

Understanding the Basics of Branding

What is branding?	2
Importance of branding	2
How to create your brand	3
How to promote your brand	4



*www.PartnersMarketing.net
1(800) 436-0627*

Understanding the Basics of Branding

What is branding?

The first step to understanding branding is to know the definitions of a few key concepts. A **brand** is the proprietary visual, emotional, rational and cultural image that you associate with a company or product. A brand is not a physical entity; it's a collection of visual images, experiences, emotions and senses that define a person's collective opinion on the subject. A **brand image** is how the consumer views a brand; a **brand identity** is how the company views itself. **Branding** is the pursuit to bridge the gap between brand image and brand identity. It's the company's attempt to get consumers to think or feel a certain way about a brand.

Importance of branding

With each industry becoming more and more competitive, branding is even more important than it has ever been in the past. Well-branded businesses and products do better in tough economic times than unbranded businesses and products.

Why? Without branding, you risk being perceived as something that can be easily switched out for a competitor. The goal of a brand is to stand out against competitors and get to the top of the consumer's evoked set.

An **evoked set** is a group of relevant brands that a prospective consumer is favorably familiar with when thinking about a purchase. Imagine someone asking you what kind of soda you'd like to drink. Do you respond with a flavor or a brand name? If that's not available, then what? The list of your first choice and the few acceptable alternatives is an example of an evoked set. Everyone has an evoked set for a majority of purchase choices, and it is very uncommon for a person to purchase outside of their evoked set.

Increasing brand awareness is how you get into that evoked set. **Brand awareness** is a consumer's ability to recall and recognize your brand, and is increased by constant reinforcement. By creating continuity within every aspect of your marketing, you are constantly reinforcing your brand, increasing your brand awareness, and building your **brand equity** (or worth of your brand).

Continuity is generally achieved by making each piece similar to one another. This continuity is usually portrayed visually, by using the same color scheme, design tricks or elements.

Brand: the proprietary visual, emotional, rational and cultural image that associate with a company or product.

Brand Image: The consumer's mental picture (or 'gut feeling') of a brand.

Brand Identity: the outward expression (or 'personality') of a brand – name, trademark, communications and visual appearance. Reflects how the company wants the consumer to perceive their brand.

Branding: the practice to get people to think or feel a certain way about your brand.

Evoked Set: a group of relevant brands that a prospective consumer is favorably familiar with when thinking about making a purchase.

Brand Awareness: customer's ability to recall and recognize the brand under different conditions and link to the brand name, logo, fonts, colors, etc.

Brand Equity: A brand's power derived from the goodwill and name recognition that it has earned over time. The worth of the brand.

Continuity: the unbroken and consistent existence of operation of something over a period of time.

Understanding the Basics of Branding

How you portray your brand visually is just as important as the message written within your pieces. More than 90 percent of consumers report that visual factors are the most important when buying a product, and the use of specific colors can target certain demographics and evoke different emotions.

How to create your brand

How to brand your business or product comes from asking yourself a series of questions:

1. Why are you in business?

Is your goal to provide a service, fix a problem, make life easier or make the world a better place? What is your purpose, your goal?

2. What do you want people to think of when they hear your name?

What images, feelings, scenarios and other things do you want consumers to think about?

3. Who is the audience?

What are the needs and wants of your customers and prospects?

4. What are my competitors doing?

And what aren't they doing?

5. What can I promise to deliver?

Be sure it's obtainable and realistic.

6. What are my features and benefits?

A **feature** is a factual statement about a business or product. A **benefit** answers the question "what's in it for me?" A benefit is more likely to entice an customer than a feature.

7. Most important: What is my Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?

What makes your business or product better than the competitor?

Make a list of everything you have to offer and everything your competitors offer and find what you can positively exploit. If your offerings are identical, what can you promote that they aren't?

Remember that your brand is the promise you give to the world, and make sure it's both positive and true.

Feature: factual statement about a business or product

Benefit: answers the question "what's in it for me?"

Example

Feature: self- setting clock.

Benefit: convenience.

Unique Selling Proposition

(USP): a specific promise of benefit unique to the product, one that the competition either did not or could not claim.

Example

A fantastic example of creating a USP while dealing with a product identical to its competitors is Folger's "mountain grown" emphasis. All coffee is mountain grown, Folger's just said it first.

Understanding the Basics of Branding

Once you've decided on how you want to brand your business or product, go back and determine if what you decided on is:

1. Different

Is it obvious to consumers why to choose you over a competitor?

2. Relevant

Does what you picked matter to your target audience?

3. Able to evolve

Can your brand evolve easily throughout time as market trends change?

How to promote your brand

Now that you've learned about what branding is, why it's important, and how to formulate your branding concept, how do you implement it?

Design

The most important visual is your logo. Never skimp on your logo design, and never settle for anything that doesn't portray your business or product exactly how you'd like it.

Promotional Products

Get your new brand in the hands of prospects. You can put your logo on virtually anything you can think of and hand them out to increase brand awareness.

Uniforms

Make sure all of your employees portray the vibe you want. Whether it's professional and sophisticated or laid back and comfortable, your employees should have a uniform that identifies them to the public.

Business Materials

Business cards, letterhead, packaging, brochures and other materials must all convey your brand and have some form of continuity between them.

Atmosphere

Professionally created signage and posters can enhance the atmosphere of your business and provide information to customers and prospects.

Communication

Communicating with prospects directly is the best way to create a relationship with consumers and increase brand awareness and loyalty. Direct mail pieces (like postcards) can not only be designed specifically for your brand, but also personalized to appeal to each individual. Email is also a direct form of communication that is very cost-effective, quick and easy.

At Partners Marketing, our team can help you throughout the entire branding process. From formulating your brand, designing your logo and pieces, printing and communicating with consumers, mailing and mail regulations, we are here to be your partner in success.

Click here to get started right now!



Click here to visit our website!

