



Why Brand?

You have an idea for your business, you have a name for your business and maybe even a few ideas regarding operations and who to hire. BUT one thing you are missing is a way for potential customers to identify and think about your business. This is where branding comes into play. Yes, branding is very important because this is how people differentiate your company from your competitors and just other businesses. So, here is some important information that you need to know about branding:

What is Branding?

Branding is the practice of creating a name, symbol, and/or design that identifies a company and separates the company from competition and other companies. It is the process of creating and/or disseminating the brand name. Branding can be applied to the entire corporate identity as well as to individual product and service names.

What is a Brand?

A product, service or concept that is publicly distinguished from other products, services, or concepts so that it can be easily communicated and usually marketed. A brand name is the name of the distinctive product, service, or concept.

Why do Companies use Branding?

- To stay in the forefront of a person's mind
- To be easily identified
- To be visible

Let's take McDonald's for example. When you see that yellow arch, you automatically think of McDonald's which is one of the first fast food restaurants that was established. You could be hungry with no restaurants around you and see the yellow arch on a flyer and immediately want McDonald's for lunch. This is one way that branding works, when the company is not around you, there is something, whether a color, a picture, or a commercial that represents the brand and will keep it in your mind.



How does Branding Help with Visibility for a Company?

Branding helps with visibility for your company because you can place your branding on any tools, software or supplies that your company uses. Again, this tactic is to stay in the forefront of people's minds. It is also a passive way to market. How many times have you heard someone say, "you are giving that company free marketing" because you are wearing name brand clothing? Well, that person is actually correct. Never miss a chance to show off your branding. You may place your logo, colors, slogans etc. on company emails, letterheads, t-shirts, flyers, social media pages, stickers and so much more.

Components of Branding:

Here are different types of branding items: (Be sure to write these down)

1. Logo
2. Website
3. Colors
4. Commercials
5. Slogans/taglines
6. Spokesperson/brand ambassadors
7. Customer service- Ex. Chick-fil-A (my pleasure) (will revisit this down below)
8. Promotional items such as t-shirts, pens, cups, flyers, business cards, rack cards, catalogs

Steps to Branding (What should I do first?)

Sometimes, people struggle with what to do first. Especially, if your company is a startup and you may not have enough capital to put towards marketing. I always recommend the following order:

1. Logo
2. Business cards
3. Website

Your logo should always come first because it is the main identifier for your company. You can immediately start adding your logo to social media sites (which are free for basic accounts) and other promotional material.

Then, it should be business cards. Remember, branding and marketing don't just occur online. When you are walking down the street or at the store, you may run into someone that needs your services. You should always be ready to hand a stranger a business card. 😊

Third, you should have a website designed. This is important because people like to go back and read about your company. Everyone does not buy off impulse. If I take myself for an example, before I decide to patronize you, I have read and researched all about your company and you having a website gave me the time I needed to make an informed decision. Your website can also assist with your Search Engine Optimization which helps your company's name appear in search engine searches such as Google and Yahoo! This ofcourse brings more business to you.

If you can purchase all of those things at once, then great!! But if not, please go with the steps that I have provided.

Other Forms of Branding

There are also other ways of branding that might be silent that no one pays attention to, however, just the way you and your employees carry yourself even when you are not working is a form of branding. People do watch what you do, and you are always a representative of your brand. Therefore, when you are networking, at happy hour, attending a conference, attending

homecoming, etc. you are still your brand. It is always a good idea to keep this in mind and to also bring it to the attention of your employees.

Great Examples of Branding

Some companies do branding very well! What do I mean by that? Well, they are either highly visible, can prove outcome results, create a buzz (have people talking), have great deals and referral programs, have lines out of the parking lot and more.

***I have listed some companies that I see do branding very well and why:
(In no particular order)***

#1 **CHICK-FIL-A-** (Now I told you I would revisit this!) Chick-fil-A has superb customer service! I have never had a bad experience at Chick-fil-A. The associates always say, "My pleasure!" I was told that this is something that they are taught to do in training. The food is also very fresh and good. Having good customer service goes a long way when it comes to branding. Now, mistakes do happen, but when it does always be willing to correct the mistake fast.

#2 **APPLE-** Apple does good branding because it uses the "need" of technology to play on the emotions of people. We are living in a digital world where technology leads. In its advertising, Apple makes a point to talk about the lifestyle, imagination, convenience, and innovation of having an Apple product.

#3 **NIKE-** Nike does good branding because it incorporates storytelling of celebrity athletes (such as Michael Jordan) in its campaigns. It also utilizes three vivid channels to sell its products such as sponsorships, advertising, and experience focused retailing.

#4 **TARGET-** Target does good branding because like Chick-fil-A, it has great customer service. Target also keeps a nice and clean store which is also a silent branding strategy. Target also sells a variety of different products such as clothing, household items, celebratory items, toys, food and much more. Having a variety of items really does attract customers.

#5 **STARBUCKS-** Starbucks uses a large mix of channels to market their products from social media to TV spots and ads. It is their marketing media that makes

their brand very recognizable. It also ensures that its locations are in highly visible and high traffic areas such as near shopping centers and main roads. Starbucks also positions itself in having quality coffee and definitely follows through. Moreover, Starbucks also introduces products that align with each season. You can always count on Pumpkin Spice Frappuccino for autumn and its Peppermint Mocha or Eggnog Latte for Christmas.

#6 **WAWA**- Wawa does good branding because it sells a variety of different products that people need such as gas, hot meals, snacks, and coffee. Wawa's are normally very clean and provide convenience. It even has curbside pickup and delivery with UberEats, Grubhub, etc. Out of all of this, I think the main thing Wawa does well is its promotions, deals and rewards program. Wawa has a rewards program where you can receive a free reward on any day! If you are a consistent customer using your rewards card, at anytime you may have a free reward come to your inbox. Wawa also does a lot of promotions such as \$1 or free Any Size coffee days or free coffee for teachers. Wawa is located in the following states: Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Florida and Washington, D.C. If you have one in your area--take advantage! Lol

#7 **AMAZON**- Amazon is killing it with Ecommerce branding! Amazon provides convenience to its customers and partners with Ecommerce sellers to sell a variety of different items online. You all know you can find just about ANYTHING on Amazon!

Branding is a very important aspect of public relations, marketing, and business. To learn other key components about these fields in an effort to help you improve your business operations and the way you communicate with customers and audiences, check out my "Navigating Public Relations for Your Business" eBook! It is over 100 pages long, includes practice exercises, easy to understand and follow, and is a resource to have always!

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