

EPIISODE
03

**THE BRAND
BUILDER'S**
PLAYBOOK

**TURNING BRAND
PERCEPTION INTO
PRICING POWER**

HOSTS



JIM
STENGEL

In October 2008, Jim Stengel shocked the marketing world by leaving his prestigious role as Global Marketing Officer at Procter & Gamble, one of the most admired brand building companies in the world. This bold move was Jim's first step on a new mission to share his passion for growing business through a focus on higher ideals.

To continue on his mission, Jim has embraced a variety of exciting roles: President/CEO of The Jim Stengel Company, LLC, host of The CMO Podcast, Author of *Grow: How Ideals Power Growth & Profit at the World's Greatest Companies* *Unleashing the Innovators: How Mature Companies Find New Life with Startups*, Adjunct Professor at Kellogg, Northwestern, speaker with the Washington Speakers Bureau® Advisor to several companies.

x **JIM STENGEL**
COMPANY



RYAN
BARKER

Ryan Barker is the founder of BERA.ai, and is known as the “Alchemist of Brand Equity” for his ability to turn the emotional power of brands into measurable business performance. After 15 years in brand consultancy at WPP, Ryan grew frustrated by vanity metrics that won awards but failed to drive business outcomes. He saw marketers losing credibility, chasing short-term sales while neglecting long-term brand value.

Out of that conviction, he launched BERA.ai—the world's first real-time brand intelligence platform connecting brand equity to business results. Today, leading brands and private equity firms rely on BERA to predict performance, guide investment, and protect their most valuable intangible asset: their brand. Blending analytical rigor with creative empathy, Ryan's mission is simple: what gets measured, gets valued—and what gets valued, gets protected.

x **BERA.ai**



CAIT
LAMBERTSON

Cait Lambertson, MBA, PhD is the Alberto I. Duran Presidential Distinguished Professor of Marketing at the Wharton School. Her research covers a wide span, ranging from studies of the sharing economy, empathy in health care settings, to end-of-life decision-making. New work explores the concepts of marketplace dignity, identifying practical means by which firms can design in ways that affirm and respect individuals' inherent worth. In recognition of her research contributions, Lambertson was named a Marketing Science Institute Scholar and received the American Marketing Association's Erin Anderson Award, which is given annually to the field's top female scholar and mentor. Her work has received the Association for Consumer Research's Early Career Award, the Shelby D. Hunt/Harold H. Maynard Award for contribution to marketing theory, the Kinnear Award for contribution to the understanding of marketing and public policy, and EBSCO's Award for Responsible Research in marketing. She currently serves as an Associate Editor for the Journal of Marketing and the Journal of Consumer Psychology.

x **Wharton**
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

TODAY'S GUEST



SANDEEP
SETH

Sandeep Seth is responsible for driving Tapestry's long-term growth strategy and oversees business development across all brands for international markets across APAC & EMEA. He joined Tapestry in July 2021 as the Global Chief Marketing Officer and North America President of COACH. In his role at COACH, Sandeep played an instrumental role in driving the brand's growth and evolution, including the successful launch of the Expressive Luxury repositioning.

Prior to joining Tapestry, Inc., Sandeep spent 24 years at Procter & Gamble in various local, regional and global roles based out of India and Singapore. Over the past two decades, Sandeep has been known for leading brand transformation by building strong brand purpose and consumer centricity. Beginning in July 2017, Sandeep was the Global CEO for SK-II, P&G's only prestige skincare brand, making SK-II one of the leading skincare brands globally. Prior to this, he served as the Global CMO for SK-II from 2010 to 2017. He also held various positions in marketing for Olay, including leading the Regional Olay business for SEA, Australia & India, and various marketing roles for multiple P&G brands including Pringles, Tempo tissues, and home care brands. Sandeep received his MBA from Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow, and his bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Jadavpur University Kolkata.

03

TURNING BRAND PERCEPTION INTO PRICING POWER

Why do people willingly pay more for some brands? This episode unpacks how Sandeep's brand strategies have supported premium pricing and sustainable revenue growth.

WHAT IS PRICING POWER?

Pricing Power is the direct, measurable ability of a brand to command a premium price by reducing consumers' sensitivity to price. At its core, pricing power is the ability to raise prices without losing customers. This only happens when customers believe they're getting value that exceeds alternatives.



Building pricing power is making sure nobody thinks there is a substitute for you.

