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# Brand Failures: The Truth About The 100 Biggest Branding Mistakes Of All Time



## Synopsis

"This book is a lot of fun ... Haig wants to educate as well as to entertain, and at this he succeeds. ... Anyone with a professional interest or involvement in brand management should read this book."

-- Anthony Di Benedetto, Professor of Marketing, Temple University in Journal of Consumer Marketing

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

What we have here in this especially interesting as well as informative book is Haig's version of "the truth about the 100 biggest branding mistakes of all time." With this subtitle, Haig immediately sets himself up for lively disagreement concerning (a) the reasons for why certain brands fail and (b) his selection of the failures themselves. I value this book so highly because Haig (by assertion or implication) challenges his reader to examine her or his own current problems with branding.

Frankly, his explanation of brand failure makes sense to me and all of the 100 failed brands he discusses seem worthy of examination. He identifies what he calls "the seven deadly sins of branding": amnesia, ego, megalomania, deception, fatigue, paranoia, and irrelevance. One or more is evident in each of the 100 brand failures on which he focuses. Haig carefully organizes his material within ten chapters. It is easy enough for those who read this brief commentary to check out the Contents so I see no need to provide it. (Thanks !) He provides a "Lessons from...." section at the conclusion of most extended analyses. All of the usual suspects are discussed: New Coke, the Ford Edsel, Sony Betamax, McDonald's Arch DeLuxe, Campbell Soup (souper combo), Harley Davidson (perfume), Ben Gay (aspirin), Colgate (kitchen entrees). Pond's (toothpaste) in consumer

products; as for dot.coms, Pets.com, VoicePod, and Excite@home. He even examines a number of PR fiascoes. I take at least three lessons from Haig's book. First, even the largest organizations with the greatest resources (including some of the brightest people) can make bad brand decisions and sometimes repeat them with another failed attempt.

Brands come and go at an ever-increasing pace these days. Mistakes are magnified and missteps in a local market carry over to the global market seemingly overnight. But can we learn from the mistakes of the past and better manage the present and future? There are definitely some lessons to be learned in the 2nd edition of *Brand Failures: The Truth about the 100 Biggest Branding Mistakes of All Times* by Matt Haig. It's worth reading if you own or manage a business, or if you're deciding whether to invest in a company. Just keep in mind that hindsight is 20/20, and pointing out mistakes after the fact is far easier than seeing them at the time.

Contents: Introduction: Why brands fail; Brand myths; Why focus on failure? Classic Failures: New Coke; The Ford Edsel; Sony Betamax; McDonald's Arch Deluxe; Kellogg's Cereal Mates; Sony's Godzilla; Persil Power; Pepsi; Earring Magic Ken; The Hot Wheels computer; Corfam; RJ Reynolds' smokeless cigarettes; La Femme; Radion; Clairol's 'Touch of Yoghurt' shampoo; Pepsi AM; Maxwell House ready-to-drink coffee; Campbell's Souper Combo; Thirsty Cat! and Thirsty Dog!

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