



Making the Connection: Building a Self-Storage Brand People Actually Love

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This will help us clear the stage and set the room for the next presenter. Plus, you’ll have 30 minutes to converse in an open, roundtable format.

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The Storage Industry Is Optimized ... for Sameness



We've spent 30 years optimizing
square footage, pricing and automation.

The holistic customer experience became an afterthought...

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The Real Competitive Set

- Your customer's expectations are being set by **retail and hospitality**.
- They don't compare you to the storage facility down the street.
- They compare you to ***every experience they've ever had.***



Typical Storage Facility



What Customers Compare You to:



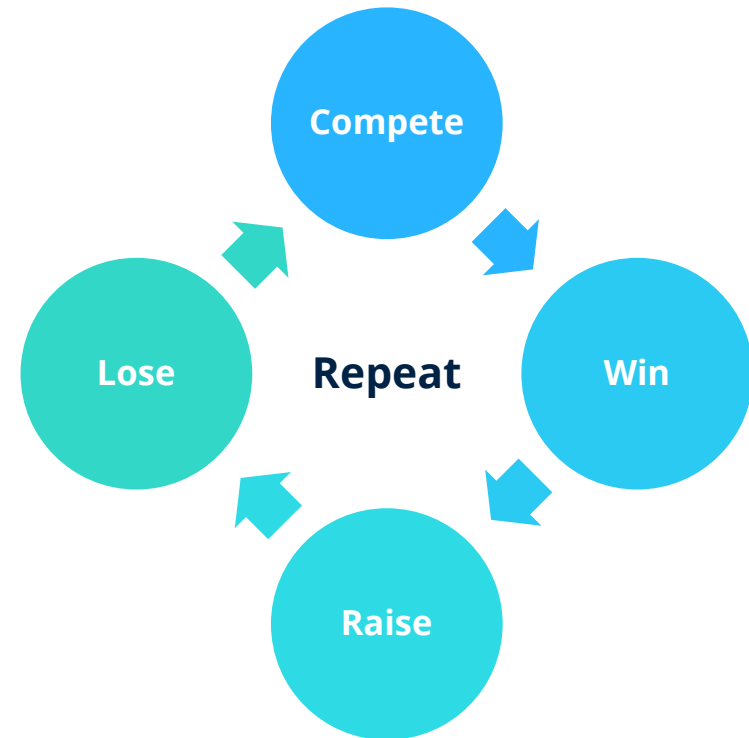
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What Happens When Everything Is a Commodity

- Compete on price
- Win price-sensitive customers
- Raise rates
- Lose them
- Repeat

This is not a growth strategy.
It's a *churn cycle*.



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The Hidden Cost of Being 'Good Enough'

Key stats (high-level):

- A 5% increase in retention increases lifetime value (LTV) more than 30%.
- Loyal customers are less price sensitive.
- Word of mouth drives higher LTV.

Storage problem: We don't track emotional loyalty, only occupancy.

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The Business Case for Brand in Self-Storage

- **What “brand” actually means:**

- Not logo
- Not colors
- Not a slogan

Brand = what people expect will happen when they choose you



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Brand Is a Financial Asset



You can't capex your way out of a bad experience.

Investing in customer touchpoints will improve asset value over the long term.

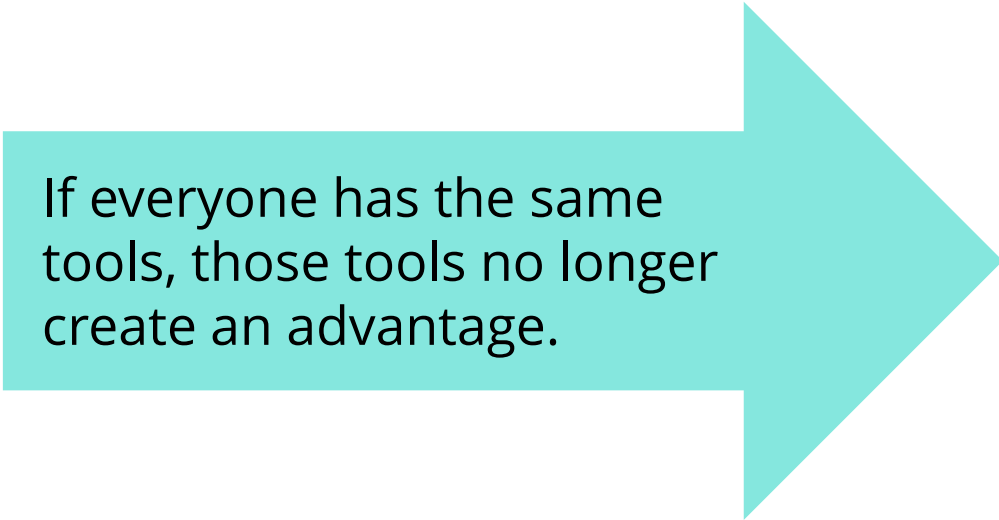
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Service Design = Retention + Pricing Power

