

Live Long and Prosper



Joined-up thinking on brand, strategy and sustainability for lasting competitive advantage

- [Frontpage](#)
- [Return home](#)
- [Browse](#)
- [By topic](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [RSS feed](#)
-

[Older »](#)

August 30, 2009 • 4:53 pm

“Real food” and customer intimacy

There’s something really satisfying about foraging for wild food. Quite apart from the fact that it’s free, it’s incredibly good for the soul – particularly when you’re doing it with a wide-eyed two year old, who seems to find bramble picking the ultimate adrenalin rush!

Walking along a nearby country lane with my wife and daughter this morning, our little girl was squealing with delight at the discovery of every crop of plump blackberries, grinning from ear to ear as I lifted her onto my shoulders to get at the higher branches, and giggling mischievously as – rather than dropping them into our little Tupperware container – she crammed them into her face instead!

It was a great start to what’s been a really awesome day, followed up, as it was, by a trip up to [Church Farm](#) in Ardeley for a quick scout around their new venture.

They’d dropped a leaflet through my door a few weeks back, attracting my attention with the promise of farm-fresh produce and local food at supermarket prices, with its store and café open every day from 8am to 8pm. At last, I thought, here are some people that really get it.

You see, admirable ventures though most farmers’ markets are, they’re sporadic and often filled with people of the “it’s ethical so let’s slap a massive premium on it” school of thinking (you know the type of thing – £4.00 for a tiny jar of homemade chutney). Instantly, you’re in the realm of trade-offs, and that’s no way to attract a wide, mainstream customer base for sustainable, local food.

What the guys at Church Farm have done is incredibly smart. In true “[value disciplines](#)” style, they’ve met threshold levels of performance on cost and convenience, allowing the quality and freshness of the food – and the joy of the whole customer experience they’ve cleverly built around it – to shine through as a genuine points of differentiation...

“Come and see the farm animals, feed the chickens and pigs, and enjoy walks on the footpaths which surround the farm. Visit Church Farm café and tearooms for all-day breakfast and lunches, all produced on the farm for under £5.00...”

“We’re an ecologically diverse, mixed farm with a little bit of everything, producing food that we would like to eat and are happy to feed to our children...”

“Everything on the menu is also available in the farm store. We only want you to pay for what you’re happy with, so if you’re not happy with anything, just ask for your money back or pay whatever you think is fair.”

Seriously smart messages, then, indicative of a perfect “customer intimate” food shopping experience – one that felt like the absolute antithesis of the supermarket shop. (Normally I can’t get in and out of the shop quick enough. Here, we sauntered happily around for ages, bought a stack of fantastic veggies, and even stayed for lunch!)

What’s more, they clearly have grand designs on establishing Church Farm as an example for others to follow, and on making a [powerful case for the necessary transformation of our food system](#). I for one wish them every success and will

continue to support them with my custom.

Filed under: [CR & Sustainability](#), [Strategy & Competitive Advantage](#), [customer intimacy](#), [sustainability](#), [value disciplines](#), [wild food](#), [local food](#), [foraging](#), [Church Farm](#)

Leave a Reply

Name (required)

E-mail (required)

Website

Notify me of follow-up comments via email.

Pages

- [About me](#)
- [About my book](#)
- [About this blog](#)

Archives

- [August 2009](#)
- [July 2009](#)
- [June 2009](#)
- [May 2009](#)
- [April 2009](#)
- [March 2009](#)
- [February 2009](#)
- [January 2009](#)
- [December 2008](#)
- [November 2008](#)
- [October 2008](#)
- [September 2008](#)
- [August 2008](#)
- [July 2008](#)
- [June 2008](#)
- [May 2008](#)
- [April 2008](#)
- [March 2008](#)

Blogroll

- [Please note this blog content is subject to Creative Commons](#)

Brand & Engagement

- [David Ferrabee – Able and How](#)
- [Kevin Keohane – Death to Internal Marketing](#)
- [Saffron Brand Consultants](#)
- [Sam Wood – The Insider](#)

- [simply group – simply blogging](#)

Design & Innovation

- [Bruce Nussbaum – NussbaumOnDesign](#)
- [Fast Company](#)
- [TED Blog](#)

Sustainability & CR

- [Cone – What do you stand for?](#)
- [Ethical Corporation Blog](#)
- [Futerra Sustainability Communications](#)
- [Intel Corporation – CSR@Intel](#)
- [Jonathon Porritt – jonathonporritt.com](#)
- [Robert Lecker – Fokus Verantwortung](#)
- [Tomorrow's Company – forceforgood.com](#)

Bookmark & Share



- [Frontpage](#)
[Return home](#)
- [Browse](#)
[By topic](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
[RSS feed](#)
-

[Blog at WordPress.com.](#)

Theme: [Grid Focus](#) by [Derek Punsalan](#)

☺