**CAIT
LAMBERTON**

**HOW DOES BERA.AI
MEASURE THE
IMPACT OF BRAND
ON PRICING POWER?**

01. Baseline Your Brand Equity

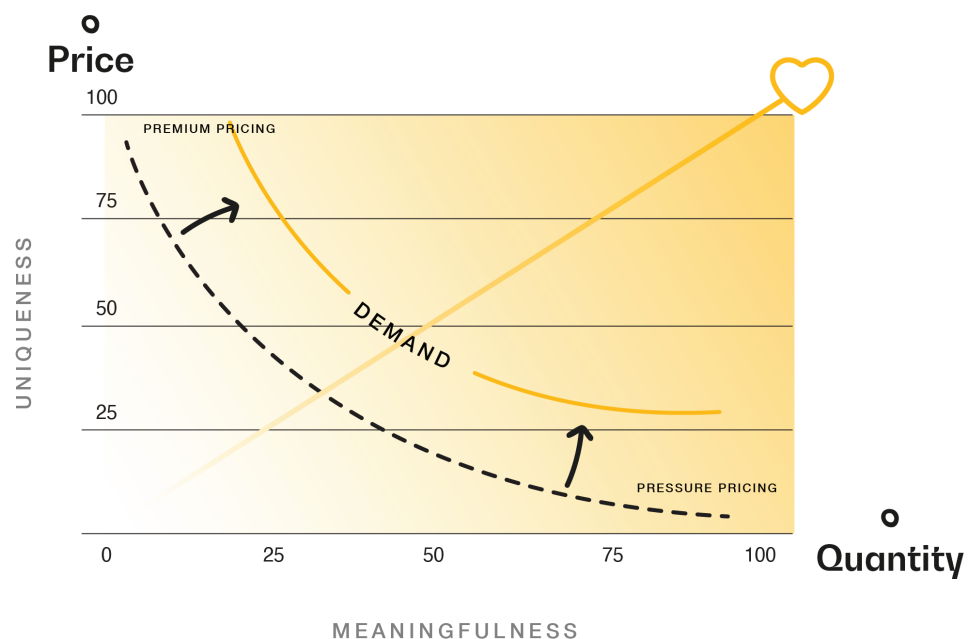
If you are a BERA user, establish a clear baseline of your current brand equity scores across the four key metrics. This will be your starting point for measuring the impact of future brand and pricing initiatives.

02. Competitive Benchmarking

Analyze your brand equity scores in relation to your top three competitors. This will help you understand where you have a competitive advantage that could support stronger pricing power and where you may be vulnerable.

03. Correlate Brand Metrics with Sales Data

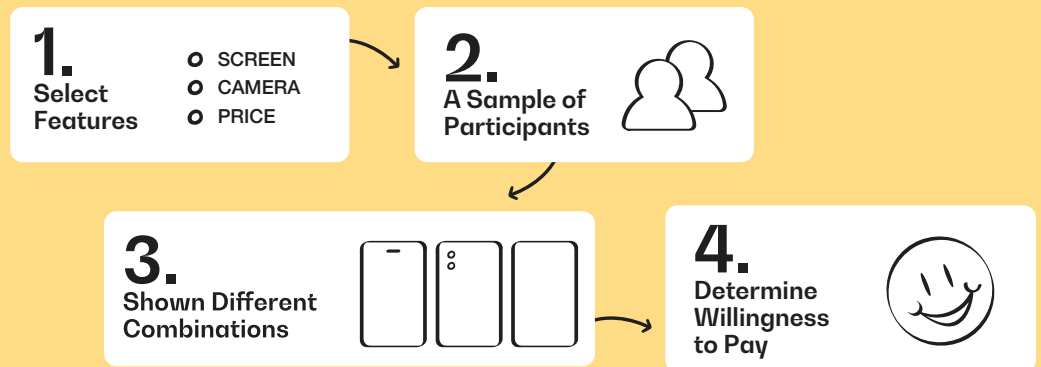
Work with your finance and sales teams to analyze the historical relationship between your brand equity metrics and your pricing and sales performance. This will help you build a predictive model for how changes in your brand perception might impact your bottom line.



Perceptions of uniqueness and meaningfulness are closely linked to brand demand. Push out the brand demand curve by growing a brand's cultural meaningfulness and competitive uniqueness, these KPIs have a direct impact on volume potential and pricing power, respectively.

