

ENTREPRENEUR'S GUIDE TO

THE LEAN BRAND

IN 999
WORDS

JEREMIAH GARDNER

with BRANT COOPER

illustrations by @FAKEGRIMLOCK

WHAT IS A BRAND?



WHAT IS A BRAND?

Any productive discussion about brand should begin with a clear understanding of what we mean by the term, “brand.” After all, a myriad of definitions float within the business lexicon attempting to explain exactly what a brand is.

At the heart of all these definitions is a simple underlying truth:

A Brand is the relationship between an organization and an audience.

Not the sweaty palms, butterfly in your stomach, can’t eat, can’t sleep type of relationship. But the real and powerful relationship formed between an organization and people.

Brand is a relationship because it represents how we, as intuitive, emotional, and sensitive human beings connect to organizations in the

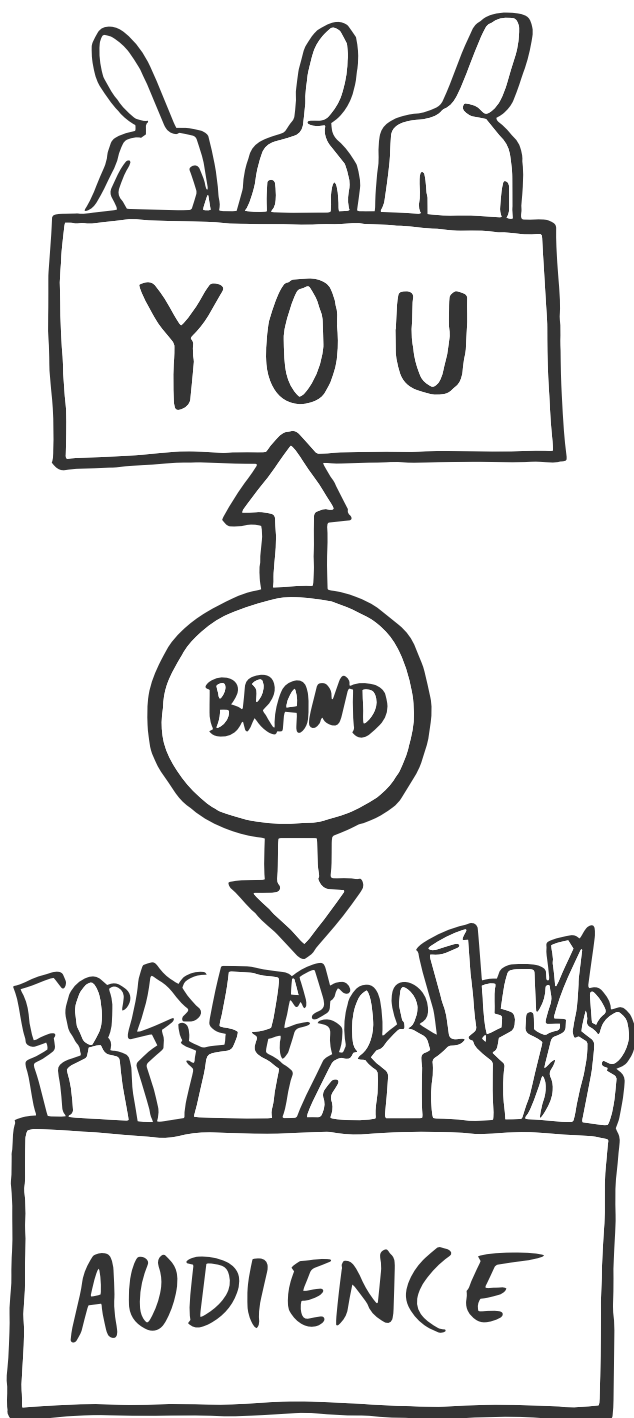
world around us. It's how we form allegiances to certain organizations over others. It's how we become passionate about the organizations we choose to engage with. It's how we decide who we buy from.

Generally, products create **functional-value** through the tasks they accomplish. Brands, however, create **emotional-value** through the human connections they facilitate.



