey, publisher of The New Yorker, said that the Lovemarks idea "helps marketers understand the warm and emotional connections readers have to The New Yorker and communicates the benefits of advertising their products and services in a category of one."

always there - waiting to be plugged into. And you certainly can't ignore it by declaring that your products are in a 'low involvement category'. What a cop-out! The most humble commodity such as a brick is emotionally transformed when it becomes part of a home.

### LOVE GIVES RESPECT NEW MEANING

I talk more about Love than Respect because we all do Respect so much better. We have made huge investments in performance, innovation, quality, trust and all the rest for decades. And we have made fantastic progress.

In the twenty-first century, great performance is no more than what consumers expect: cars start first time, the fries are always crisp and all beer tastes good. Today, everyone has to be respected, just to stay in the game.

The problem is that business just loves the 'e-r' words: newer, brighter, stronger, faster. And the

most frightening 'e-r' word of them all: cheaper.

The new challenge is to be Loved. Don't be fooled: love demands the same investment and the same rigour we brought to the capture of Respect. Our client Toyota gets it. Don Esmond at Toyota USA crystallised the new Toyota challenge: "it's time to move from the most *respected* car company in America to the most *loved*".

When you look at the Love / Respect Axis (**Figure 1.**) it makes perfect sense. No respect, no love.

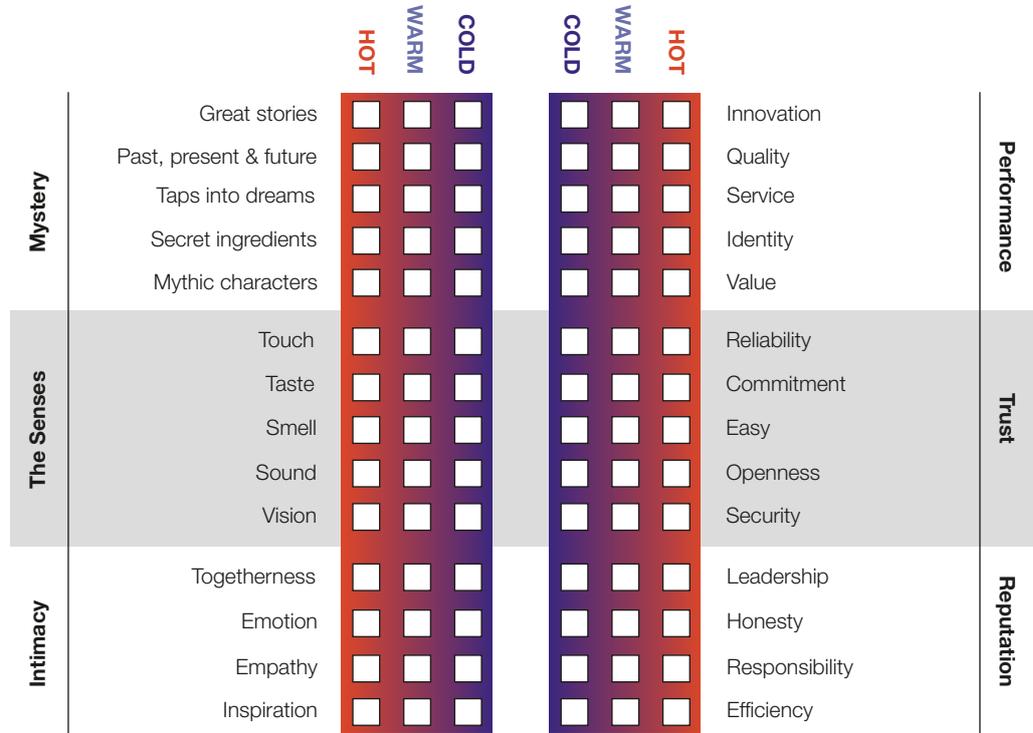
At the bottom are commodities and fads. They have different limitations but with the same results. Consumers don't connect with them emotionally for the long-term.

Most brands live in the top left quadrant, offering consumers solid quality and performance but not enough personality or emotion to attract love. The sun is where Lovemarks sit. High Love, High Respect.

**...PRODUCTS AND SERVICES THAT CAN CONNECT WITH CONSUMERS IN AN EMOTIONALLY POSITIVE WAY DELIVER HIGHER PROFIT...**

**Brand Lovemark status**

Is your brand a Lovemark? Use the Lovemark to find out the strengths and weaknesses of your brand. The Lovemark helps clarify areas that need improvement in order for your brand to achieve Lovemark status. Rate highly in all sections i.e. 'Hot'? Congratulations - your brand's a Lovemark.



