

by Allen Moczygemba
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Raising standards

If you were able to attend the National Angus Convention this past November in Columbus, Ohio, you know I'm not exaggerating when I say it was an overwhelming success.

There were almost 2,000 folks in attendance who were treated to motivating speakers, outstanding educational sessions and a trade show filled with the American Angus Association's sponsors and numerous business partners. As one exhibitor told me, "We come here to do business, and there's no group better to do business with than the members of The Business Breed."

The convention was hosted in Columbus to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the *Certified Angus Beef*[®] (CAB[®]) brand, which has called Ohio home since its inception in 1978. And while we understandably celebrated the success and milestones of the past 40 years, we also looked ahead to the future and how both the CAB and Angus brands must continue to evolve to maintain their relevancy and impact.

During Saturday's opening general session, I spoke to the fact that great brands are powerful and impactful. And, great brands, like Angus, can provide leverage to brand extensions such as AngusSource[®], Angus LinkSM and yes, even to CAB as it did in 1978.

Building brands

But great brands aren't built overnight. It takes time. It takes commitment, resolve and perseverance. And, it takes money

— money to invest in the brand to maintain and grow its value.

However, it's important to recognize that customer's needs change and evolve over time. That's the same whether the customer is a rancher who's looking for a high-performing registered Angus bull or a couple in New York City wanting to enjoy a great steak after watching a Broadway show.

Today's consumers want to know more than ever before. Simply put, they want to be informed. And that goes from expecting bulls to have genomically enhanced expected progeny differences (GE-EPDs) as part of their pedigree or the story on cattle care and handling behind the ribeye steak they're about to enjoy.

As consumer's needs evolve, so do successful brands. While ultimately a brand's product is measured on its performance, I believe that how a brand is positioned and its message is just as important. In fact, in today's 24/7 onslaught of noise, a brand's message determines its success or lack thereof.

In our case, our brands will evolve supported by our Belief Statement which is the foundation of our story. Titled "Raising Standards," it's built upon the four key pillars: proper cattle care; empowering the next generation; supporting our local

communities; and, our commitment to the continued stewardship of our natural resources.

Our Belief Statement and its attributes represent what we do every single day. And, that's not just our members and staff across the country, but also the thousands of CAB licensees. As I said on the main stage that day, it's important we share our story with others; and when we do, remind folks that "raising standards" is not only what we do today but what we've been doing for generations.

We're Angus. America's Breed. We're the leading beef breed in the world with the world's largest and best known premium branded beef program. As we plan for the future, we'll continue to set standards for the beef industry that ensures a prosperous future for the entire Angus family.



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