Click To Tweet

"A Brand is the relationship between an organization and an audience." ~ #TheLeanBrand



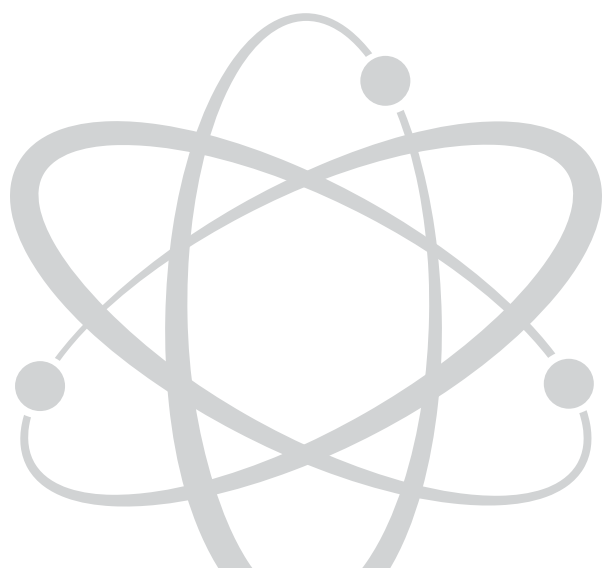
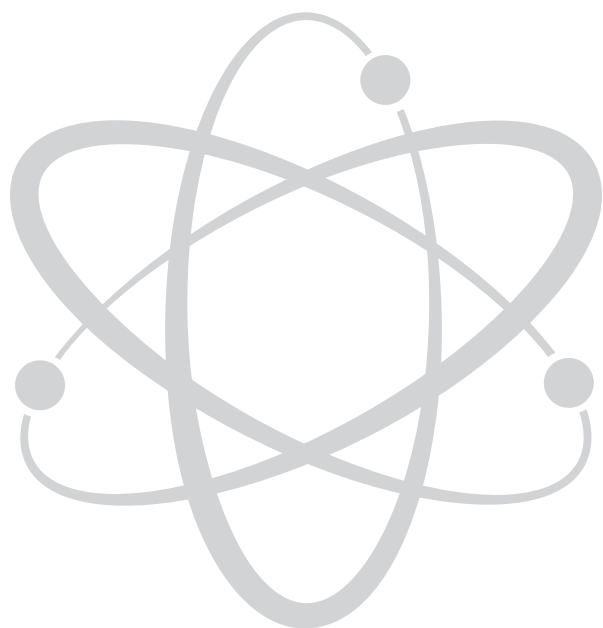
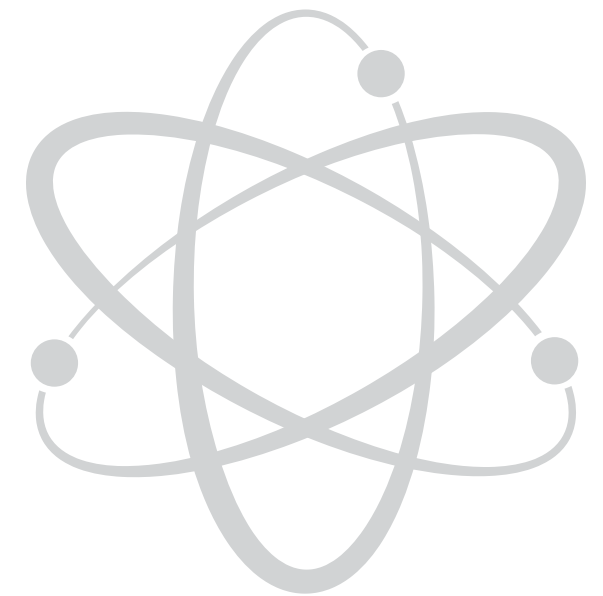
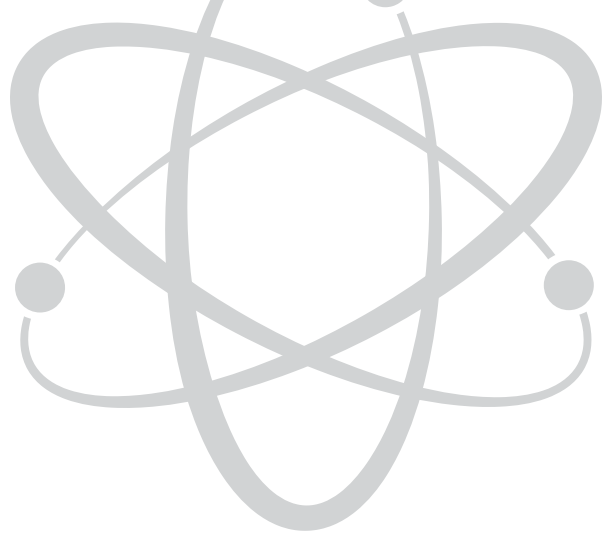
Lean Brand development centers around helping organizations discover the emotional-value in their brand development efforts.

