

a puff piece

Are you familiar with the term *puffery*? You typically see the word at work in promotional statements someone or some business might make about something they offer. For example, say you're walking down the main street of Anywhere USA and see a sign in the window of a bakery that reads: "Best Glazed Donuts In The World."

The best part of puffery is it's completely subjective. I mean, how could anyone even know that without taste testing ALL of the glazed donuts? (However, if you come to find out this test needs to be done, please pass on my contact information — see below.)

Seriously though, I'm a huge fan of puffery for your business — when used within reason. Is there one unique thing your garden center is "best in the world" at? Or at the very least, "best in the neighborhood?" And are you able to prove it? If so, it looks like you have a story worth telling.

beautiful yarn

There's nothing better than a good pair of blue jeans. They're durable, timeless and quintessentially American.

I've always been of the "jeans are jeans" mindset, and while the price for good denim can run the gamut, a classic pair of Levi's 501s will do me just fine 10 out of 10 times.

Make that nine out of 10 times.

Earlier this year, I made a trip to our neighborhood vintage- and used-clothing shop in search of a blazer. Twenty minutes later, I came out with a next-to-new, \$300 pair of jeans.

I got lucky, though. Unlike the original owner, I only spent \$35.

So what's the big deal about these jeans,

right? And if I'm a "jeans are jeans" kind of guy, how in the world did I know these were a diamond in the rough in the first place?

Great questions. One easy answer: I knew the story behind the brand.

While doing some research on Made-in-the-USA products, I came across a two-minute video profiling the North Carolina-based company Raleigh Denim. In those two minutes, I learned this company is extremely small, founded by a husband and wife duo, makes jeans by hand on refurbished shuttle looms from the 1920s, sources denim from a plant 75 miles away in Greensboro and refers to its employees as "Jeansmiths" who autograph an inside pocket with a Sharpie once they finish a pair.

Now that's a story!

Whether blue jeans or green plants, it's really amazing the weight "knowing" carries in regard to the story of how a product or company came to fruition.

coffee (back)grounds

To keep with the theme, in "Outside The Vines: Brewing Interest" (page 60), associate editor Abby Kleckler interviews the owners of a locally owned coffee roaster and learns how the business is positioned as one-of-a-kind; and that has made it memorable and rewarding for its employees and customers alike.

Just like your fingerprint, your company's story is unique and solely yours. Don't be afraid to tell it. **LGR**




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