
IT'S ALIVE INSIDE! A NOTE ON THE PREVALENCE OF PERSONIFICATION

Stephen Brown

Personification is a literary device ordinarily associated with 'babbling' brooks, 'weeping' willows and 'dancing' daffodils. It is also widely used in marketing and advertising. Pepsi's 'smiling' logo, Yakult's 'friendly' bacteria, Karmi's 'feminine' beer bottle and academics' venerable ideas about product life cycles and marketing myopia, are just some of our many attempts to humanise marketing phenomena. Taking Guinness as a guiding exemplar, this paper develops a taxonomy of brand personifications and attempts to account for the trope's popularity in marketing theory and practice.

A car that says: you've arrived. A car that says: you've made it.

A car that says: you've achieved something. It's probably out there somewhere.

But wouldn't you prefer something a little more exciting? I can help with that.

I am Mercedes-Benz.

The above copy is taken from a magazine advertisement for the Mercedes CLC Coupé. It is a classic example of 'personification'. Personification is the figure of speech that bestows human characteristics on inanimate objects; characteristics such as sentience, self-consciousness, solicitude and the all-important gift of the gab. The Mercedes copy also carries connotations of snobbery, inasmuch as it insinuates that the CLC only converses with the *crème de la crème*, the elite high-achievers in society, the fortunate few who are worthy of its attention, winners one and all. As another ad in the same series observes:

Power is a curious thing. If you need to prove you've got it, then you probably haven't. It's not about ostentatious, adolescent display. Real power should be effortless. But then I'm biased. I am Mercedes-Benz.¹

My Goodness, My Guinness

Exemplary though they are, the Mercedes ads aren't unique. On the contrary, the world of advertising is replete with personifications of one kind or another. Dancing coffee beans, lovelorn mobile phones, amorous chocolate bars, grumpy vacuum cleaners, malevolent bathroom bacteria, yodelling credit cards and friendly pro-biotic yogurts are just some of the many personifications that populate our television screens, glossy magazines, daily newspapers, radio programmes, roadside posters and website pop-ups. Canadian consumers, for example, are

currently caught up in the heartrending tribulations of 'Salty', a tearful salt cellar who's been cast onto the condiment scrapheap by Knorr's low-sodium side-dishes (Williams, 2010). American adolescents are in awe of Old Spice Man, the buffed, ripped, super-confident embodiment of a formerly moribund range of male grooming requisites (Malvern, 2010). English aesthetes are appalled by Mandeville and Wenlock, the ghastly mascots for London Olympics, who are supposed to be personified steel castings but whose appearance has been likened to 'terrifying penis monsters' (Bennett, 2010, p. 31). Anxious French motorists are safe in the hands of Bibendum, Michelin's venerable inflatable spokesperson, who's been reinvented as a pumped-up, socially-responsible superhero, his days as a *bon vivant* conveniently forgotten (see Darmon, 1997). Meantime, Irish snack food aficionados are devouring the official autobiography of Mr Tayto (2009), a dapper ambassador for potato crisps, while chomping on his delicious cheese-and-onion flavoured comestibles and no doubt downing a refreshing glass of Guinness, which likewise purports to be 'alive inside'.

¹ Personification comes naturally to car owners. Many treat their much-loved Volvos, Lancias, Morgans, Alfa Romeos or whatever as if they were family members or companion animals, complete with foibles, quirks and distinctive personality traits (Miller, 2001). Hence the proliferation of pet names that are bestowed upon such creatures, the heartfelt cajoling that takes place when cantankerous cars refuse to start or act up on a long journey, and the perennially popular cultural representations of sentient motor vehicles (Pixar's *Cars*, *Knight Rider*, the *Herbie* movies, Steven King's *Christine*, the manic punishment beating administered by Basil Fawlty when his car conked out at the worst possible moment).

Few brands, in fact, have employed personification more astutely – or more consistently – than Guinness (Bourke, 2009; Simmons, 2006; Yenne, 2007). From the name of the product, through the signature on the label, to the annual celebration of ‘Arthur’s Day’ (22 September), the founder’s presence is apparent in every bottle, can and keg. From the award-winning ‘Noitulove’ ad, which depicts human evolution in reverse, through the famous ‘Darwin’ poster of 1985, which shows the slow but steady ascent of brand, to the smiling faces on the pints in early Gilroy illustrations, the stout’s corporeality is constantly emphasised. From the action hero embodiment of the brand in Nigeria (Michael Power), through its association with supreme sporting achievement (such as Six Nations rugby and Gaelic games), to the muscular draymen, brawny lumberjacks and iron girder-carrying construction workers of the classic ‘Guinness For Strength’ posters, the product’s larger than life personality is incessantly articulated. From the totemic Guinness Storehouse, which recreates the black magic nectar in brick and mortar and imagination, through consumers’ companionable colloquialisms, such as ‘the blonde in the black dress’, to the belief in parts of Africa that Guinness is good for procreation (a ‘baby in a bottle’, no less), the entire history of the iconic Irish brand is incarnation incarnate (Kelly, 1999; Hartley, 2009).