A brand is not a logo. It's not a color scheme, or a personality, or an identity system. At their most basic, these are merely surface elements pointing back to something much deeper and more substantial below the surface – the relationship.

These relationships lay the foundation for value creation and delivery crucial to today's transforming marketplace.

A stylized atomic symbol in light gray, featuring three intersecting elliptical orbits and three small circular electrons positioned at the top, bottom-left, and bottom-right. The title text is centered horizontally across the middle of the atom.

THE MYTH OF THE BRAND GENIUS



THE MYTH OF THE BRAND GENIUS

In truth, the predominant conventional brand development approach is broken.

The world has changed in dynamic ways all around us, yet brand development has remained relatively static.

What worked for Coca-Cola, isn't working for Dropbox. What worked for Wells Fargo, isn't working for Square. What worked for Ford, isn't working for Tesla.

At the center of the conventional approach is a narrative painting a story of branding brilliance – **“The Myth of the Brand Genius.”**

The Myth tells us a brand genius – if given the right creative environment and paid the right fee – will work out a world-class brand fraught with glittering deliverables and infallible

strategies for an organization to simply execute upon.

The Genius relies on an arcane process to work his magic. A process deeply rooted in the factory-think of industrialization.

In the factory, a systematic series of steps A + B + C produced a product.

The conventional brand process follows the same linear path:

Brand Promise Statement + Logo + Personality...and so on is thought to add up to "the brand."

Sound familiar?

As much as traditional agencies may flinch at the idea, the great brands emerging today are no longer being developed on the 40th floor of a Madison Avenue high rise.

Today, great brand development isn't about genius, it's about the **discovery of value**.

We need a new framework. We need new thinking to bring entropy, energy, and life back into the way organizations form relationships with people.



Click To Tweet

"Great brand development isn't about genius. It's about the discovery of value." ~ #TheLeanBrand



BRAND, MEET LEAN

BRAND, MEET LEAN

The purpose of Lean Brand development is to *discover* the emotional-value being created and *for whom* that value is being created.

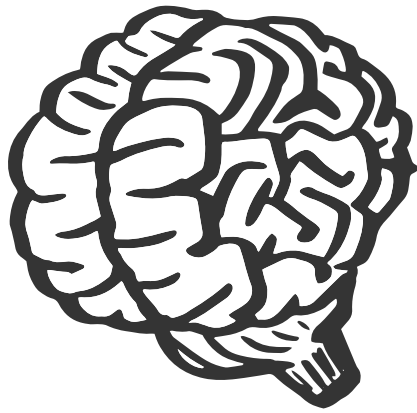
Conventional brand development favors execution through a known process managed by a brand genius.

Lean Brand development favors *innovation*, through *experimentation*, managed by *validated learning*.

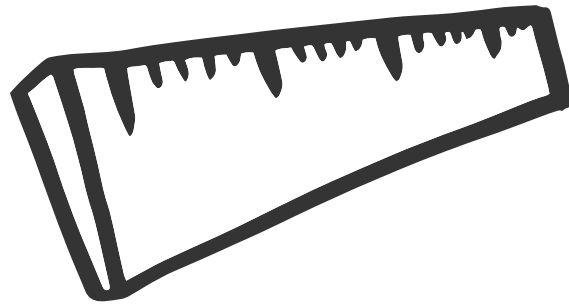
This means your job – in the formation of your brand – is not to execute but to learn.