WHAT MIGHT BE A
GOOD FIRST STEP
IN DETERMINING
PRICING POWER FOR
A NEW PRODUCT
WITHIN A BRAND?

Cait Lamberton's recommendation would be a **conjoint analysis**. A conjoint analysis is how consumers evaluate different bundles of attributes when put together.



STRATEGIES TO
BUILD PRICING
POWER

Positioning Across Four Dimensions: Brands must define their Purpose, Emotional connection, Functional benefits, and Experiential touchpoints. Emotional connection tends to have the longest-lasting pricing impact.

Avoid Commoditization: Products without emotional or purpose-led positioning become interchangeable, eliminating pricing power.

Innovate With Cultural Relevance: Brands must evolve faster than their category norms to stay distinct. Coach's use of bold, inclusive campaigns helped revitalize its perception among younger audiences.

Manage Discounting Carefully: Discounting trains customers to wait for lower prices. Brand storytelling offers an alternative way to drive urgency without eroding brand value.



Pricing is an outcome of desirability.

**SANDEEP
SETH**

HOW DOES BRAND POSITIONING PLAY INTO PRICING POWER ?

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Positioning determines how a brand is perceived in the minds of consumers—and that perception shapes their willingness to pay. When positioning is done strategically and effectively, it builds emotional resonance, perceived uniqueness, and value—all of which are essential for commanding higher prices without losing volume

01. Purpose—Why the brand exists beyond profit.

Example: Patagonia commands premium pricing by leading with sustainability and activism.

02. Emotional Connection—How the brand makes people feel.

Example: Apple evokes feelings of empowerment and creativity — not just technology.

03. Functional Benefits—What the brand helps people achieve.

Example: Tide dominates at a premium because it's perceived as the most effective detergent.

04. Experiential Touchpoints—What it's like to engage with the brand.

TOOLTIP

A strong positioning answers the consumer's internal question: "Is this brand worth it?" When the answer is a resounding "yes," the brand has pricing power.

TAPESTRY TRANSFORMATION STRATEGIES

Consumer-Centric Pricing: Pricing starts with understanding the consumer—not the finance team. Coach identified the 'Point of Market Entry' (e.g., 18-year-olds buying their first handbag) and defined pricing thresholds based on what those consumers value.

Emotional Differentiation: Coach evolved its positioning to 'Expressive Luxury,' acknowledging that Gen Z defines luxury as a vehicle for self-expression, not status. This differentiated Coach from legacy luxury brands.

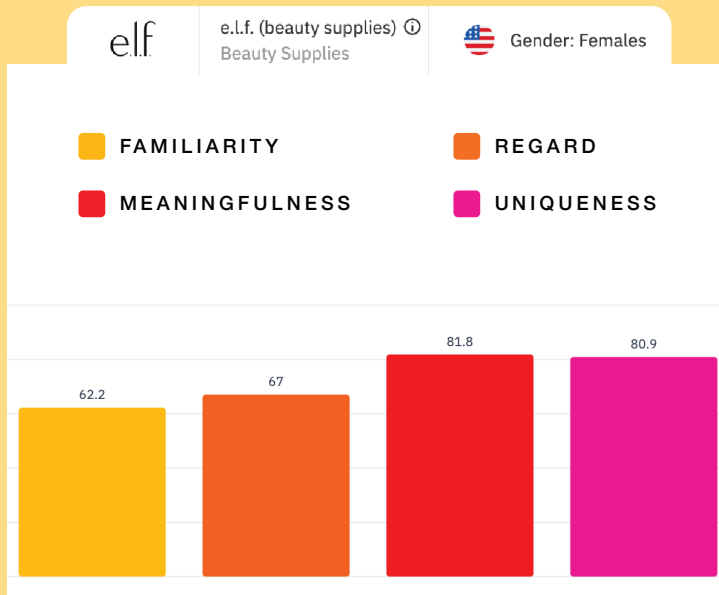
Value Beyond Discounts: To escape over-discounting, Tapestry reduced promotional messaging and instead focused on desirability, product storytelling, and emotional resonance to rebuild brand equity.

Magic + Logic: At Tapestry, brand building combines creativity (magic) with data science (logic). They apply elasticity modeling and brand equity tracking to validate brand investments.

