



Dealmaker
Karen Harvey
Talent Scout

TITLE Founder and president of Karen Harvey Consulting, a search firm specializing in design categories and managers of creative companies

CLAIM TO FAME A Zen meditator for 30 years, Harvey applies many Zen principles to her professional work. "The ideas of no ego and of quieting the inner dialogue come in handy when you're doing a search"

FAVORITE BRANDS Nike, for its "dedication to authenticity and innovation"; Google, although "from a design perspective, there is so much more they could do"; and eBay

INSIDE STORY In her college days at Antioch University, Harvey was interested in pursuing a career in psychology, so she studied for a Marriage, Family and Child Counseling degree. Then she turned to Zen meditation and Eastern thought. "That was my passion," she says, sitting in her office overlooking New York City's Union Square. "It struck a number of chords with me: the idea of no delity, no worship of one thing, and this way of being authentic."

After working for larger search firms for 20 years, Harvey opened her own consulting business in 2001, focused on helping consumer-goods companies in fashion and retail find people who could strike the right balance between business smarts and creative vision. Her first clients were Benetton and Nike. Today she has offices in New York City and London and works with a team of 13 people. Clients run the gamut from giant corporations like Target to smaller, design-focused brands like Cole Haan.

Harvey looks for talent all over the world but finds that when it comes to design—especially in fashion—London has some of the best schools. "London is less commercial, and designers there are unabashed about their belief in themselves," she says. So what is the most important quality to have as a designer these days? "It's a combination of talent, humility and a desire to embrace a total vision or the ability to drive a vision," says Harvey. She cites Christopher Bailey, creative director of Burberry, as a good example.

The hardest thing about doing a search is convincing a company to change, and for that, Harvey has spent years developing special, customized programs for companies with an interest in marketing, merchandising and design. "Many companies think they want to change or fix something, but they don't really want to," she says. "We find that in order for a search to be successful, a client has to have the courage to fill the void." By that she means a kind of Zen ability to let go of their ideas. "It's very scary," she adds, "especially when there's a lot of money involved and you have to be commercial."

THINKTANK
KAREN HARVEY OF KAREN HARVEY CONSULTING GROUP ON EMBRACING THE CHANGING WORLD. PAGE 12

BOCA BOUND
LORD & TAYLOR STEPS OUT FROM ITS NORTHEASTERN BASE AND OPENS A FLAGSHIP IN BOCA RATON. PAGE 5

BFFS
MICHAEL KORS WILL DO A CAPSULE COLLECTION FOR GWYNETH PALTROW'S GOOP SITE. PAGE 2

WWD

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2008 \$3.00 WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY



Next Gen

Kenneth Cole has zeroed in on the slippery existential question of the everyday male's degree of social evolution as the positioning of his 10th men's scent, called — what else — Mankind. It also is the first designer scent for his new licensee, Parlux Ltd. For more, see page 9.

PHOTO BY THOMAS MANACONE

CONQUERING AN Prestige Unveiled

By J...
WITH THE LAING Beauty Store, Amazon.com — and as important as the products are sold. The e-commerce effort that thus far many brands accustomed to — e-commerce channels like department stores. Amazon hopes to Luxury Beauty Store visual presentation for which it is renowned. It also has committed price, or not going to anti-mortar stores.

"We have luxury Amazon's director of care. "What we have and we hope this is a retailers' needs with what playing and selling it. For the launch signed on 24 brand Vincent Longo is the Ahava, Strivec, DDD, Burberry fragrance grooming products, vertical retailers. The shop, which is of Amazon's main nature from the more site. The pages are standard Amazon p which have been photo. "We all know the when the desire on more luxury in been would be so importa

Neiman's \$100 in

By VICKI M. VI

NEIMAN MARCUS \$100 million over the paid its omnichannel. The retailer planning platform across prove inventory visit a filing Thursday w Commission. The e 2014 it plans to begin the new platform, w mentation in fiscal- "The lines have e and-mortar and e- cent of Neiman Ma A&M University's i Galleria in Dallas. " today is how to make "Every aspect of c by technological advic to the mission of ing a lot of time on t Gold explained t stores had operated and business cadet didn't care about di to be seamless. So " we do and it's really thing, it's an enc we are working dilig

VIEWPOINT

Hailing a New Dynasty: Bring on the Marketing King

Editor's Note: Think Tank is a periodic column written by industry leaders and other critical thinkers. Today's column is written by Karen Harvey, chief executive officer of Karen Harvey Consulting Group.

