

A stranger to your selfie

 By [John Laurence](#)

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No, this is not about how men who take frequent selfies are more narcissistic and psychopathic ([they apparently are, though](#))...

It's about how you trust the familiar and how important it is to build familiarity in brands.

For instance, have you ever noticed how a photo of your face looks different to how you perceive yourself, or how your own voicemail message has this strange-sounding person on the other side?



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The photo phenomenon occurs because you're accustomed to the slightly different reverse image of yourself. You know - the one that you gaze at lovingly in the mirror each morning. A camera does not reverse your image, so a photo reveals the stranger that's really you.

The voice effect occurs because bones in your skull make your voice sound unique to your ears. This causes you to perceive it differently to the squeaky one everybody else hears.

The point is that you can often find the 'real you' less appealing than the one you are more familiar with. The same goes for brands and products and most other things for that matter - a phenomenon called the mere-exposure effect.

Let's face it, despite claims to the contrary, people don't really fall deeply in love with 99% of brands out there. They aren't rationally persuaded to buy every product they do. Much of advertising is really about making a brand more familiar to people by repeatedly (but not excessively) exposing them to it in a pleasant way.

This familiarity principle also causes marketers and advertisers to have rose coloured goggles when they dote over their own products, brands and advertisements. Sometimes it makes sense to invest in a bit of research to provide an objective and quantitative view of how a potential customer may really perceive them.

ABOUT JOHN LAURENCE

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