

Board Member Spotlight

How To Build Your Brand Globally and Domestically: Doing Well by Doing Good

By Pamela S. Viglielmo

I started my career with a background in business based on an academic foundation in languages and international relations. I focused on the energy sector and politics, but was always drawn to fashion and art. Prior to spearheading the growth of MĒNAJI, I was the founder of The Gramercy House, LLC, an international strategic marketing and sales consulting firm, that focused on Asia, Western Europe, the Middle East, and South America. Unlike the auto industry, beauty is always a great export and I wanted to help the U.S. improve their trade value. I found the consumer goods sector to be dynamic and tied to so many other things. So how does one build a brand domestically and globally in this ever-changing competitive environment? The following strategies are a great way to start!

Build Equity by Building Value

First and foremost, ask yourself where can I make the biggest contribution? You have to find the value to a consumer, with superior online and live support, proprietary formulas that deliver real benefits, and by listening to their changing needs. For example, consider the current trends toward health and wellness, anti-pollution, low waste, and earth-friendly packaging. MĒNAJI's shaving gel formula delivers to this issue with anti-aging ingredients, minimal packaging, no need for water, and a non-contaminating, non-aerosol, airless pump.

Look for Points of Differentiation

Whether you have unique packaging, a unique viral message, a special color palette or formula targeted to a niche market, you should focus on your points of differentiation. Use that in building dialogue and touchpoints with customers both direct and trade. You need to be able to quickly address challenges in a multicultural marketplace on several

levels. Not just about geographic differences and access, but cultural issues - like how men are used to grooming for example. In Korea, it's much more common for men to wear makeup whereas here in the West it is still emerging. While men in the U.S. are more health conscious than ever before about their appearance, they are still wearing makeup as "undetectable," "anti-shine," and more natural, as compared to Asia where it is worn as more transformative - giving contours, definition, and so forth. Tailor your branding efforts to the culture; whether it's millennials, multi-cultural, gender fluid or gender neutral!

Secure Good Partnerships and Vendors

ICMAD provides the tools for MĒNAJI to develop new products and grow our business. We have relied on this organization's partnerships to allow for economies of scale for shipping and packaging, for example. We also rely on vendor referrals for new suppliers as well as support for product registration. Think about what trade shows, both domestic and international, you need to attend and ask around for suggestions about what will best fit your needs and goals. The referrals and help are invaluable!

Do Well by Doing Good

It seems obvious to help yourself by giving back and helping others. But as our industry has been attacked by groups questioning our integrity, I have been on both sides of the fence and realize that thinking about the bigger, long-term picture is not always about the immediate bottom line. Think about relationships between your customers, trade and direct, stores, vendors, and other partners. And always harness leads. Even when you lose a sale, there's always something to be learned from it!

Finally, align your business and yourself



with a worthy cause you believe in. With 663 million people around the world, without access to clean water, MĒNAJI is invested in helping those with limited means, and to end the global water shortage. MĒNAJI has been donating products and time to the Thirst Gala's "Save Water" campaign for several years. It gives purpose to our brand - and I think there is nothing better than that!

Pamela's Bio:

Pamela S. Viglielmo is President of MĒNAJI Worldwide, LLC., a U.S.-based men's skincare and cosmetic brand sold in more than 25 countries. Founded in 2,000 by a celebrity makeup artist, the brand and product line are recognized as a true "category creator" in the men's skincare/grooming sector. Prior to spearheading the growth of MĒNAJI, Pamela was the founder of The Gramercy House, LLC., an international strategic marketing and sales consulting firm, that focused on Asia, Western Europe, the Middle East, and South America. With more than 25 years in the global beauty industry, Pamela has worked with indie brands across multiple product categories and via multiple distribution channels internationally. Pamela is an Adjunct Professor at Laboratory Institute of Merchandising (LIM) in New York City, a member of Cosmetic Executive Women (CEW), and is a Board Member for the Independent Cosmetic Manufacturers and Distributors Association (ICMAD). She holds a Masters in Chinese Studies from SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, DC and Nanjing, China.