WHY IS CHANGE SO hard to see until it is right in front of us? In searching for the next generation of ceo's, we must recognize we are in a new omnichannel reality and embrace change. Instead of bemoaning the loss of an era when talent fit into a neat box — i.e., merchant, operator, financial — and grieving the death of merchant training programs, we must respond to this new reality in which the Merchant King dynasty is giving way to a new reign of the Marketing King.

In today's omnichannel world, e-commerce represents high-double-digit percentages for many businesses' volume, and the consumer defines the brand. Because merchants typically do not run e-commerce or digital, the traditional merchant role does not translate, lessening the merchant's position and carving an opening for the Marketing King. My question is: How can we cultivate a generation of leaders where marketers are merchants and merchants are marketers?

First, let's take three of retail's most brilliant leaders today: Net-a-porter's Natalie

consumer-centric, not myopically product-centric. ■ Storytelling — This next generation of leaders must be great storytellers with a holistic view as brand managers to merge the analytics with compelling storytelling.

I know very few merchants today who have been groomed to understand how to harness these four critical aspects. This is not due to the lack of department store training — at this point, who cares? The bigger issue is our industry's silos, which do not train merchants as general managers fully owning their P&L. If we want to save the relevancy of the merchant role, companies of scale must break down silos and think in terms of creating brand leaders with broad scope, rather than functional doers.

Traditionally, the merchant leader was the one with that 50/50 right-brain/left-brain balance platformed on great taste. Interestingly, this is true of marketers in other industries. If marketers don't have good "eyes" and vision coupled with big ideas, they can't be the next leader of Pepsi or L'Oréal. So merchants should become marketers — with the superior general management training, holistic brand view, storytelling ability, consumer closeness and data comprehension — and marketers should become merchants.

But how do we make this transition to a new paradigm without banking our stake hopes on the old merchant emerging as the new leader? There are two paths:

■ Partnership — It's important we don't swing the pendulum too far and abandon the merchant. Although the role of the marketer must grow, the role of the merchant is still key to the equation. The new reality requires a new close partnership between the marketer and merchant replacing the traditional union of merchant and operator.

■ Recruiting and Grooming — Consider marketers from business schools, social media and e-commerce. Look for the innate qualities traditionally screened for in hiring merchants — then teach them the industry as marketers. Take lessons from the beauty industry and others, where brand management is trained early on, encompassing marketing, merchandising, consumer data and product innovation.

These are not new concepts, just new to our industry. The image-driven consumer packaged goods companies and many international luxury brands have recruited talent from outside their industries for years. They search for inherent taste and balance of right-left brain thinking — qualities that make merchants great, but that merchants don't have the market cornered on. These companies then train these potential leaders in product, fashion and brand codes — skills better suited to run brands than current merchandising skills.

We must figure this out. If not, the discipline most critical to building our brands up to now will be rendered irrelevant, and our industry as a whole will be left behind.

Karen Harvey founded Karen Harvey Consulting Group in 2001. The group specializes in executive search, professional development and brand incubation.



Delivering the right product and consumer experience simultaneously changes both what our industry must do and what we need in leaders.

■ Holistic — Companies must break down silos, and leaders must think in terms of holistic brand leadership rather than functional silos.
■ Data-Driven — The next generation of leaders must understand data and use information to drive business, going beyond the right product in the right place at the right time, to the right offer for the right consumers in the right channel with the right voice.
■ Consumer-Centric — Bring the consumer into the center of the conversation. Merchants must become

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