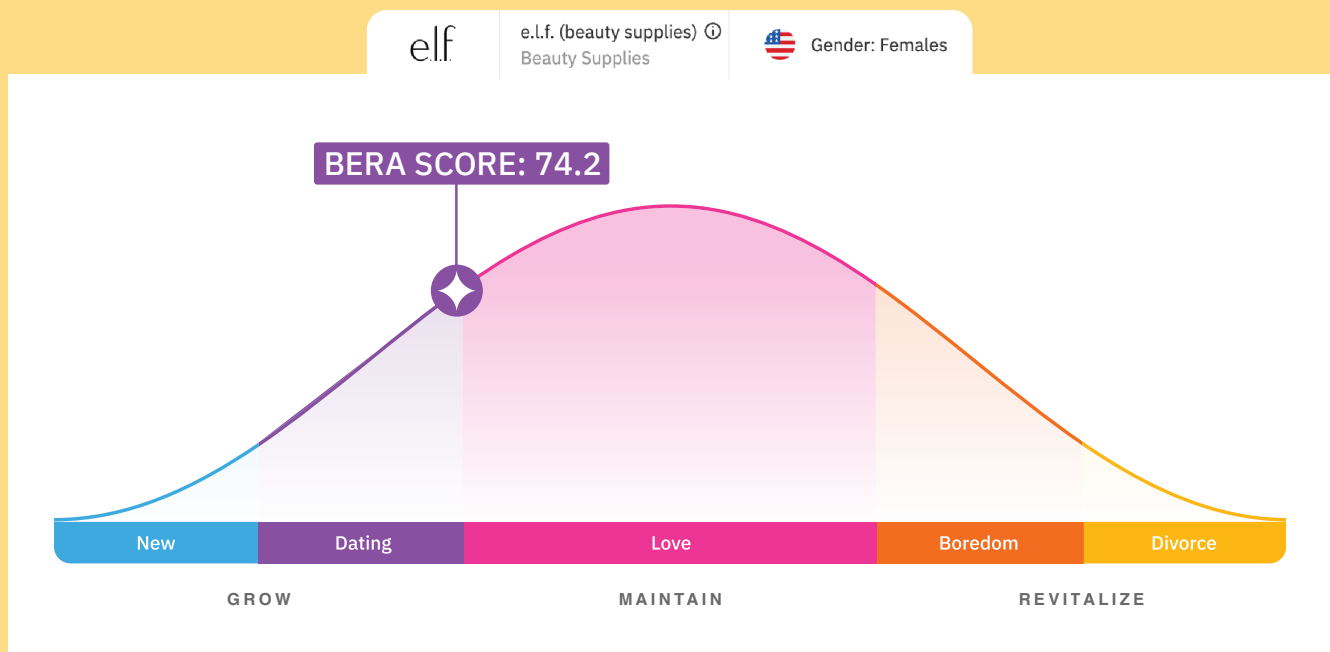
Brand Purpose: The brand purpose 'Courage to Be Real' guides product innovation, in-store experience, and communication—creating alignment across emotional connection and pricing flexibility.

Playbook Proof

This is where theory meets tangible results. In this section, we showcase a key visual directly from the BERA platform—the hard data and actionable insights that prove the value of the strategies discussed in this week's episode.



e.l.f. Has the consumers permission to command a premium price. Love reduces price sensitivity and they have enough differentiation, uniqueness, and meaningfulness to command that premium price.



COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

Keeping brand positioning the same.



Positioning Must Evolve to Sustain Pricing Power.

Innovating for the sake of innovating.



Innovation should stem from consumers' needs.

Failing to make new connections over time.



Brands that do not continually forge new emotional and functional connections with consumers risk becoming outdated.

Remaining consistent AND static.



Brands must stay consistent in their core promise while evolving how it's expressed through new products, experiences, and campaigns to keep pricing power strong.

Discounting.



Discounting undermines perceived value and trains customers to expect lower prices. Instead, build desirability and scarcity to sustain premium pricing.

EPIISODE TAKEAWAYS

Your pricing power depends on how uniquely and meaningfully you meet their needs. When you deeply understand what business you're really in for them—and deliver that better than anyone else—you earn the right to charge a premium.

Marketers must own pricing strategy: Don't leave it to finance—pricing is a reflection of the brand.

Focus on Point of Market Entry: Win the first moment—whether that's a first handbag, a first credit card, or a first career move.



***Pricing is not a tactic,
it's a reflection of
strategy.***

**CAIT
LAMBERTON**



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