To learn you *must* experiment.

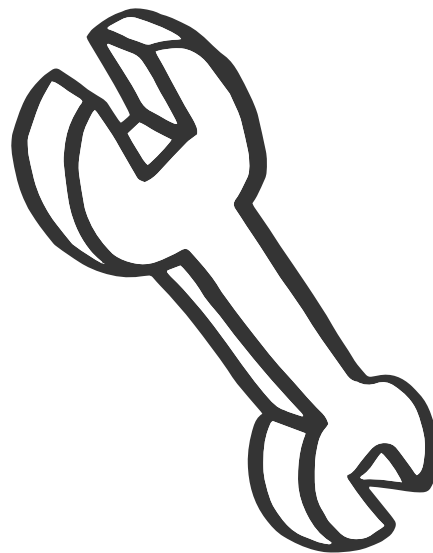
Experimentation happens in a **Build–Measure–Learn** feedback loop centered around three simple questions:



WHAT DO YOU NEED TO **LEARN**?



HOW WILL YOU **MEASURE**?

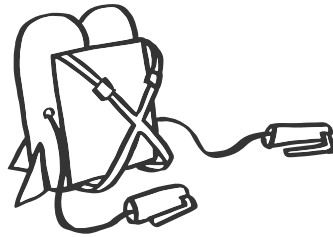


WHAT DO YOU NEED TO **BUILD** TO
RUN AN EXPERIMENT?

Start by entering the loop as quickly as possible with your first **Minimum Viable Brand** (MVB). Your MVB distills the relationship between you and your audience down to its most meaningful elements: **story**, **artifact**, and **invitation**.



STORY



ARTIFACT



INVITATION

STORY

Story is *your story*. Who you are. Why you do what you do. Why people should care about a relationship with you. This is your unique **rallying point** defining what you're fighting against and what you're fighting for.

Relationships are formed in the *synchronicity* between who you are and who your audience wants to become.

ARTIFACT

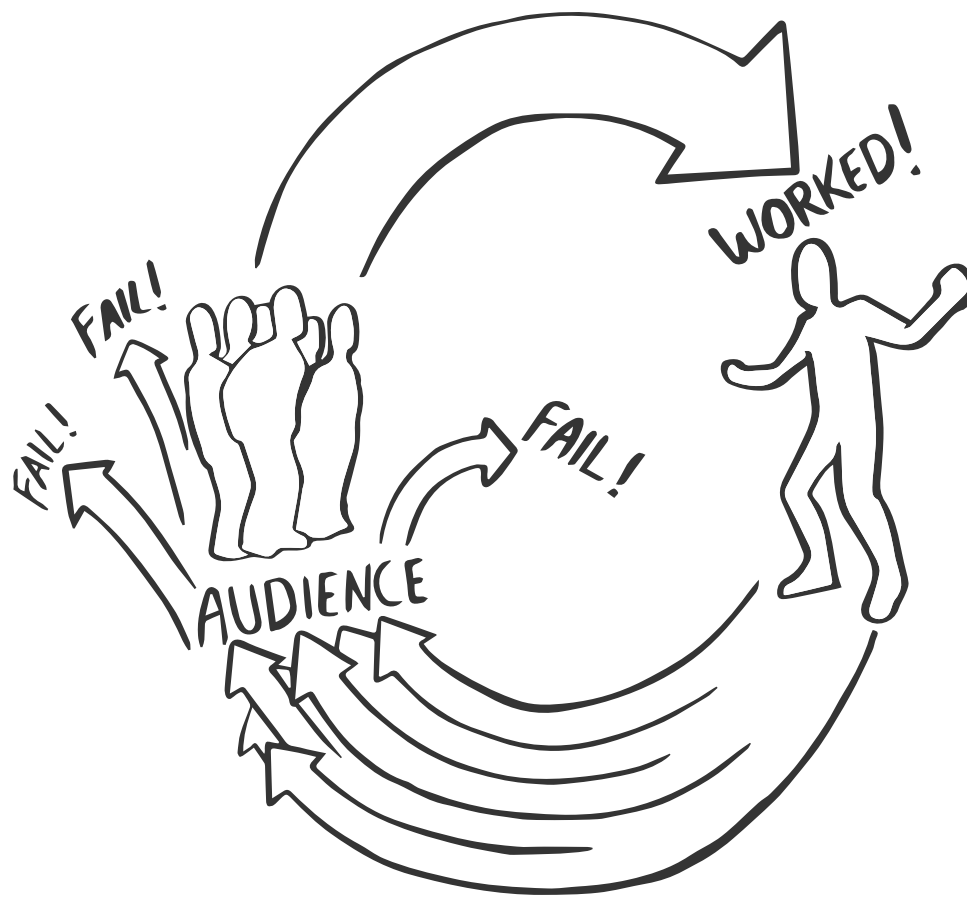
Artifacts are expressions of your story. Whether it's a pink mustache on a car or a hackathon on Google's campus, the goal is to find artifacts that tell your story and engage people with who you are.