The Big Pint

Although marketing’s inventory of brand characters is prodigious – Ronald McDonald, Uncle Ben, Betty Crocker, Captain Birdseye, Colonel Saunders, Mr Clean, Mr Kipling, assorted Scottish Widows, the Marlboro Man, the Michelin Man, the Man from Del Monte and many, many more (Mollerup, 1999; Sivulka, 1998) – personification isn’t confined to our ever-growing population of vivacious advertising icons (Aggarwal and McGill, 2007). It makes regular appearances in focus groups (Rook, 2006), where informants are routinely asked to personify products, places, promotional campaigns and so forth (‘If Dublin were a person, what kind of person would it be?’). It is integral to segmentation exercises, where the target market is divided into discrete groups which come complete with lively labels like Botox Betty, Billy Bunker, Patio Man and Miss Pencil Skirt (McWilliams, 2007). It is a commonplace of celebrity endorsement, where the glamour, cool

and kudos of the superstar is magically transferred to the timepiece, sportswear, soft drink, designer label or pharmaceutical regimen they happen to be recommending (Pringle, 2004). It is not unusual among Fortune 500 corporations, where the chief executive officer is a managerial manifestation of the organisation’s identity – the face of the company, in fact – as in the inimitable cases of Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, Michael O’Leary, Martha Stewart, Miuccia Prada and the late lamented Anita Roddick (Haigh, 2005). Personification even makes its presence felt in the hallowed halls of the ivory tower, where entire academic disciplines are predicated on embodiments of their chosen subject matter, such as the ‘economic man’ with the hidden hand who walks randomly down Wall Street (Orrell, 2010) or the ‘cultural dupe’ conception of contemporary consumers that once prevailed in Media Studies, Sociology and Political Science (Jenkins, 2008).²

Consumers too are prone to personify. Down the years, I have collected hundreds of customer stories pertaining to fashion brands, retail stores, advertising campaigns and every imaginable purchasing situation from buying greeting cards to the dubious delights of Christmas shopping (Brown, 2006). Again and again aspects of personification pop up in these unprompted narratives. Consider, for example, the life force that the following alluring products ostensibly possess:

I felt like the sandals were screaming ‘buy me, buy me’. The shop assistant could see how delighted I was as she handed the sandals to me. (female, 20)

Left turn for frozen fish and then ice-cream, trying to resist the boxes of Galaxy chocolate that were calling out my name. (female, 29)

2 It also often features at the opposite end of the marketing spectrum, such as orientation sessions for new employees. As Quinn (2010) reveals, raw recruits are frequently invited to envisage customers as living, breathing people instead of slices from a pie chart (‘Here’s Jill Jones, a 28-year old mother of two from Slough, who typifies our target customer profile ...’). Place marketing, likewise, is replete with personifications of cities – the heart (city centre), lungs (parks, open spaces), lifeblood and arteries (rivers, roads), nervous system (utility supplies) and so on (see Knight, 2010). The much-imitated ‘I heart New York’ campaign epitomises this propensity (Bendel, 2011).

We wander into the first shop, Principles. I browse around but unfortunately nothing catches my eye ... However, as soon as I walk through the door of Brazil, a brown jacket on display screams out for my attention, assuring me that it would match my skirt. (female, 22)

Consider, conversely, consumers' negative reactions to the off-putting personalities of certain retail stores:

I always judge a shop by its appearance and only if it looks like 'me' will I enter. This one didn't. (female, 20)

The first store I entered was a local men's clothing retailer called Foster's. I'd heard of its reputation for pushy sales staff but this was laughable. As I entered, I felt like I was being watched by hungry beasts who were ready to pounce on their prey. (male, 21)

As she wandered about looking at the latest fashions offered by Next, I stood nodding approval now and again. However, I felt completely out of place. I was a fish out of water. Eventually she picked something. I paid, only too gladly. Anything to return to the comfort of the street. (male, 24)

Consider likewise the following description of a shopping trolley that not only has a mind of its own but a bit of a temper into the bargain:

We eventually get our trolley and it seems to be quite cooperative. As soon as we enter the supermarket, the trolley begins to squeak and, yes, you've guessed it, the wheels have minds of their own, oblivious and uninterested in the way we want to go. Oh no, we've hired the Trolley From Hell ...