Source: Saatchi & Saatchi

**LOVE DRAWS ON MYSTERY, SENSUALITY AND INTIMACY**

We all know the power of Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy from our own lives. Getting to know people, learning their stories, joining their celebrations, sharing meals and secrets – falling in love. The obvious question, then, is why should relationships in business be any different? My answer is simple. They are not. Business too needs Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy.

Mystery draws together the stories, metaphors and dreams that give a relationship texture. Not surprisingly, after the metric mania of the twentieth century, Mystery is again taking centre-stage. What we *don't* know starts to be as important as what we do know. That's why the white cables of the iPod are so tantalising, why restaurants dim the lights and why movies spend so much time and money on teaser trailers.

The five senses, vision, sound, smell, touch, taste, pull us towards Sensuality. This is how human beings experience the world. Sensuality is a portal to the emotions, and it can work anywhere you want it to. Apple knew this when they advertised their brightly coloured Apple Macs with one compelling word: YUM!

And Intimacy, where thinking and feeling come together most closely. The art of knowing the right thing to do. Great service, attentive follow-up, genuine caring - what we call empathy.

Some companies have created experiences that have used Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy brilliantly. Think of the expertly integrated experience Starbucks have sent out around the world.

By focusing on Mystery, Sensuality and Intimacy, business-as-usual can be transformed with new emotions and new ideas.

The Stanford economist Paul Romer likes to say that big competitive advantages in the marketplace always come from “better recipes, not just more cooking”. Love has got to be the best-tested recipe of all.

**LOVE CONNECTS WITH CONSUMERS**

Consumers are the heart of any enterprise and, at last, businesses are starting to realise it. People want control over their lives. They are more sophisticated and, best of all, they keep changing. These are the new consumers.

To touch *these* customers directly you need to listen to them, not just read about them in market



## SUCCESS IN BUSINESS TODAY DEPENDS NOT ON MANAGEMENT OR ON LEADERSHIP BUT ON INSPIRATION – AND, AT ITS BEST, INSPIRATION IS ABOUT LOVE

research reports. Most businesses never get close enough. They set up a programme of consumer contact, rather than just hanging out. They take notes rather than taking pulses.

Forget focus groups, they only focus on what they think you want to hear. Instead, you have to listen - really listen - to the hearts, minds and insights of consumers. Believe me, most consumers will find this a startling new experience.

### LOVE LOVES THE LOCAL

People live in the local. They live in real, distinct places and they love it there. I have never met a global consumer and I never expect to. We define ourselves by our differences. For global brands this is a huge challenge.

A G Lafley, CEO of Procter & Gamble, believes that in ten years P&G's toughest competitors will be focused local companies.

Emerging markets remain critical to growth. There are millions and millions of people wanting to take part in the ease, opportunity and spirit of the modern. But they want it their way.

International corporations do not have to retreat. Billion dollar brands remain an inspiring goal. We just have to get smarter.

'Think global, act local' is back-to-front. And 'act global, think local' is not much better. Starting with the 'local' is absolutely right, but 'think' is all wrong. 'Think' is not action. 'Think' is not fast or transforming. It's not emotional or inspiring. What works better? 'Act local, go global.' Action at both levels.

### LOVE INSPIRES PEOPLE

All the stuff we pushed out of business in the last century needs to be enticed back. We need to feel what is important as individuals – not just analyse it in others. We need to transform management with inspiration and engage both head and heart.

This is *exactly* what Love can do. A study of neural activity at Emory University, Atlanta revealed the small act of co-operating with another person, of choosing trust over cynicism, generosity over selfishness, makes the brain light up with quiet joy. We love to Love.

Success in business today depends not on management or on leadership but on inspiration – and, at its best, inspiration is about Love.

Just as they exclude Love, most people push Inspiration out of their lives. What a terrible loss. Inspiration awakens people to their potential and shows them what they can be and what they can achieve. Inspiration is contagious and Inspiration arouses people's commitment to exceed their personal best. Not just to beat their sales targets or the competition, but to exceed their personal best.

### ONLY LOVE INSPIRES LOYALTY BEYOND REASON

Lovemarks is a very simple idea. They are created from deep inside what every human being wants and needs most: Love. How paradoxical that the loyalty beyond reason we are searching for should be only a heartbeat away from each of us. It's simple. Love is the law, the law is love.



Kevin is CEO Worldwide Saatchi & Saatchi. He is author of 'Lovemarks: The Future Beyond Brands' published in 15 languages by the end of 2005. He is CEO-In-Residence at The Judge Institute of Management, the business school of Cambridge University, and Professor of Sustainable Enterprise at the University of Limerick, Ireland and the University of Waikato Management School in New Zealand. He can be contacted at [k.roberts@saatchi.com](mailto:k.roberts@saatchi.com)

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