Great artifacts evoke emotion and reflect the relationship you are forming with your audience.

INVITATION

Invitations are active calls for people to join your story. It's much more than "messaging." What you say, where you say it, and how you say it impact the way people respond to you.

Customers aren't looking to be sold on features and benefits, they're looking to be inspired. Compelling invitations don't sell, they inspire.



Click To Tweet

"The purpose of #TheLeanBrand is to discover the emotional-value being created and for whom that value is being created."

EXPERIMENT & MEASURE

To discover value, you must form your *best* assumptions into one proposed MVB and run live experiments to generate learning.

Learnings are gained through tightly measuring people's reaction to your MVB. To be effective, you must get *outside of your building* and dig into the relational metrics of **interaction, engagement, and participation**.

Host a meetup and measure who shows up. Participate in social conversations and measure engagement. Or simply buy an early adopter a coffee and have a meaningful conversation.

These learnings become the basis for decision making grounded on *empirical evidence* rather than subjective opinion.

You preserve the parts that resonate and iterate on the parts that don't, until you find **product-market-brand fit** with an audience.

THE CONTINUOUS BRAND



THE CONTINUOUS BRAND

Lean Brand development is about the hard work of learning where real, paying customers connect with you and how to continuously **adjust, iterate, and grow** your brand to meet those connections.

Brand development isn't about a genius with a factory-think, black-box process. Nor is it about a “waterfall” approach where the supposed brilliance of a few creative elites trickle downstream.