The next stop is the meat counter. As we head towards our destination, the Trolley From Hell seems to have its own ideas and veers off in the direction of the cereal display. Just missing by inches, we gently persuade the trolley to come round to our way of thinking by giving it a good hard kick. I don't know if this treatment did the trolley any good but it sure made me feel better. (female, 21)

Even the weather can make its unwelcome presence felt when eagerly-awaited shopping expeditions aren't quite going to plan:

By now there was a sprinkling of rain and I thought to myself perhaps the elements were creating a sympathetic background to complement my dampened mood. (female, 23)

Literary purists might complain about the last of these excerpts, since it is a perfect example of the 'pathetic fallacy', creative writers' erroneous assumption that their physical surroundings are in sync with their emotional state (Abrams, 1993). What today's consumers lack in literary acumen, however, they more than compensate in *prosopopoeia* (the formal term for personification):

On leaving the shopping centre, we had to exit past River Island. I happened to glance at the window display and my attention was caught by a beautiful gleaming pair of shoes – which seemed to be literally crying out for me to buy them. Making my way over for further investigation I just knew that I was going to enter the store and try them on ...

Standing in the queue for the cash register, satisfied that I had found something I liked and which fitted, I happened to glance around the rest of the shop and to my shock and utter amazement there were a number of suits neatly lined up against the wall, smiling at me. (female, 21)

Good Things Come to Those Who Wait

The prevalence of personification is incontestable. So much so that a typology of the trope's marketing manifestations can be tentatively proposed. As Figure 1 illustrates, this comprises three basic categories of personification: *anthropomorphism*, where the product or brand is given the name and characteristics of a human being (Uncle Ben, Mr Tayto); *zoomorphism*, where the product or brand is aligned with a wild or domesticated animal (Jaguar cars, Dove soap); and *teramorphism*, where the attributes of an imaginary, supernatural or prodigious creature are bestowed on goods or services (Fairy Liquid, Monster Munch).³ In addition to these basic forms of personification, there are variations in the nature of the figurative relationship between brand and icon (Pink, 1998; Zaltman, 1996). In some cases, the relationship is *metaphorical*, where the brand name and the

3 The term 'teramorphism' may be unfamiliar to you, as it was to me before writing this paper. From the Greek *téras*, meaning monster, marvel or prodigy, 'teratism', 'teratosis' and 'teratology' refer to lovers of, sufferers from and researchers into the monstrous or superhuman. Hence teramorphism.

Figure 1

Brand Icon Matrix

	<i>Metaphor</i>	<i>Metonymy</i>	<i>Simile</i>
<i>Anthropomorphism</i>	Marlboro Man Uncle Ben Betty Crocker Milky Bar Kid	Mr Peanut Mr Moneybags (Monopoly) Barry Scott (Cilit Bang) Captain Ric (Ricles)	Juan Sheet (Bounty) Fido Dido (7-Up) Californian Raisins Nicole Kidman (Chanel)
<i>Zoomorphism</i>	Toilet Duck Hello Kitty Puma Sportswear Red Lobster Restaurants	Tony the Tiger (Frosties) Aleksandr Orlov (Comparethemarket) Lux the Penguin (Linux) Ralph Lauren (polo pony)	Cadbury's gorilla Budweiser frogs Coca-Cola's Christmas polar bears Tetley T-birds
<i>Teramorphism</i>	Jolly Green Giant Mr Clean Google Android Green Goblin Cider	Honey Monster M&M candies Keebler Elves Snap, Crackle & Pop (Rice Krispies)	The Noid (Domino's Pizza) Citroen Transformer ad campaign Philadelphia Cheese (angels) Skittles sock puppet

embodiment are one and the same (Mr Muscle, Tiger Beer). In other cases, the relationship is *metonymical*, where the personification is an endorser rather than an embodiment of the brand (Mr Peanut, the Budweiser Clydesdales). In yet other cases, the relationship is a *simile*, a looser, less long-lasting linkage or association (as in the cases of Pepsi or L'Oreal, where celebrity 'faces of the brand' are replaced on a regular basis).⁴