Service is the new differentiator.



If everyone has the same tools, those tools no longer create an advantage.

- Online leasing
- Smart locks
- Dynamic pricing

Service becomes the advantage.

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The Service Flywheel



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Retention Is Revenue

It's more affordable to keep a customer than acquire a new one.



\$100 / month
x 8 months
= \$800 LTV

8
Months

Stephen



\$100 / month
x 24 months
= \$2400 LTV

24
Months

Julie

Same market. Same pricing. Same needs.
Only the experience is different.

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Retention Is Revenue

Assuming customer acquisition cost (CAC) is \$150

Acquisition:

$\$150 \times 3 = \450

Lifetime Value:

$(8 \text{ months} \times 100) \times 3$
 $= \$2,400$

ROI:

$\$1,950$



Acquisition:

$\$150$

Lifetime Value:

$24 \text{ months} \times 100$
 $= \$2,400$

ROI:

$\$2,250$



Churn caps your revenue. Retention compounds it.

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Price Sensitivity Is a Trust Problem

People pay more when they:

- Trust you
- Feel respected
- Value the experience



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Trusted Brands Keep Customers

People prefer high-trust companies in every industry:

- **Hotels** they always book when they travel
- **Retailers** they return to without checking price
- **Subscriptions** they don't cancel even after increases



J.CREW

NETFLIX

Trust → Default choice → Lower churn → Greater pricing power

Trust creates loyalty, retention and **long-term revenue**.

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Low-Cost, High-Impact Experience Upgrades

You don't need a rebrand. **You need behavior change.**

Friction Removal

- Simple online flows
- Clear pricing
- Easy access
- Fast answers

Micro-Moments

- Welcome message
- Thank-you text
- Rate-change explanation
- Proactive support

Human Language

- Plain-English notices
- No legal/corporate jargon
- Owning mistakes
- Clear next steps

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What Great Brands Do Differently

They stand for something.

Not “cheap” or “convenient” but:

- Reliable
- Customer first
- Authentic
- Professional

They are consistent.

- Same tone
- Same standards
- Same experience
- Every location
- Every channel

They empower their teams.

- People don't deliver brand in isolation.
- Systems empower employees to go above and beyond.
- That builds a culture of putting the customer first.

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How to Operationalize Brand at Scale

The myth:
**Brand is
marketing's job.**

The reality:
**Brand is an
operating system.**

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The Brand Stack

How brand is delivered consistently across locations

STRATEGY

STANDARDS

TRAINING

SYSTEMS

EXECUTION



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Your Brand Lives in 5 Places



First Call



Website



Facility



Billing



Support

If these aren't aligned, your brand will suffer.

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Standardize the Experience, Not the Building



Different assets, **same standards**

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Measure What Matters

- **Retention:** This correlates with customer loyalty.
- **Rate resilience:** Strong brands drive willingness to pay.
- **Net promoter score:** High scores indicate a successful brand.
- **Complaints per unit:** Uncover gaps in the experience.
- **Referral volume:** People only recommend brands they trust.
- **LTV:** Quantifies lifetime brand loyalty.
- **CAC:** A strong brand can drive this down.

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The Future of Self-Storage Brands

The industry will be splitting into two different types of operators:

1

Commodity Operators

2

Experience-Led Brands

The Winners?

Build trust, design service, think long-term, invest in experience,
measure loyalty

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You can build a facility or you can build a brand.

Only one compounds!



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