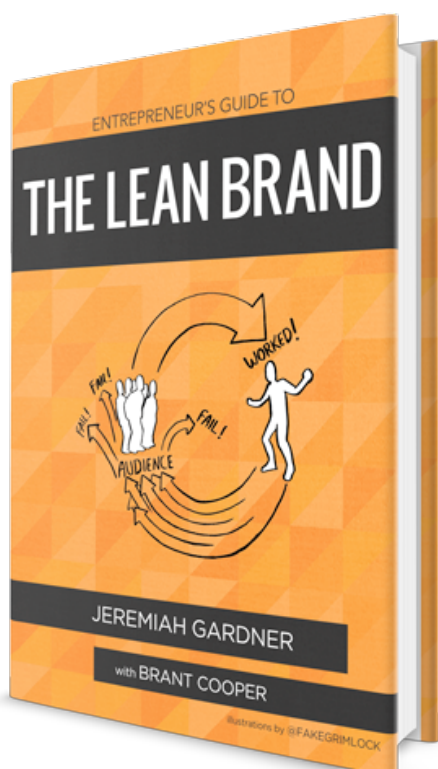
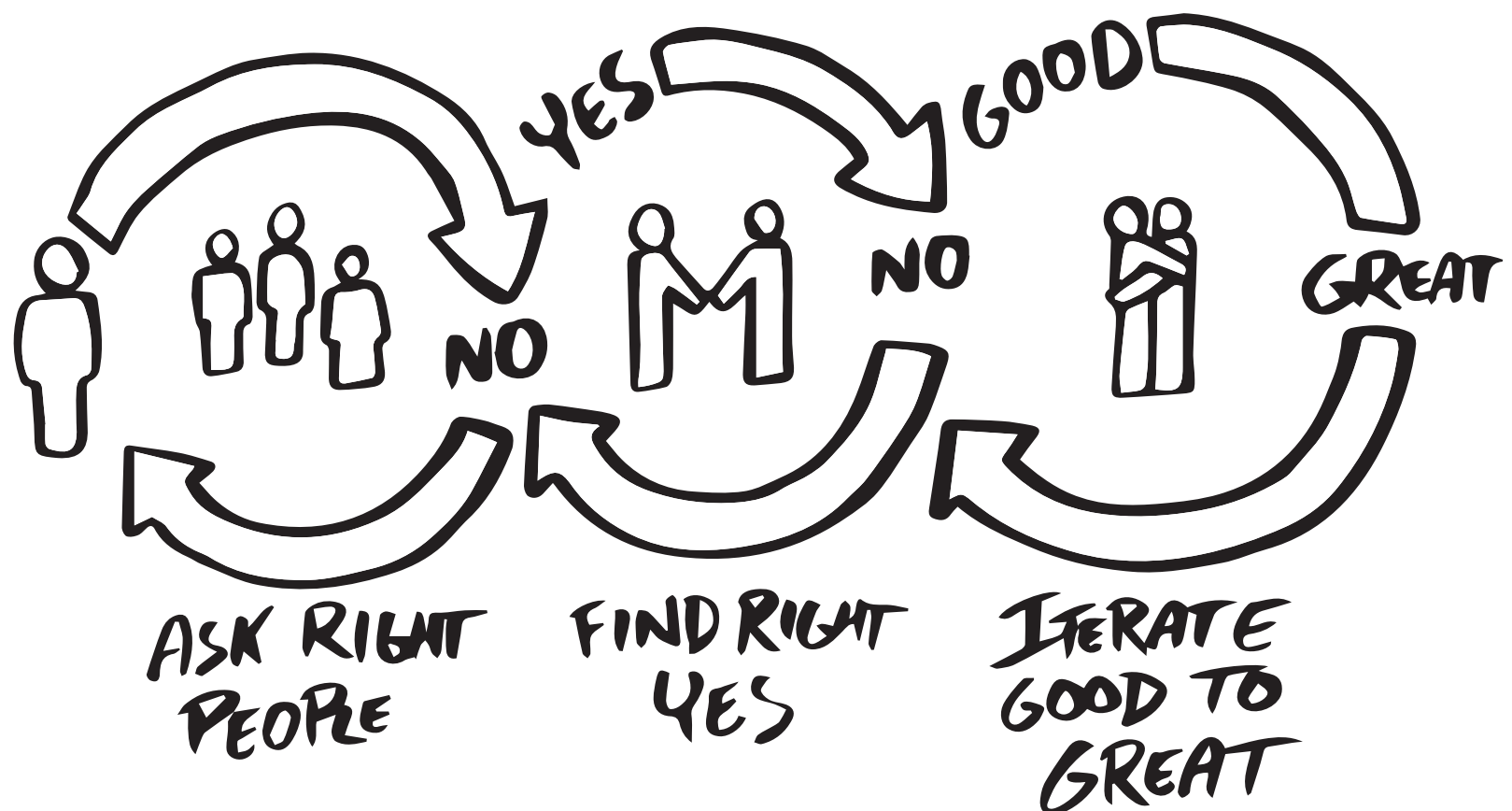
A Lean Brand replaces the conventional process with **continuous iteration**.

A Lean Brand replaces a brand genius with **validated learning**.

And a Lean Brand is optimized for the **discovery and delivery of value**.

That's **brand innovation**.

That's ***The Lean Brand***.