Taken in combination, these speculative categories comprise a nine-cell classification of brand personifications, which give some sense of the trope's many and varied forms of expression (Figure 1). The categories, admittedly, are less clear cut in practice than they are in theory. Michelin's Bibendum, for instance, is an example of both anthropomorphism (recognisably human figure) and teramorphism (composed of gigantic cartoon tyres) and although his relationship to the brand is metonymical (ambassadorial rather than an incarnation), the character is redrawn on a regular basis (such as the 'Running Bib' design of the 1980s) thereby moving it somewhat closer to the simile category (Darmon, 1997). The Energiser bunny, likewise, hovers somewhere between zoomorphism and teramorphism – since pink rabbits are comparatively rare in the wild, cerise drumming

rabbits especially so – and somewhere between metaphor and metonymy, because the mascot and the product are separate but inseparable in many people's minds. There's a crucial temporal dimension as well, inasmuch as the relationship between the brand icon and the parent organisation may change through time. The Jolly Green Giant began as a teramorphic spokesperson for the Minnesota Valley Canning Company, as did the Honey Monster for a Quaker's breakfast cereal, but nowadays the companies are named after their superhuman brand mascots. The creatures have taken over the corporation.

Not Everything in Black and White Makes Sense

Although typologies have their place, if only as a means of organising disparate masses of material, they offer little by way of explanation. The *reasons* for personification's popularity remain unclear (see Guthrie, 1995). It can be hypothesised, nevertheless, that habit and precedent have a very important part to play in the process. The imputation of human characteristics to inanimate objects or animals or abstractions like truth, justice, time and liberty – to say nothing of nationalities, such as Uncle Sam, Mother Russia and our own Cathleen Ní Houlihan – is a long-established cultural convention, practised by poets, playwrights, storytellers and songwriters beyond number. The beast fables of Aesop, Apuleius and Hans Christian Andersen are classic cases in point, as are the short stories of Dr Seuss, Rudyard Kipling and Roald Dahl, as are the animated movies of Disney, Pixar and Dreamworks, as are television series like *Sesame Street*, *Thomas the Tank Engine* and *Walk on the Wild Side*, as are iPhone apps like *Angry Birds*, *Baloonimals*, and *Plants versus Zombies*, as are non-fiction classics like *The Selfish Gene*, *The Lonely Crowd*, *The Gaia Hypothesis*, *Anatomy of*

4 Metaphor works by synthesis, inasmuch as two separate ideas are brought together (Michael is a lion). Metonymies work by substitution, where one term is replaced by another ('crown' for the monarch). Similes work by association, where one thing is compared to something else (her eyes shone like diamonds). Metaphor is the 'strongest' of these tropes, though this has advantages and disadvantages in marketing. A metaphorical attribution, such as Volvo and safety, can be a very effective differentiator but it can also be a curse when the brand needs repositioning (Zaltman, 2003).

*Criticism, Inside the Whale and The Hedgehog and the Fox.*⁵ The list is literally endless.

Another explanatory factor concerns the character of metaphor, metonymy, simile and so forth. Far from being ornamental figures of speech, as was once widely thought, metaphorical reasoning is now regarded as one of the basic building blocks of human insight and ingenuity (Punter, 2007). Our very understanding of the world is reliant on figurative thinking. Metaphors are both unavoidable and invaluable. They are the bits, the bytes, the binary code of the imagination and the crucible of today's Creative Economy (Durgee and Chen, 2006; Hirschman, 2007; Howkins, 2002). According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), moreover, the most powerful conceptual metaphors are predicated on human embodiment, emotion, sensation and physical orientation. Hence, we sniff out market opportunities, listen to the voice of the customer, keep in touch with technological developments, spot yawning gaps in the market and lament the chronic myopia of top management. Our basic worldview is personified, in other words, and marketing's root metaphors reflect this fact (Brown, 2008).

