



September 27-29, 2010 – Hotel Sax – Chicago

Hello and welcome to our Private Brand Movement 2010 podcast series. I'm Melissa Sundaram, Online Producer for the event and this year we've invited a few of our speakers to chat with us before we meet this year in Chicago. We do hope that you enjoy our series and that you'll join us at this year's event. We'll be in Chicago at the Hotel Sax from September 27-29, 2010. Visit www.privatebrandmovement.com for more information.

We had the pleasure of speaking with Vickie VanHurley, Ph.D. & Gregg Keeton, MEIJER. They will be presenting "May the [Brand Building] Force Be With You!" on Tuesday, September 28th at 1:30pm as part of our Design track session.

1. Your presentation, "May the (Brand Building) Force Be With You" is part of our Design track session on Tuesday, September 28. Is the "force" already with certain designers and what are key steps that internal design teams must take to transform their thinking to be, if I may, Brand Jedi Masters?

VH: Well, in part, I believe that yes, the "force" is already with certain designers and there are a few key steps that internal design teams or those designers that don't already have that "force" can employ to help get there. One of those things that I believe is very key is for a designer to have the ability to stay focused on what the brand message is and to also be able distance themselves, take a look at their work, their ideas, whether they are finished, actual pieces, and be able to say "Okay, let's think like a consumer- what is this saying to me as a consumer?" To be able to scrutinize the design, the concept, to make sure that the consumer, when looking at it are going to get the information regarding the brand and perhaps the product properly.

2. Tell us a bit about your session, what attendees will get out of it by attending and why you feel this conversation is important this year?

VH: Certainly. One of the unique things about the Meijer packaging design team is that we are very small but we are also very mighty. Meijer has been around for several years and we have approximately, wow, under the umbrella brand of Meijer itself, we also have 11 sub-brands and 25 other brands. So we're looking at 36 brands that we actually design. So what I feel that we could bring is how we manage to get a lot of things done with very little resources?

3. Where to do you see the private brands going in the next 5-10 years?

VH: I'll turn this over to my colleague, Gregg to see what he'd like to say on that – Gregg?

GK: Well I think the private label brand will continue to grow like it has been doing for the past 30 something years here at Meijer. And even at other companies, its becoming more and more of their bottom line that it generates a lot of sales and the companies do

find it a viable product. Design-wise, I know that here at Meijer, when I started over 25 years ago here, we tried to emulate the national brands then we moved to our own look with the national brand colors and now we've changed over to our own look and our colors and even coming up with our own catchy titles of what the product is called and I think that more and more retailers are going to that.

4. What aspects of the event are you looking forward to most and why – networking activities, chatting with fellow speakers, attending other sessions, keynotes?

VH: Wow. Well I personally myself am just looking forward to everything. Not so much networking but also its just really good to be able to sit and to talk with people of a kindred spirit, in similar situations because many times I know being in a in-house design team, in a corporate structure, many times you tend to feel isolated as a creative so it will be really fantastic to meet with other people who are doing like things - just sharing experiences, stories and solutions.

5. What excites you about attending the Private Brand Movement 2010?

VH: Gregg, what do you think?

GK: Well it will be really interesting as Vickie has said, to meet with people, who are in the same type of work, the same internal design teams at retail stores. We do have a lot of unique problems and situations that a lot of agencies don't have. You know, a time crunch is a big aspect of our daily life. It would be really interesting to network with these other groups to find out if we have a unique situation or if everybody has the same problem. To see how they handle it some situations and if there is anything that we do right that will help other retailers.

Again, our thanks to Vickie VanHurley, Ph.D. & Gregg Keeton, MEIJER for participating in this year's Private Brand Movement podcast series. We look forward to meeting them and you at the event. Don't forget, visit www.privatebrandmovement.com for more details. See you there!