GET YOUR COPY

Today, great brand development isn't about genius, it's about the discovery of shared value. *The Lean Brand* is the first book to apply lean principles to brand development to help organizations build validated, passionate relationships with an audience. *The Lean Brand* is not new jargon for old thinking, but an entirely new approach to brand development rooted in experimentation, validated learning, and iteration. Get your copy and start learning how to build strong relationships based on shared value today.

MINIMUM VIABLE BIOS



AUTHOR

JEREMIAH GARDNER

Jeremiah Gardner is the author of *The Lean Brand*. His work is about helping people reframe the way they think about brand development, culture, creativity, and leadership. He has worked with Fortune 500s, entrepreneurs, and startups to help them discover, iterate, and develop their emotional-value. Jeremiah is a speaker, Lean Brand practitioner, and bulldog lover.

Jeremiah blogs at JeremiahGardner.com and tweets [@JeremiahGardner](https://twitter.com/JeremiahGardner).



CO-AUTHOR

BRANT COOPER

Brant Cooper helps organizations big and small innovate. He is the co-author of the New York Times Bestseller, *The Lean Entrepreneur* and is a sought after speaker, advisor and mentor. Brant is the Co-Founder of Moves the Needle Group, which has advised the innovation practices of such leading companies as Qualcomm, Intuit, Capital One, Pitney Bowes and Hewlett-Packard.

Brant blogs at [Market By Numbers](http://MarketByNumbers.com) and tweets [@BrantCooper](https://twitter.com/BrantCooper).

ILLUSTRATIONS BY:



ILLUSTRATOR

@FAKEGRIMLOCK

ME, GRIMLOCK, AM MOST FAMOUS ROBOT DINOSAUR ON ENTIRE INTERNET. THIS FACT. HERE IMPORTANT FACTS: 1) ME HERE TO HELP WORLD BE LESS STUPID, MORE AWESOME. 2) WHY TALK THIS WAY? BECAUSE AWESOME! 3) GRIMLOCK POWERED BY COFFEE, BEER, BACON, HUMANS. ALL DELICIOUS. 4) WHO REALLY GRIMLOCK? ME AM!

FakeGrimlock writes at FakeGrimlock.com and tweets [@FAKEGRIMLOCK](https://twitter.com/FAKEGRIMLOCK).

THE LEAN BRAND™ IN 999 WORDS

A PRIMER TO LEAN BRAND DEVELOPMENT BY JEREMIAH GARDNER

WITH BRANT COOPER | ILLUSTRATIONS BY @FAKEGRIMLOCK

FIND OUT MORE AT: LEANBRANDBOOK.COM | JOIN THE WORLDWIDE CONVERSATION: [#THELEANBRAND](https://twitter.com/LEANBRAND)

NOTICE OF RIGHTS

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. THIS BOOK CONTAINS MATERIAL PROTECTED UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND FEDERAL COPYRIGHT LAWS AND TREATIES. ANY UNAUTHORIZED REPRINT OR USE OF THIS MATERIAL IS PROHIBITED. NO PART OF THIS BOOK MAY BE REPRODUCED OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS, ELECTRONIC OR MECHANICAL, INCLUDING PHOTOCOPYING, RECORDING, OR BY ANY INFORMATION STORAGE AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM WITHOUT EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION FROM THE AUTHOR / PUBLISHER.

NOTICE OF LIABILITY

THE INFORMATION IN THIS BOOK IS DISTRIBUTED ON AN “AS IS” BASIS WITHOUT WARRANTY. THE INFORMATION IN THIS BOOK IS DISTRIBUTED ON AN “AS IS” BASIS, WITHOUT WARRANTY. ALTHOUGH EVERY PRECAUTION HAS BEEN TAKEN IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS WORK, NEITHER THE AUTHOR(S) NOR PUBLISHER SHALL HAVE ANY LIABILITY TO ANY PERSON OR ENTITY WITH RESPECT TO ANY LOSS OR DAMAGE CAUSED OR ALLEGED TO BE CAUSED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY BY THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS WORK.

ISBN 978-0-9961007-1-7

© JEREMIAH GARDNER 2014 | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED