

SEVEN CARDS, ONE DECK
GILLETTE

The Power of the Name

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Before products, there is the name.

Factories close.

Managers change.

Shareholders come and go.

Technologies grow old.

Markets shift.

The name remains.

Gillette is not just a company.

It is proof that a word can accumulate trust for over a century and still keep generating value even after no one remembers who invented it.

A brand is a collective memory.

When the name is strong, it arrives before the object.

People buy a story before they ever buy a product.

The name is the first invisible asset of the economy.

And yet, at the beginning, there was no empire.

There was a man.

Son of French immigrants in Massachusetts.

Few resources.

A great deal of stubbornness.

As often happens, the future does not show up dressed as a legend.

It shows up dressed as a salesman.

The rest of the story anyone can read on the company's website, or on Wikipedia.

What interests me is something else.

What interests me is what we have in common.

Three elements.

PRODUCT. NARRATIVE. BROTHERHOOD.

He built a blade.

I built a website.

He wrote a book.

I have written over a hundred.

He belonged to a brotherhood.

I know that same grammar, made of symbols, belonging, memory, and mutual recognition.

And like him, I have spent most of my life selling.

Not just products.

Trust.

That is why I have always tried to keep my distance from him.

Not out of difference.

Out of excess of resemblance.

Every era produces its own products.

Every era produces its own narratives.

Every era produces its own brotherhoods.

The mistake is believing they are the purpose.

They are not.

They are the vehicle.

The blade was not Gillette.

The book was not the narrative.

The brotherhood was not the meaning.

They were only instruments.

The real power was the name.

Before crossing the Rubicon, the Romans would send out scouts.

They had to learn.

Understand.

Know.

Know before deciding.

That was the secret that let them deliberate — and, often, win.

I hope I am a good scout.

But without a war.

I carry no armies.

I carry no decrees.

I carry no authorizations.

I carry stories.

I gather them.

I connect them.

I deliver them.

Then everyone decides what to do with them.

CEOs run companies.

Employees make companies work.

Small shareholders finance companies.

I am only a man who does not have to ask anyone's permission.

And that is probably the greatest freedom I possess.

This is the card of Gillette.

Not the power of the factory.

Not the power of the blade.

Not the power of the company.

The power of the name.

Because when the product wears out, the name remains.

When the buildings disappear, the name remains.

When the men pass, the name remains.

And when a name manages to cross generations, it stops belonging to its founder.

It becomes part of collective memory.

The founder disappears.

The name remains.

That is the true victory of a name.

Ferdinando