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**EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT BRANDING IS WRONG, EXPERT ADVISES:
GUESS WHO'S REALLY IN CHARGE?**

Clear, compelling and powerful. Branding – in all its power and glory – made accessible and exciting --Tom Peters

NEW YORK, NY – In today's environment, connecting with customers is harder than ever. Customers are bombarded with an onslaught of sales pitches from every direction. Author David Shenk estimates that the average American is exposed to more than 3000 advertising messages each day. According to Steve Yastrow, one thing is clear – the average American is probably ignoring the vast majority of them: "It takes more than a catchy slogan or a clever ad to win over today's consumer. It's time to forget everything you know about marketing and branding. Companies and corporations are not wielding the power when it comes to branding, but instead, it is the customers who are in charge."

In an effort to challenge the branding status quo and offer companies of all sizes a sensible and profitable way to improve their brands, Yastrow has created *Brand Harmony: Achieving Dynamic Results by Orchestrating Your Customer's Total Experience*. In *Brand Harmony* (A Tom Peters Company book published by SelectBooks, \$19.95) Yastrow presents a fresh and revealing approach to branding by calling for a 180 degree shift in thinking and explaining how companies of all types and sizes can achieve dynamic results by orchestrating their customer's total experience. *Brand Harmony* is a breakthrough concept that aligns everyone in a company to deliver a powerful, harmonious message to customers.

In *Brand Harmony*, Yastrow challenges conventional branding wisdom by redefining branding as we know it. "A brand is not the message a marketer intends to *send* to a customer. A brand is the message the customer perceives about the product, which may be something altogether different than the message the marketer intended to send. Your brand can't be sent through the mail or projected through the airwaves. Your brand is a thought in your customer's mind, which she creates at her own discretion as she interacts with your company and your product. Your brand is not what you say you are. Your brand is what your customers think you are. "

Moreover, Yastrow points out that like it or not, branding is inevitable: "Branding is not a discretionary act. Every time people interact with you they create thoughts and opinions about you."

In *Brand Harmony*, Yastrow explains that the days of what he calls Brute Force Branding are over: "Essentially, Brute Force Branding is like assuming 'if we have a really powerful message to interrupt our customers with, and we interrupt them with it enough times, they will be branded.' This is like saying, 'If I have a really big stick and I hit you over the head with it enough times, you will eventually agree with me.' Brute Force Branding assumes that we can muscle our way into our customers' minds, and that the company with the biggest ad budget and the best creative staff wins. Although Brute Force Branding has been the dominant concept of branding in our lifetimes, it is increasingly ineffective in today's world."

In *Brand Harmony*, Yastrow maintains that every decision about marketing and branding has to start with the recognition that the customer is empowered: "For today's customer, scrutiny is very high and tolerance is very low. We need to change the way we interact with them or our marketing messages will seem irrelevant."

Full of common sense wisdom, *Brand Harmony* dispels the myths about branding and shows how companies can successfully create Brand Harmony in the minds of their customers by aligning the entire organization to tell one cumulative story. Brand Harmony takes marketing beyond the marketing department by showing how people throughout an organization need to "be the brand" in order to create comprehensive, company-wide messages that customers will understand and believe. *Brand Harmony* includes ten how-to exercises based on Yastrow's proven

methods and real-life examples which walk the reader through each stage of the branding process. According to Yastrow, “People are looking at branding backwards. All this time companies think that they brand their customers when in reality, it’s the customers who do the branding.”

Kenzi Sugihara, Publisher at SelectBooks adds, “We look forward to the release of *Brand Harmony* and feel that this fresh, new look at branding can be of great benefit to companies, both large and small, who are ready to embrace a dynamic new approach to corporate identity.”

Steve Yastrow is president of Yastrow Marketing, a consulting firm which has served clients such as McDonald’s Corporation, Tom Peters Company, The Cayman Islands Department of Tourism, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Reed Business Information and many other organizations. Previously, he was vice-president of resort marketing for Hyatt Hotels & Resorts and senior-vice president of marketing for Sunterra Resorts. He earned an MBA from the J.L. Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, and a B.A. from Indiana University. *Brand Harmony: Achieving Dynamic Results by Orchestrating Your Customer’s Total Experience* will be available in bookstores nationwide.