Metaphors, furthermore, are one of the building blocks of myth and, as everyone from classically-educated old fogies to Xbox-fixated teenage boys well knows, myth is a rogues' gallery of personification (Hirschman, 2000). Whether it be the Greek gods of love (Aphrodite) and learning (Athena), Roman gods of drinking (Bacchus) and death (Pluto), Nordic gods of war (Odin) and thunder (Thor), Celtic gods of eloquence (Ogma) and mischief (Abarta) or indeed the deities of every other cultural tradition, personification pervades the mythosphere from Anubis and Amaterasu to Zhu Rong and Zoroaster (Cotterell, 2003; Philip, 2007). Myth is not only deeply embedded in human culture but it underpins

more than a modicum of marketing activity (Gabriel, 2004; Mark and Pearson, 2001). Contemporary consumers are in thrall to the herculean endeavours of floor cleaning fluids (Ajax), the elemental power of biological washing powders (Ariel), the narcissistic appeal of eau de colognes (Aramis), the beguiling writings of popular publishing houses (Pan), the *Táin*-ish thrills of satellite television sports channels (Setanta) and the corporate logos of Versace (Medusa), Exxon-Mobil (Pegasus), Interflora (Hermes) and Nike (the winged Greek goddess of victory).⁶

It is, of course, easy to get carried away on the transports of myth, legend, allegory and fleet-footed figures of speech. There is a much more mundane reason for personification's popularity in marketing and management. Namely, the Companies Acts of the mid-nineteenth century, which ruled that joint stock companies are artificial persons and are charged with the same rights and obligations as a real person (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 2005). Personification, in other words, is enshrined in company law and, as recent rulings by the US Supreme Court attest, this gives rise to an anthropic mindset (*Economist*, 2011; Ehrenreich, 2011). Our literature is thus replete with personified concepts like product life cycles, customer relationships, brand DNA, marketing myopia, viral communication, retail store personalities and policy matrices featuring cows, dogs and problem children (Fournier, 1998; Kitchen, 2008). Our books urge managers to 'imbue their brands with a warts and all humanity' (Beverland, 2009) or explain how best to 'create a living, breathing corporation' (McCracken, 2010) or maintain that there is much to be learned from 'what technology wants' (Kelly, 2010) or the 'wisdom of the crowd' (Surowiecki, 2005), provided a 'black swan' event doesn't occur, of course

5 Another celebrated example is the corpus of Karl Marx, whose writings are full of extravagant personifications. In the famous commodity fetishism chapter of *Das Capital*, for example, he describes a kitchen table as follows: 'It not only stands with its feet on the ground but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than if it were to start dancing of its own accord' (Marx, 1983/1867, p. 445).

6 It would be remiss of me not to mention evolutionary psychology, which regards personification as a primordial survival mechanism (Guthrie, 1995). Albeit deeply reductive, EP contends that we see men in the moon, faces in the clouds, white horses in the surf and portraits of Jesus in pepperoni pizzas – or mistake bushes and trees for bears and tigers – because it is in our best interest to do so. Getting it wrong makes people feel foolish, getting it right means survival. It is usually less costly, after all, to mistake a boulder for a bear than a bear for a boulder.

(Taleb, 2007). Consultants and academics, furthermore, often pose as management physicians who identify the ailments afflicting the corporate body and recommend expensive proprietary remedies (Bennis and O'Toole, 2005). As Wroe Alderson (1963, p. 10) dryly observed almost fifty years ago: 'Finding the source of the difficulty in a marketing system is something like diagnosing the factors in a case of human illness or the malfunctioning of a mechanism such as an automobile.'

It's Not Easy Being a Dolphin

Half a century from Alderson's adroit insight, marketing's personified worldview is alive and kicking, as it were. But one crucial question remains unanswered: what kind of person is marketing? We marketers are quick to identify idealised customer types and endow indistinguishable products with idiosyncratic personalities. However, what do customers make of marketing? Who or what embodies the spirit, the essence, the character, the personality of marketing itself?

This question, admittedly, is easier to ask than to answer, not least because marketers themselves can't agree on their subject's physiology or psychology. Some scholars consider marketing to be a youthful discipline that'll deliver scientific laws and universally applicable theories, axioms and what have you when it grows and matures (Baker, 2007). Others believe marketing is in the midst of a mid-life crisis, where it's casually casting aside frumpy ideas and foolishly chasing after bewitching intellectual fads (Brown, 2003). Yet others are seriously worried about marketing's mental state, because if Service-Dominant Logic isn't evidence of latent lunacy, heaven only knows what is. And yet others regard marketing's inexorable fragmentation into ever more fractious interest groups, subject areas, incommensurate paradigms and battling methodologies as symptomatic of incipient schizophrenia or dissociative identity disorder (Hackley, 2009).

Consumers too are uncertain about marketing's innate character. The empirical evidence informs us that consumers simultaneously abhor and admire marketing (Zuboff and Maxmin, 2003). They hate us for the spamming, the junk mail, the unwelcome telephone solicitations, the mis-selling of insurance, investments, ideologies, the fast-talking, hard-charging, weasel words-spouting 'repre-

sentatives' who won't take no for an answer, let alone 'feck off' (Sheth and Sisodia, 2003). But they love us too for the clever ads, the call of the mall, the dazzling window displays, the allure of must-have products, the larger than life figures that the industry throws up on a regular basis (Pavitt, 2000). Richard Branson, Donald Trump, Martha Stewart, Ben & Jerry, Joe Isuzu, Crazy Eddie et cetera are both appealing and appalling, a bit like marketing itself (Miller, 2009).

We marketers, I grant you, like to see ourselves as honest, decent and truthful, as kind-hearted, hard-working, straight-talking, serious-minded, sober-sided citizens, who care for customers' welfare. However, many consumers look past this puritanical pose – thanks to the 'schemer schema' (Wright, 1986), their belief that we can't be believed (DeCarlo and Barone, 2009) – and see us for the scamps, the scallywags, the lovable rogues, the trickster figures that we often are (Mitchell, 2010). Marketing, for many people, is Simon Cowell, Joe Camel, Steve Jobs, P.T. Barnum, Bugs Bunny, W.C. Fields, Wily Coyote, Don King and, not least, John Priest, the mysterious figure who starred in the unforgettable Man With The Guinness ads from 1987 to 1994 (Davies, 1998). Played with deadpan panache by Dutch actor Rutger Hauer, the black-suited, white-haired, ineffably enigmatic John Priest was nothing less than a walking, talking pint of Guinness. Once described as 'the best thing to happen to the brand since the invention of Guinness Draft' (Griffiths, 2004, p. 77), the MWTG campaign was the stuff of advertising legend – creative inspiration, corporate doubt, casting challenges, consumer confusion followed by fanaticism, rocketing sales, youthful appeal, advertising awards, elevation to iconicity:

Millward Brown analysed the campaign. It was controversial because it broke every rule of advertising. It didn't sell the brand at all. It featured a man who spoke no sense whatsoever. There were no drinking scenes. No women. The name 'Guinness' was never mentioned. It didn't communicate. Which meant it couldn't shift attitudes. Yet it got branding recognition of 94%. It was the Man in Black with white hair. People could tell you about the man with the dolphin but not what it meant. Yet the campaign *had* shifted attitude – more so than any campaign Millward Brown had ever monitored. 'Congratulations gentlemen; you have broken the mould. But we have no idea why it

Figure 2 Guinness Brand Matrix

	<i>Metaphor</i>	<i>Metonymy</i>	<i>Simile</i>
<i>Anthropomorphism</i>	Arthur Guinness Signature	Michael Power John Priest	'Anticipation' ad Ziggy and Bones ads
<i>Zoomorphism</i>	Toucan Toucan II (revived 1979)	Gilroy's menagerie Guinness memorabilia (feat. menagerie)	'Racing Horses' ad 'Surfer' ad
<i>Teramorphism</i>	The Big Pint Griming glasses of Guinness posters	<i>Guinness Book of Records</i> Guinness Storehouse	'Not Men But Giants' campaign 'Darwin' poster (Pure Genius)

* Now called *Guinness World Records*, the book operation was sold by Diageo in 2001. From its inception in 1954, however, the bestselling anthology (which began as a marketing department give-away) itemised all sorts of superhuman achievements.

works. Our research model does not fit your campaign. You have a phenomenon on your hands.'
(Griffiths, 2004, p. 88)

Pure Genius

Arthur Guinness, in sum, is a national icon, a post-modern patron saint, whose birthday celebrations are fast becoming a full-scale public holiday (Hartley, 2009). More than that, his brand is the embodiment of marketing, full stop. Born at the birth of modern marketing (if we take Josiah Wedgwood, as many do, to be the first proper marketer), trademarked from the get-go of trademarking (albeit beaten to the punch by Bass's red triangle), involved in international marketing before

International Marketing was invented (the term dates from the 1930s), advertised in a manner that makes most advertisers green with jealousy (according to Davies (1998), Guinness is the best advertised brand, bar none) and adroitly covering every cell of our brand personification matrix (Figure 2), Guinness is the apotheosis of everything marketing stands for. It looks good, tastes bad and is addictively different. It's delicious, delightful, delinquent, delirious. It's alive inside, outside, upside, down, down, down. It's the Mercedes-Benz of beverages. It's *a jar that says: you've arrived. A jar that says: you've made it. A jar that says: you've achieved something.*

Guinness is you for good.

Author

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